

Information on U.S. Air Force helicopter HH-53C tail number 68-10359

Date: 03/27/1972 MIA-POW file reference number: 1805

Incident number: 72032777.TXT

Unit: 40th ARRS

Cambodia - UTM grid coordinates: XA682585

Original source(s) and document(s) from which the incident was created or updated: Defense Intelligence Agency Reference Notes. Defense Intelligence Agency Helicopter Loss database. Also: 1805 ()

Loss to Inventory

Crew Members:

C SGT CROW RAYMOND JACK JR BNR

PR SGT MANOR JAMES BNR

PR A1C WAGNER RAYMOND ANTHONY BNR

P CPT DREHER RICHARD E BNR

P CPT PANNABECKER DAVID ERIC BNR

REFNO Synopsis:

Source: Compiled by Homecoming II Project with the assistance of one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews.

Date Compiled: 01 January 1990

SYNOPSIS:

Altogether, the HH-53 "Super Jolly Green Giant" was the largest, fastest and most powerful heavy lift helicopter in the U.S. Air Force inventory. In 1967, the Air Force started a development program to acquire a night rescue capability, and by March 1971, it had succeeded in installing a nighttime recovery system aboard five HH-53C Super Jolly helicopters in Southeast Asia. The Super Jolly was involved in such famed rescue attempts as the attempt to rescue American POWs held at the Son Tay prison compound near Hanoi in late November 1970, and the assault operation to free the Mayaguez crew in May 1975. Capt. Richard Dreher and Capt. David E. Pannabecker were assigned as escort pilots as part of a day rescue mission and departed NKP at 0830 on the morning of March 27, 1972. Dreher and Pannabecker's Super Jolly was the second aircraft in a flight of two. Aboard the aircraft was the pararescue team consisting of James Manor and Raymond A. Wagner. SGT Raymond J. Crow, Jr. was the helicopter crew chief. Following aerial refueling over southeastern Thailand, they departed the tanker to complete the mission, maintaining interplane communications on FM and UHF radios. The lead aircraft called a "tally ho" on the aircraft they were escorting. When the lead aircraft did not receive an answer, the pilot attempted to find him visually without success. After completing a 180 degree turn, the pilot of the lead aircraft reported sighting a column of black smoke coming from the dense jungle five miles away. Their position at this time was in Stoeng Treng Province, Cambodia, about 10 miles southeast of the city of Siempang. A pararescue specialist was lowered to the ground at the site of the crash to check for survivors, but due to the intense heat from the burning helicopter, he could not approach near enough to determine if there were crew members inside the aircraft. Some three hours later a second rescue specialist was deployed in the immediate area, who reported the wreckage was still burning, precluding close inspection. It was never determined if any aboard the Super Jolly survived, but all aboard were declared Killed/Body Not Recovered. In an attempt to classify the cases of the Missing in Action to determine which cases could be readily resolved, the Defense Department assigned "enemy knowledge" categories to each missing man, according to the likelihood their fates would be known by the enemy. In the case of the downed Super Jolly, Wagner, Pannabecker and Dreher were assigned "Category 2", and Manor and Crow "Category 3". Category 3 includes personnel whose loss incident is such that it is doubtful that the enemy would have knowledge of the specific individuals (e.g. aircrews lost over water or remote areas). Category 2 includes personnel who were lost in circumstances or in areas that they may reasonably be expected to be known by the enemy (e.g. individuals

connected with an incident which was discussed but not identified by name by enemy news media, or probably identified by analysis of intelligence reports.) No explanation has been given as to why the crewmembers were classified differently.

This record was last updated on 12/21/2000

<http://www.flyarmy.org/incident/72032777.HTM>

Edited for formatting only