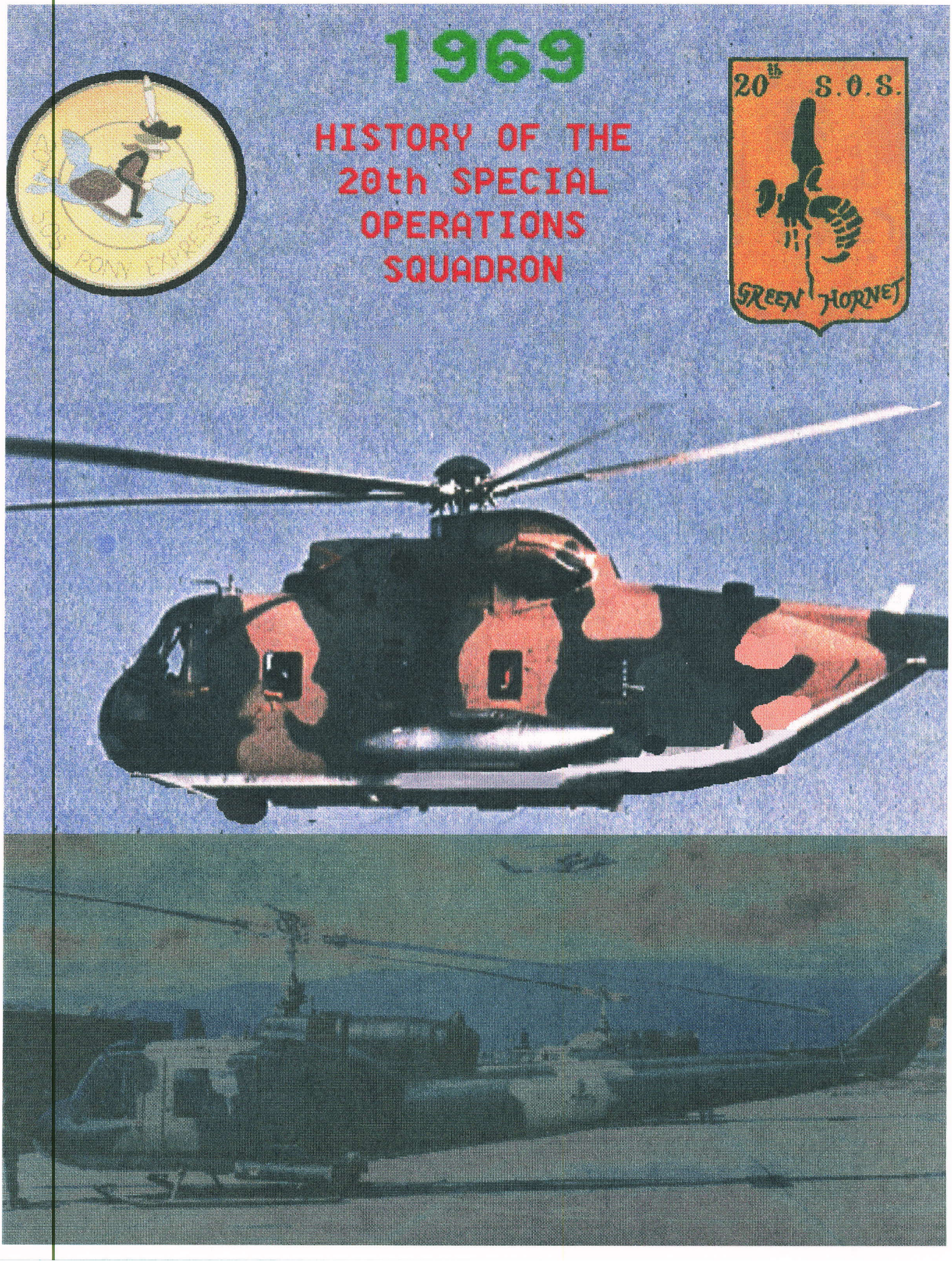
1969

HISTORY OF THE 20th SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



MEMORANDUM

Date: 27 Dec 94

From: 20 SOS/CCX

To: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Subject: DOCUMENT CLASSIFICATION

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1. The documents contained herein are portions of the 1ST/16TH SOW histories for the dates shown on each document. The SOW histories as a whole are classified for the most part.

2. The documents in this binder are a compilation of materials from varied sources and have all been declassified if necessary. Sheets showing declassification are all posted in the last document protector for each respective binder.

3. Any materials you feel may be of questionable classification you are encouraged to bring to my attention and I will endeavor to alleviate your apprehensions.

SQUADRON HISTORIAN

[redacted]

99

100

[redacted]

20TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON

(U) The 20th Special Operations Squadron's mission was apportioned among its various flights. "A", "B" and "C" Flights provided support for Controlled American Sources (CAS) personnel and performed counterinsurgency operations and utility transportation. "D", "E", "F" and "G" Flights performed missions in the areas of unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, film courier, base defense, special warfare training, logistical support of USAF units and US sponsored activities and psychological warfare.

(U) Secondary missions included rescue, VIP courier and civic action.

(U) There were no organizational changes during the reporting

[redacted]

period.

(U) On 26 March the squadron commander, Lieutenant Colonel Frank A. DiFiglia was killed in a helicopter crash. His death and the causes are fully documented later in the chapter. Lieutenant Colonel David K. Sparks assumed command of the squadron.[101]

(S) During the quarter the squadron lost three aircraft to hostile fire and unknown causes. Five men lost their lives and two were wounded.[102] The loss of aircraft during this and the preceding reporting periods placed an umbearable burden on the 20th. The losses severely taxed the already limited resources of men and aircraft assigned.

NHA TRANG AB, RVN

(U) On 26 March, 1969, a UH-1F, 63-13158, was enroute from Ban Me Thout to Nha Trang with a total of ten persons on board. The aircraft crashed and burned near Duc My, some 12 minutes flying time north of Nha Trang Air Base. Of the ten persons on board two survived. Dead were Lieutenant Colonel DiFiglia the aircraft commander, Colonel Donald G. Lepard, 14th Special Operations Wing deputy commander for special operations, Colonel J.B. Levesque, 14th SOW, deputy commander for materiel, Captain (Dr.) Robert W. Fields, 14th USAF dispensary, Captain Walter C. Booth, 20th SOS maintenance officer, Technical Sergeant Jesse C. Bowman, 20th SOS gunner, and Sergeant Antonio L. Alho, 20th SOS gunner. Also killed was Mr. Abb Greer, Bell Helicopter Company technical representative. Two additional crewmen were critically wounded.

(S) The investigating board determined that the crash sequence began at four to five thousand feet MSL when a severe vibration or beat was noted and autorotation initiated. During the descent and forced

landing, control of the aircraft was lost, causing subsequent destruction of the main rotor which in turn severed the tail boom. The board determined that the escalation of events from initial severe beat or vibration through the impact progressed to a point where aircraft control was impossible to maintain.[103] The board concluded that the chain of events began with the failure of the tail rotor which was possibly caused by hostile fire impacting on a critical component and causing an imbalanced condition or failure leading to the severe beat or vibration.

(U) Another loss occured on 3 January 1969, when UH1F #63-13164 was shot down near Duc Lap while attempting to rescue a special forces patrol. Sergeant Ronald P. Zenga was pinned under the aircraft and died in the ensuing fire.[104]

(U) Another UH-1F #64-15492, was shot down on 13 February while trying to suppress fire for rescue of a Special Forces patrol near Duc Co. The aircraft burst into flames but was landed without serious injury to the crew. The crew was rescued by another squadron aircraft.[105]

(U) Despite the severe losses documented above, morale remained high.

(U) However, the equipment condition was not so fortunate. Replacements in the past had been obtained by levying a demand on Straticic Air Command UH-1F inventories. This source of aircraft has been cut off.[106] Alternative sources, such as squadron aircraft assigned to Tan Son Nhut Air Base and Udron Air Base, Thailand, would not be available unless the squadron dropped its mission and commitments at these locations.

(U) As the aircraft losses added up, the crew training suffered in

direct proportion. As of the end of the quarter, it was difficult to conduct half of the airborne training considered to be minimal for upgrading pilots and gunners. Reduction of training requirements was not a feasible solution.[107] The extradordinary demands of the unit mission required instruction that cannot be simulated and cannot be taught in a classroom but must be provided under actual combat conditions and over the geography of South Vietnam.[108]

(U) During the reporting period the 20th SOS flew 5,064 hours and was programmed for 5,325 flying hours. The CH-3Cs were credited with 1,204 hours flown while the UH-1Fs flew 4,860 hours. During the quarter the unit flew 9,145 sorties, again with the UH-1Fs accounting for most of the effort with 7,526 sorties versus 1,619 for the CH-3Cs. The squadron flew 97.3 percent of its fragged sorties during the quarter.[109]

(U) The squadron expanded 886 thousand rounds of ammunition and 1,792 rockets and carried 15,482 passengers and 330 tons of cargo.[110]

(U) The 20th operating location at Tan Son Nhut accomplished 1,219 sorties, 391.0 flying hours and carried 2,713 passengers along with 27 tons of cargo with only two aircraft.[111]

(S) The 20th SOS at Udorn, RTAFB, Thailand, mission remained the same as last quarter with support for Tacan sites in and out of country receiving first priority. The second priority was support to special air warfare as sponsored by Controlled American Sources (CAS). The third priority was support of special air warfare training of U.S. Special Forces and civic action projects.[112]

(S) During the period 10-15 January, the squadron's Udorn Element provided primary airlift support for the emergency evacuation of tribesmen in Northern Laos who were in danger of being overrun by hostile enemy forces. The evacuation was carried out deep in an area that was surrounded by hostile enemy actions. The unarmed and unescorted helicopters were subject to possible ground fire throughout the entire evacuation route. The high altitude of the operating sites at 4,700 feet and the maximum gross weight take off's coupled with adverse weather conditions limited the CH-3 and UH-1 performance characteristics. The aircrews of the 20th SOS met the challenge in a highly professional manner, logging 230.9 flying hours, completing 539 sorties, transporting 115.1 tons of cargo and baggage and moving 5,107 passengers to a safe area 14 miles away.[113] During the whole operation, there was no loss of life or damage to aircraft.

(U) Emphasis in the Vietnam based elements' civic action program shifted from the Nha Trang area to the Central Highlands and small villages. Working in cooperation with the civic actions personnel of the Army Special Forces in the Ban Me Thuot area, the 20th initiated a program to supply essential medical and educational supplies to isolated mountain villages.

(U) In a more normal application of civic actions, the Udorn element accepted the Udorn community orphanage as a squadron project. Daily visits were made by members of the unit, during which they painted the interior and exterior of several buildings, exercised and entertained the children and donated large quantities of vitamins, diapers, sheets, mattress covers and sundry items such as Q-tips.

(U) During the quarter, men of the 20th SOS received two Purple Hearts, 16 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 32 Air Medals.[114]

(S) One member of the squadron, First Lieutenant James P. Fleming, was notified that he had been nominated for the Medal of Honor for an action that occurred 26 November 1968. He rescued a Special Forces patrol despite intense hostile fire and with complete disregard for his own personal safety. Lieutenant Fleming was reassigned to the United States pending action on the award.

(Security Classification - if classified) RCS: 5500

HISTORICAL DATA RECORD

REPORTING PERIOD		REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL
FROM: 1 Jan 69	TO: 31 Mar 69	AU-DS

FROM: (NAME AND LOCATION OF UNIT SUBMITTING THIS REPORT)
20th Special Operations Squadron
14th Special Operations Wing (PACAF)
APO San Francisco 96205

TO:
14th Special Operations Wing (DXI)

IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED FOR ANY ITEM, ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS INDICATING APPLICABLE ITEM NUMBER.

SECTION I — ASSIGNMENT

MAJOR AIR COMMAND	NUMBERED AIR FORCE	AIR DIVISION	WING	GROUP
PACAF	7th Air Force		14th Special Operations Wing	

SECTION II — SUBORDINATE UNITS

There are seven flights located at three operating locations. "A", "B", "C" flights are located at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. "D", "E", "F" and "G" flights are located at Nha Trang AB, RVN and Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN.

SECTION III — MISSIONS

A. PRIMARY
"A", "B", and "C" Flights - Support of [redacted] American [redacted] personnel, counterinsurgency, and utility transportation. "D", "E", "F" and "G" Flights - Unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, film courier, base defense, SAW training, logistical support of USAF units and US sponsored activities, psychological warfare.

B. SECONDARY (OR OTHER)
"A", "B" and "C" Flights - Rescue, utility and civic action.
"D", "E", and "F" Flights - Rescue, VIP courier, and utility.

SECTION IV — PERSONNEL

STATUS	OFFICERS	AIRMEN	CIVILIANS	TOTAL
ASSIGNED	71	199	1	271
AUTHORIZED	88	214	0	302
ATTACHED				

SECTION V — EQUIPMENT

A. AIRCRAFT
UH-1F - 19
CH-3C - 9

B. WEAPONS (INCLUDING MISSILES)
20 - 7.62 miniguns
12 - 2.75 Rocket Launchers
13 - M-60 Machine Guns

C. ELECTRONICS

D. OTHER
[redacted] Eyes [redacted]

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Interview of Lt Colonel David K. Sparks, Commander, 20th Special Operations Squadron by Captain Theodore C. Sharpe, Historian, 15 April 69	1. This interview covered the major problems encountered by the 20th during the reporting period.
2. 20th SOS, Supervisor of Flying Log Book.	2. Log Book, maintained by Supervisor of Flying, Nha Trang. Includes Aircraft movements and significant events.
3. Awards and Decorations Book, UH-1F missions.	3. Book lists awards and decorations of the 20th SOS. Location: Awards and Decorations desk, Nha Trang.
4. Interview of Major Rands, Civic Actions Officer, 20th SOS by Historian 5 April 69.	4. Interview covered the current Civic Actions program of the 20th SOS.
5. Hornet Log Book, for period of report.	5. This log is classified Confidential covers day to day operations at Ban Me Thuot. Location: Mission Commanders desk, Ban Me Thuot.
6. Report of Investigation, Loss of UH-1F, 26 March 69.	6. This report classified For Official Use Only. Location: Wing Commanders files, Nha Trang AB.
7. Historical Reports, Tan Son Nhut Location, 20th SOS for months of reporting period.	7. These reports are unclassified and located in the squadron Historical files Nha Trang.
8. Historical Reports, Udorn RTAFB, location, 20th SOS for period of this report. Compiled by Major Bruce L. Athon, Location Historical Officer	8. Reports are classified Secret, Location: 20th SOS Historical files Nha Trang.
9. The Recceregister, newspaper of Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, dated 7 Feb 69.	9. Article on Sergeant William F. Sharp-Airman of the Year.
10. Report of General Inspection of the 20th SOS 10-16 Feb 69.	10. This report of inspection in file at Wing Headquarters, Udorn ATAFB, Thailand.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (CONT'D)

11. Message classified Secret from American Embassy, Vientiane, Laos, to 20th SOS, dated 17 Jan 69	11. Attached
12. Letter classified Secret from Major General Royal N. Baker, Vice Commander, 7th Air Force to Major General Louis T. Seith, Deputy Commander, 7/13th Air Force; dated 21 January 69.	12. Attached
13. Letter classified Secret from Major General Louis T. Seith (supra) to Commander, 20th SOS, Udorn, undated.	13. Attached
14. Management and Trends Report, March 1969. 14th SOW, Nha Trang AB.	14. Report Sets Forth Operating statistics for 14th SOW. Location 20th SOS General File Nha Trang.

The 20th Special Operations Squadron - Nha Trang AB, RVN

1. There were no organizational changes to the structure of the 20th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) during the reporting period. On 26 March 1969 our commander, Lt Col Frank A. DiFiglia was killed in a helicopter crash. His untimely death and the causes are fully documented below. Lt Col David K. Sparks assumed command of the squadron.

2. During this reporting period the 20th SOS lost three aircraft to hostile fire and unknown causes. Five men lost their lives and two men were wounded. These accidents together with the loss of aircraft documented in the preceding reporting period have placed an unbearable burden on the 20th. Unbearable, because it has severely taxed the already limited resources of men and aircraft assigned. This problem is so acute that minor problems such as radio communications and maintenance delays pale in significance to this great loss of men and airplanes. Problems discussed in preceding reports for the most part remain unchanged. (1)

3. On 26 March UH-1F 63-13158 was enroute from Ban Me Thuot to Nha Trang with a total of ten persons on board. The aircraft crashed and burned near Duc My, some 12 minutes flying time north of Nha Trang Air Base. Of the ten persons on board 2 survived. Dead were Lt Col DiFiglia(supra) the aircraft commander, Colonel Donald G. Lepard, 14 Special Operations Wing Deputy Commander for Special Operations, Colonel J.B. Levesque, 14th SOW Deputy Commander for Materiel, Captain (Dr.) Robert W. Fields, 20th SOS Flight Surgeon, Captain Walter C. Booth, 20th SOS Maintenance Officer, Technical Sergeant Jesse C. Bowman, 20th SOS Gunner, and Sergeant Antonio L. Alho, 20th SOS gunner. Also dead was Mr. Abb Greer, Bell Helicopter Company Technical Representative. Critically wounded were Sergeants James P. O'Gorman and Joslin. The investigating board determined that the crash sequence began at 4 to 5 thousand feet MSL when a severe vibration or beat was noted and an autorotation initiated. During the descent and forced landing control of the aircraft was lost causing subsequent destruction of the main rotor which in turn severed the tail boom. The board determined that the escalation of events from initial severe beat or vibration through the impact progressed to a point where aircraft control was impossible to maintain. First the severe beat, then the uncontrollability, followed by the separation of aircraft access doors, subsequently the main rotor underwent violent stresses and severed the tail boom. The board concluded that the chain of events began with the catastrophic failure of the tail rotor which was possibly caused by hostile fire impacting on a critical component causing an unbalanced condition or failure leading to a severe beat or vibration. (2) (6)

4. On 3 January 1969, aircraft 63-13164 was shot down by hostile fire. The crash occured near Duc Lap. Sergeant Ronald P. Zenga was pinned under the aircraft and died in the ensuing fire. The crew, consisting of Major Paul E. McClellan, aircraft commander; Major Thomas M. Courtney, pilot, and Sergeants Jess P. Rowland and Zenga; were attempting to rescue a six man Special Force reconnaissance patrol. The patrol was in contact with an unknown sized enemy force and in danger of being encircled and overrun. After Green Hornet gunships had suppressed the enemy groundfire, a slick helicopter

attempted a McGuire Rig extraction only to encounter intense fire upon coming to a hover. The slick was heavily damaged and its radios knocked out. After taking eights hits the slick departed the area and again gunships suppressed the enemy fire. Major McClellan and crew then approached for a second attempted pickup. As they came to a hover above the trees enemy fire struck the fuel cells setting the aircraft on fire. They were able to accelerate the aircraft and attempted a landing in a small jungle clearing less than 500 meters from enemy forces surrounding the Special Forces patrol. The engine failed just short of the clearing and the helicopter crashed into the trees. Sergeant Zenga was pinned beneath the overturned aircraft, Major Courtney was knocked unconscious, and Sergeant Rowland was entangled in his harness. Major McClellan was able to get out of the wreckage and remove Major Courtney and Sergeant Rowland just prior to the aircraft bursting into flames. Another slick landed nearby and the crew of this aircraft assisted in rescuing the downed crew. (3)

5. On 13 February 1969, aircraft (UH-1F) 64-15492 was shot down by hostile ground fire near Duc Co. The crew was composed of Captain Ronald Andrews, Aircraft Commander; Major Ronald N. Guy, Pilot; and Technical Sergeant Jesse C. Bowman and A1C Isidro Arroyo, gunners. Again a Special Forces patrol was in contact with a large enemy force, and again the 20th SOS gunships came in to suppress the enemy fire long enough for the slick aircraft to extract the patrol. On the first gun pass, the aircraft was hit and immediately fuel fumes choked the crew. Within seconds the aircraft fuel tanks were in flames. Captain Andrews landed his flaming aircraft a scant kilometer away from the hostile forces. Again another 20th SOS Slick landed nearby and rescued the crew as the airplane went up in flames. (3)

6. Despite the severe losses documented above, the men of the 20th are dedicated to the mission. Morale remains high. However, our replacement aircraft have been obtained in the past by levying a demand on Strategic Air Command UH-1F inventories. This source of aircraft has been cut off. Alternative sources, such as aircraft assigned to Tan Son Nhut Air Base and Udorn Air Base, Thailand could be brought to Vietnam; but this would require us to drop our missions and commitements at these locations. No solution to this problem has yet been found. (1)

7. As out aircraft losses mount, crew training suffers in direct proportion. As of the end of this reporting period, it was difficult to conduct half of the airborne training considered to be minimal for upgrading pilots and gunners. Reduction of training requirements is not a feasible solution; as the extraordinary demands of this mission require instruction that cannot be simulated, cannot be taught in a classroom; but must be provided to men uder actual combat conditions and over the geography of South Vietnam. (1)

8. Emphasis in the squadrons civic action program has shifted from the Nha Trang area to the Central Highlands and small villages. Working in cooperation with the civic actions personnel of the Special Forces in the Ban Me Thuot area the 20th is initiating a program of supplying essential medical and educational supplies to isolated mountain villages. The ad-

vantage of rapid transportation and the far flung operations of the various operating locations of the 20th enable us to provide civic action teams with supplies that otherwise would be delayed or possibly never reach their intended recipients. (4)

9. During the reporting period men of the 20th SOS were awarded the following decorations: (3)

2 Purple Hearts
16 Distinguished Flying Crosses
32 Air Medals

10. On 1 March 1st Lt James P. Fleming was notified that he had been nominated for the Medal of Honor. On 26 Nov 1968 Lt Fleming had rescued a Special Forces patrol despite intense hostile fire and with complete disregard for his own personal safety. Lt Fleming has been reassigned to the CONUS pending receipt of this award and further details are not available at this time. (3)

11. During the reporting period the 20th SOS was credited with the following statistical record of accomplishments. These figures reflect all 20th SOS operations in Southeast Asia.

FLYING HOURS

	JAN	FEB	MAR
FLOWN	1718	1487	1859
PGMD	1775	1775	1775
CH-3C			
FLOWN	453	344	407
PGMD	500	500	500
UH-1F			
FLOWN	1265	1143	1452
PGMD	1275	1275	1275
GND ALRT HRS	6180	6180	6180

SORTIES/MISSION		JAN	FEB	MAR
		6.43	6.35	6.58
2	FRAGGED	485	453	515
O	FLOWN	477	434	505
T	% FLOWN	98	96	98
H	SORTIES FLOWN	3067	2755	3323
C	FRAGGED	45	51	65
H	FLOWN	45	51	65
3	% FLOWN	100	100	100
C	SORTIES	705	420	494

	JAN	FEB	MAR
U FRAGGED	440	402	450
H FLOWN	432	383	440
1 % FLOWN	98	95	98
F SORTIES	2362	2335	2829

ROUNDS EXPENDED

	JAN	FEB	MAR
THOUSANDS OF ROUNDS EXPENDED	347	309	230

ROCKETS EXPENDED

	JAN	FEB	MAR
NUMBER EXPENDED	593	744	454

PASSENGERS

	JAN	FEB	MAR
NUMBER	7837	3411	4234

CARGO

	JAN	FEB	MAR
TONS	120	112	98

(14)

12. The 20th SOS at Tan Son Nhut Air Base

Our operating location at Tan Son Nhut again compiled a record of accomplishment that a unit with twice the strength would envy. As in the past periods, the mission remained the transportation of intelligence film and VIP flights for 7th Air Force Staff. The two aircraft assigned flew 1,219 sorties, 391.0 hours, and carried 2,713 passengers along with 27 tons of cargo. In addition over 30 VIP flights were logged. (7)

11. The 20th SOS at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand

1. (S) The mission of the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Operating Location at Udorn RTAFB, remained the same during the period Jan - Mar 1969. No missions were flown over North Vietnam in support of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACSOG) due to the presidential restriction of 1 November 1968. Tacan site in and out of country support remained the first priority.

The second priority mission of support to Special Air Warfare as sponsored by Controlled American Sources (CAS). The third priority mission is support of Special Air Warfare training of U.S. Special Forces and Civic Action Projects. (S)

a. (S) Civic Actions: From 10 Jan 1969 to 15 Jan 1969 the 20th SOS provided primary airlift support for the emergency evacuation of tribesmen in Northern Laos. The emergency evacuation was ordered because high officials were concerned with the imminent danger of the area being overrun by hostile enemy forces. The evacuation was carried out deep in an area that was surrounded by hostile enemy actions. The unarmed and unescorted helicopters were subject to possible ground fire throughout the entire evacuation route. The high altitude of the operating sites (4700') and the maximum gross weight take off's coupled with adverse weather conditions limited the CH-3 and UH-1 performance characteristics. These adverse conditions and operations within a hostile environment including extremely precipitous terrain made the critical mission planning an utmost challenge to the slying skill and knowledge of each pilot. The aircrews of the 20th SOS met the challenge in a highly professional manner, logging 230.9 flying hours, completing 539 sorties, transporting 115.1 tons of cargo and baggage and moved 5,107 passengers to an area 14 miles away to escape enemy atrocities. Each day of the six day operation was hampered by morning fog. The nearest refueling location was Lima site 36, 27 miles to the south of the evacuation Lima site. It was highly congested with air traffic causing refueling delays and only limited fuel supply available for our use. This resulted in the loss of precious evacuation time already reduced by weather. To aleviate this problem, 20th SOS aircrews worked out a plan to transport fuel from home station to the operating location. Five drums of fuel per aircraft were moved to the evacuation deplaning site each day. The use of this fuel made it possible for our aircraft to extend their operating time transporting evacuees, resulting in a great saving of lives. The outstanding professional skill of all 20th SOS crew members made the emergency mission completely successful and without the loss of life or damage to aircraft.

2. The 20th SOS lost one CH-3 aircraft while supporting a Tacan site in Northern Laos on 17 January 1969. The Tacan site was located deep in a hostile area. Three crew members, Major Walter Martin; Aircraft Commander, Captain Richard A. Fleming; Co-pilot, and Albert J. Davis; Crew member, lost their lives in the crash and fire that immediately engulfed the aircraft. Three passengers also perished in the crash. Two crew chief's and one passenger survived the crash and were air evacuated to Clark AB for medical treatment. As of this date, a determination of the cause has not been received. (S)

3. (U) VIP Visits: Lt Col Frank A. DiFiglia, Commander of 20th SOS, Nha Trang arrived 16 Jan 69 for an orientation staff visit of this squadron. He was met by Lt Colonel Huff, 20th SOS (OLC). (S)

4. Colonel Collins, 14th Special Operations Group Commander and Colonel Allman, 14th Special Operations Wing Commander from Nha Trang arrived 19 Jan 69 to be briefed by Lt Colonel Huff concerning the aircraft loss. (S)

5. (C) Two UH-1 aircraft and crew members have been operating from Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, with daily support to Tacan CH-92. The Tacan site is being completely rebuilt. The Hueys slung an airconditioning system from the Tacan site to Ubon for reconditioning and then sling it back to the site. The airconditioning system weighed approximately 600 pounds. A large antenna was moved in 6-8 foot sections to the Tacan site. There is no firm projected date for completion of the Tacan site and daily support required by the UH-1 aircraft and crew members. Aircraft crew changes are scheduled once a week from Udorn to Ubon. (S)

a. (C) Maintenance report for January: January was a fairly good month considering the problems of 290 station cracks on CH-3E's 579, 692, 676, and 718 are still undergoing repair. This month was marked by two major occurances; on 18 January the maintenance section was relocated to the new area at the far end of the flight line. Some of the old buildings were relocated while awaiting the construction of a new 2400 Sq Ft concrete block building plus a 8900 Sq Ft hangar. These projects are scheduled for completion this year. The squadron benifitted by this move in that adequate parking space is now available for all aircraft. The unity of the maintenance complex was established by putting all office buildings in the same area. Pony Control (Maint Control of the 20th) was placed in the maintenance supervision office. The whole move was effected without incident, except for a slow response on the part of Base Civil Engineering to connect the power and the Comm Sqdn to connect the phones. This month was marred by the loss of Aircraft CH-3E 62-12582 on 17 January 1969. One CH-3E Aircraft broke 100 hours flying time this month, it was CH-3E 67-14721, which flew 102.6 hours. The recovery phase program is working very well. Manning status as of 31 January; 112 enlisted personnel authorized and 96 assigned, one officer authorized and one assigned. (S)

b. (C) Aircraft Maintenance Status for Jan 1969:

	CH-3	UH-1
OR RATE	72.1	97.1
A/C Utilization Rate	90.5	81.7
A/C Utilization Auth	65.	60.
A/C Possessed	5.	4.
OR Hours	3180.6	2890.7
Possessed Hr.	4412.0	2976.0
OR Aircraft	4.	4.
NORS	16.9	0.0
NORM	11.0	2.9

(S)

6. (S) The 20th Special Operations Squadron was involved in large scale infil operations on 17 Feb 1969. There were 18 helicopters and 14 fixed wing strike aircraft fragged to accomplish the mission. The mission was planned so that the ravin A/C, T-28's and A-1E's arrived over the target to strike it and insure the landing zone was sanitized prior to the arrival of the helicopters with 360 plus FAR and SGU assault force troops. Six of the 20th's helicopters (4 CH-3E and 2 UH-1F's) were involved in the successful mission. (S)

7. (U) One mission was fragged to sling a T-28 aircraft that made a forced landing in a rice field. The aircraft was approx. 10 miles west of Koke Kathiem RTAFB, Thailand. The engine, wings, horizontal and vertical stabilizers were removed from the T-28. The T-28 engine, weighing 2000 lbs, was slung to Koke Kathien RTAFB. The CH-3E returned to pick up the fuselage, wings, and tail sections weighing 4300 lbs. The wing and tail sections were loaded internally while the fuselage was slung with a low response sling to Koke Kathiem RTAFB. (S)

8. (S) Capt Belanger made an emergency landing in CH-3E 682 on the 17th Feb 69 in Laos approximately 23 miles southeast of NKP. He was returning from a combat mission when the master caution and the caution light for low transmission oil pressure light came on. The flight mechanics immediately advised the pilots over the intercom that there was an extremely bad oil leak around the main transmission. The oil was spraying all over the cabin of the CH-3E. Capt Belanger broadcasted his emergency condition to Pony Express 15, the lead ship, and stated he was making an emergency landing in the rice field immediately below. Captain Belanger made a beautiful landing at 1730L without damage to the aircraft. At the time of the touch down the transmission oil pressure was reading zero. The aircraft was shut down, secured, and the crew evacuated the aircraft to the waiting CH-3E, piloted by Major Chambers. This landing area was considered to be semi hostile. The appropriate notifications were made by Major Chambers to the controlling agency. The agency suggested that guards from the nearby SGU camp be airlifted to guard the downed aircraft. Major Chambers directed his flight to the SGU camp which took approximately ten minutes flying time. Six guards were requested to be immediately returned to the downed aircraft site because dusk was rapidly approaching. Maj Chambers' flight arrived back over the downed CH-3E at approximately 1825L with the guards. CH-3 682 was engulfed in flames and all that remained was the tail rotor and boom. The following morning, air strikes were called in approximately 1½ miles from where the CH-3 made the emergency landing. (S)

9. (U) Major Dale Eppinger, from the UH-1F standardization shop of 20th SOS, Nha Trang arrived here on 13 Feb 69. His staff visit included a review of records and standardization procedures. (S)

10. (U) VIP Visits: Colonel D.G. Lepard, Commander 14SOG, Lt Col F.A. DiFiglia, 20th SOS Cmdr, and Lt Col Sparks, the new 20th SOS Cmdr were at Udorn 20th SOS for an orientation staff visit from 3 thru 4 Feb 69. Colonel Bishop and Lt Col Batey from 7AF Plans and Programs Office discussed helicopter utilization and looked into our overall utilization for the past six

months. Lt Col Huff also briefed them on SOG/CAS and other missions activities in accordance with communication with Colonel Collins on 5 Feb 69. (8)

11. (U) Report of General Inspection of the 20th SOS from the 10-16 Feb 1969. OVERALL RATING: Satisfactory. The 20th SOS (Pony Express) was performing its classified mission in a very efficient and effective manner. The unit had received special recognition for an emergency evacuation of personnel and cargo during a special operation in Jan 69. All crew members were highly qualified and dedicated to getting the job accomplished. Maintenance was providing operations with quality aircraft in a timely manner. This unit was 84% manner, however, there was a manning problem in the proper AFSC's in the maintenance area. If this is not corrected, it will have an adverse effect on the units ability to perform its mission. Housekeeping was satisfactory in all areas. (10)

12. (U) Sgt William F. Sharp, 22, Mobile Ala, a helicopter crew chief with the 20th Special Operations Sq, has been named the Udorn First Term Airman of the Year for calendar year 1968. Sgt Sharp will now compete for the title of PACAF First Term Airman of the Year. He enlisted in the Air Force 25 Feb 66. After completing basic training at Lackland AFB, Tex, he was assigned to the helicopter mechanics course at Sheppard AFB, Tex, he graduated with honors. Sgt Sharp's first permanent duty assignment was with the 90th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (CAMS) at Francis E. Warren AFB Wyo. In Oct 67, he was assigned in a flying code status as a crew chief on a UH-1F helicopter. Soon after his assignement as crew chief he was also appointed a master crew chief, signifying a high in-commission rate and non-abort record of the aircraft assigned to him. In Jan, 1968 he was named Maintenance Man of the Month for the 90th CAMS and was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for his outstanding professional skill, knowledge, and leadership as a crew chief. (9)

13. (U) The maintenance report for Feb is as follows:

a. The 13thAF IG Team visited and gave maintenance an overall satisafctory with only three minor discrepancies noted.

b. Personnel status as of 28 Feb 69; 92 possessed, 112 authorized.

c. Aircraft 682 came out of IRAN 7 Feb 69. Acft was in very good shape as was found on the acceptance inspection. 718 came out of RAM 8 Feb 69 and began buildup with new gearbox and rotor head. Fuel leak found 9 Feb 69. Cell ordered and received on 25 Feb from depot. 13 Feb to 28 Feb 69 UH-1F 163 underwent a major overhaul of main rotor head, mast, transmission and engine change. The aircraft itself was gone over thoroughly, repaired and as necessary painted. 21 Feb 69 A/C CH-3E 63-9682 was logged as a combat loss. 692 came back from RAM Team. (8)

d. CH-3E 67-14721, had a time change on the main gear box (transmission) and main rotor head for excessive sleeve leaks. The crew completed the changeover in 2 days where normally 3½ days are required to do the job.

14. (S) Aircraft Maintenance Status for Feb 69:

	CH-3E	UH-1F
OR Rate	82.2	83.6
A/C Utilization	63.9	63.7 hrs per A/C
A/C Util Auth	65	60 hrs per A/C
A/C possessed	5.5	4.0
Possessed A/C hrs	3700	2688
NORS	11.3	4.4
NORM	6.5	12.0
NOR	17.8	16.4

(8)

15. (S) On 1 Mar 69, two UH-1F crews were supporting CH-72 in Laos when they heard a mayday distress call from an Army OV-1 aircraft. The Army aircraft was on a visual recon/photo mission over southern Laos when the trail aircraft was hit by antiaircraft fire. The Army crew made an attempt to reach Saravan, however the crew was forced to eject when it became apparent they could no longer maintain altitude and were dropping below the level of the nearby hills. The lead aircraft remained over the downed crew and transmitted directions to the two UH-1F helicopters piloted by Capt James, Capt Harkness, and Major Bunn and Major McClellan. At 0330Z the two UH-1Fs arrived over the area where the crew went down. Capt James and his crew consisting of Capt Harkness as copilot and SSgt Adams as crew chief and Sgt Lloyd as mechanic made the rescue of the two downed Army fliers. While on the ground, the Army crew heard voices and gunfire from nearby. The sister Army ship fired numerous 2.75 rockets in an attempt to prevent the ground forces from capturing the downed crewmembers who had been forced to flee their would be captors. The downed crew was located and a successful rescue was accomplished even though the UH-1F was under heavy and constant enemy ground fire from small arms and a nearby .50 caliber automatic weapon. The rapid action and heroic effort of the "Pony Express" crew saved the downed Army fliers from certain death or capture. This was another outstanding show of professional flying skill and extreme bravery in the face of heavy enemy fire, by the Pony Express crews. (8)

16. (S) Our Controlled American Sources (CAS) missions increased 61% over the previous months fragged missions. This increased activity is expected to continue through next month. For the first time since the bombing halt on 1 Nov 68, we were fragged on 4 SOG missions to support the 21st Helicopter Sq at NKP. Two of these missions were cancelled by the Customer and two missions were completed. These missions were conducted in Laos, in a very hostile environment. (8)

17. (S) On a recent TACAN support mission into Northern Laos, our pilots learned through a radio position report that CH-92 and Lima site 36 were under enemy attack. Our aircraft were approximately 40 miles from their destination when they learned of the attack. The ponies immediately returned to a neutral landing site for further intelligence reports. It was determined that Lima site and TACAN site had been lost to the enemy. Our aircraft returned to home station without further incident. (8)

18. (S) The 20th SOS took part in a CAS mission on 25 Mar 69 that involved 18 helicopters being utilized to infil 230 SGU assault force troops. The infil was successful, however, the planned exfil time was delayed by the controlling agency for operational reasons. During the exfil our aircraft came under heavy ground fire on their final approach into the HLZ. Three of our CH-3Es and one of our UH-1Fs received battle damage. Major Donald Berger received wounds in the right leg and Lt Col Cason received an injury to his hand from fragments of the aircraft. Major Berger was the aircraft commander and flight leader on the ill-fated aircraft in which he received the leg wound. Lt Col MacQuarrie, the copilot immediately took over control of the aircraft and the flight and successfully led the flight back to NKP. One of our CH-3Es piloted by Major Ray Hoff received 15 bullet holes that resulted in the loss of an engine. The ground fire was received at approximately 750' as the choppers turned to final. The exfil was immediately aborted until the area could be sanitized. Of the 10 USAF helicopters in the formation, 6 aircraft received battle damage. (8)

19. (U) VIP operations: On 10 March, Major General Louis T. Seith, Deputy Commander 7/13AF Udorn RTAFB, Thailand was transported by a CH-3E Pony Express helicopter to Sakon Nakhon, Thailand, and returned to Udorn RTAFB. On 22 March, one of our Pony Express UH-1F helicopters transported Minister Hanana and Consolate Mr. Francis. (8)

20. (U) VIP Visits: Colonel D.G. Lepard, Deputy Commander, 14 SOW, Lt Col F.A. DiFiglia, 20th SOS Commander, Colonel Levesque, Director of Maintenance, 14 SOW, Lt Col Sparks, 20th SOS Deputy Commander were here on the 18th of March to discuss helicopter operations. The VIPs were also hosted at a Pony Express party to honor departing and newly arrived "Ponies". Departing Commander Lt Col Wilbur C. Huff turned over control of the Pony Express operations to the new commander, Lt Col Ernest L. MacQuarrie. (8)

21. (S) Lt Col MacQuarrie has established three projects to improve the Pony Express performance and expand our operations:

a. The first project is a weight reduction of our CH-3E helicopters to provide our crew members with better aircraft performance which is greatly needed with the hot temperatures and high density altitudes we are required to work with. Along with the weight reduction program, improved crew protection from ground fire is being studied.

b. The second project is to study tactics and methods to improve existing tactics. This committee will run the complete spectrum of aircraft handling to procedures for infil/exfil operations.

c. The third and most sensitive project will deal with a proposed night covert operation. This project could develop into vast expansion of the Pony Express operation. (S)

22. (U) A 7AF IG Inspection of the 20thSOS Udorn RTAFB, Thai was conducted 3 March 1969. The overall evaluation was satisfactory. The 20th Special Operations Squadron was satisfactorily performing its assigned mission. However, increased emphasis on housekeeping in the troop housing was indicated. The administration section requires a concentrated effort by the TRANSEC Officer to improve the TRANSEC Program. Operations was satisfactory; however, increased control to insure crew members read the CIFs was indicated. Maintenance was satisfactory, however, management emphasis was required in the areas of Tech Orders, Publications, Supply, and DD 780 equipment. (S)

23. (U) The maintenance report for March is as follows:

a. Mr. C. Fowler, the Sikorsky tech rep, departed for the United States on 3 March 69. Mr. C. Fowler was replaced by Mr. Bruce Parsons who moved from NKP to Udorn.

b. Mr. M. Dimitrakis, the General Electric representative for engines, departed 15 Mar 69 and was replaced by Mr. George Arvanites.

c. Forms documentation errors dropped from 13.2% in Feb to 3.7% for March. TCTO kits for cockpit armor plate, and interim fuel dump kits arrived this month. CH-3E 681 is the only remaining aircraft that does not have the fuel dumping system installed. CH-3E 681 returned from IRAN in good mechanical condition and CH-3E 579 was placed in IRAN on 21 Mar 69. (S)

24. (S) Aircraft Maintenance status for March:

	CH-3E	UH-1F	
OR Rate	76.9	88.4	
A/C Utilization Rate	81.4	65	Hours per A/C
A/C Utilization Rate Authorized	65	60	Hours per A/C
A/C Possessed	5	4	
Possessed A/C Hours	4005	2976	
NORS	10.1	1.2	
NORM	13.0	10.4	

(S)

25. Civic Actions During the reporting period the 20th accepted the Udorn community orphanage as a squadron civic action project. The support of the orphanage consisted of daily visits by squadron members during which they painted the interior and exterior of several buildings, exercised and entertained the children, and donated large quantities of vitamins, diapers, sheets, matress covers, and sundry items such as Q-tips.

26. (S) Udorn Statistics 1 January - 31 March 1969.

Mission Type	Hours CH-3E	Hours UH-1F	Total	Sorties CH-3E	Sorties UH-1F	Total	Passengers CH-3E	Passengers UH-1F	Total	Cargo CH-3E	Cargo UH-1F	Total
Tacan	361.5	616.3	977.8	447	547	994	1198	580	2778	174167	54880	129,047
CAS	417.9	125.5	543.3	440	96	536	1225	99	1324	30187	3850	34,037
Other	328.6	64.0	392.6	233	187	420	5555	366	5921	249,327	21098	270,425
Training	25.8	17.9	43.7	33	15	48						
FCF	50.4	18.0	68.4	79	26	105						
MAG SOG	15.0	0.0	15.0	11	0	11						
Total	1209.2	841.7	2050.9	1623	871	2494	7980	1401	9981			

Combat Hours	CH-3E	UH-1F	Total
	915.2	635.2	1550.4
Combat Sorties	1216	585	1801

[redacted]

[redacted]

RESERVED FOR COMMUNICATION CENTER

JOINT MESSAGEFORM

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

	PRIORITY	ROUTINE	IMMEDIATE	FLASH
TYPE MSG			X	

PRECEDENCE

ACTION Routine

INFO

DTG 17/0610Z JAN 69

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

FROM: DEP CMDR 7/13AF UDORN AFLD THAILAND

TO: 20 SOS (CLAB) UDORN AFLD THAILAND (MESSENGER)

20 SOS NHA TRANG AB VIETNAM

S E C R E T EO. Subj: Favorable Communication. For Lt Col Wilbur C. Huff.

1. The following msg from Amemb, Vientiane DTG 160511Z Jan 69 is quoted for your edification. Quote: For Gen Brown and General Smith. Subj: USAF airlift of MEO refugees.

2. Wish to express my deep appreciation to you both for your cooperation in making USAF helicopters available for six days to help lift to safety more than seven thousand MEO refugees from [redacted] area in North East Laos. Your action avoided their certain capture by NVN/PL troops in the area.

3. Please convey to the Commander of the 20th Special Operations Squadron at Udorn our appreciation and admiration as well for the professional and effective manner in which this risky operation was carried out to its successful conclusion.

4. Best Regards. Gp-1 Hurwitch. Unquote.

DATE: 17 | TIME:

MONTH: JAN | YEAR: 69

PAGE NO. | NO. OF PAGES

RELEASER

TYPED NAME AND TITLE: Lt Col Casem/jgs

PHONE: [redacted]

SIGNATURE:

TYPED NAME AND TITLE: [redacted] Major General, USAF

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: SECRET

RELEASING INSTRUCTIONS: 69-[redacted]

AFCIN-2

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 173

REPLACES EDITION OF 1 MAY 65 WHICH MAY BE USED

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1966 [illegible]

ABBREVIATED JOINT MESSAGEFORM
and/or CONTINUATION SHEET

SECRET

PRECEDENCE	RELEASED BY	DRAFTED BY	PHONE
ACTION			
INFO			

2. In addition to the laudatory comments presented by Mr. Hurwitch, I wish to extend my personal commendation to you and each member of your command for the efficient and professional manner in which this difficult mission was accomplished. This outstanding dedication to duty and professional airmanship reflects most favorably on your unit and the United States Air Force. Congratulations on a job well done. General Seith. Gp-1

CONTROL NO.	TOR/TOD	PAGE NO.	NO. OF PAGES	MESSAGE IDENTIFICATION	INITIALS
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DD FORM 1 NOV 63 173-1 REPLACES EDITION OF 1 MAY 55 WHICH MAY BE USED. 201569-063

Atch 2

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS SEVENTH AIR FORCE (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307

OFFICE OF
THE VICE COMMANDER

21 JAN 1969

Maj Gen Louis T. Seith
Deputy Commander
7/13 Air Force
APO San Francisco 96237

Dear Ted:

(S) I have received recently a message of appreciation from the American Embassy, Vientiane commending the 20th Special Operations Squadron for the helicopter airlift of several thousand Meo refugees to safety. Records here indicate that this squadron flew almost 400 sorties, over 200 hours of flying time, with an average of 5 possessed aircraft during the week of this operation.

(U) I would like to add my congratulations to those expressed by Mr. Hurwitch for the outstanding professionalism exhibited by the officers and airmen of the 20th Special Operations Squadron. Please convey my personal thanks to the squadron commander, his aircrews, and airmen.

Sincerely,

Royal N. Baker

ROYAL N. BAKER, Major General, USAF
Vice Commander

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS,
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

~~SECRET~~

DOCT-69-S-0239
~~69-104~~ Atch 2B
20HS 69-063.

[redacted]

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS DEPUTY COMMANDER
SEVENTH AIR FORCE/THIRTEENTH AIR FORCE, THAILAND (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96237

REPLY TO ATTN OF: DC

SUBJECT: Favorable Communication

TO: Commander
Det OLAB, 20 Specl Ops Sq (PACAF)
APO San Francisco 96237

It is indeed a pleasure to forward to you the attached laudatory letter from General Baker concerning recent operations conducted by the 20 th Special Operations Squadron.

Other favorable communications regarding this operation were sent to you on 17 January 1969, however, I would like to add my congratulations to those presented by General Baker. This outstanding performance of duty was highly instrumental in assuring the success of our mission objectives in Southeast Asia. Please pass to all concerned my sincere appreciation for displaying such professional airmanship and dedication to duty.

Upon removal of attachment 1, this letter becomes unclassified.

LOUIS T. SEITH, Major General, USAF
Deputy Commander

1 ATCH:
Ltr fm Maj Gen R.N. Baker dtd
21 Jan 1969 (S)

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years
DODS69-063
69-104

Atch #3
DOSA 69-004

[redacted]

(U) As part of its civic action program the squadron contributed several boxes of clothes to the Vinh Son Orphanage and collected $249.50 for the base "Dollars for Scholars" project. The unit was also involved in a project to modernize and improve living conditions in the Binh Gang Convent. Two wells were cleaned and deepened and improvements were being made in electrical wiring and plumbing.

20TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON

(U) The 20th Special Operations Squadron's mission was apportioned among its various flights. "A", "B", and "C" Flights provided support for Controlled American Sources (CAS) personnel and performed counterinsurgency operations and utility transportation. "D", "E", "F", and "G" Flights performed missions in the areas of unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, film courier, base defense, special warfare training, logistical support of USAF units and U.S. sponsored activities and psychological warfare.

(U) Secondary missions included rescue, VIP courier and civic action.

(U) During the quarter the squadron lost three UH-1F helicopters to hostile fire and a major aircraft accident. One man lost his life and one was wounded. The loss of aircraft during this and previous reporting periods placed an unbearable burden on the 20th. A 10-day partial stand-down period was conducted in May to preclude the squadron from running out of trained personnel.[137]

NHA TRANG AB, RVN

(C) On 13 April, a UH-1F, 65-7937, was lost when Captain Johnson was wounded and Captain Lynch was killed by enemy ground fire. On 21 April, UH-1F 63-13152 was shot down while attempting to extract a reconnaissance team. All of the crew members and the team were rescued after a prolonged battle. On 1[illegible] May, UH-1F 63-13151 was lost due to a fuel control malfunction which may have been caused by fuel contamination. A major aircraft accident resulted, and the aircraft was brought back to Nha Trang and stripped of useable parts. Since 26 November 1968 eight UH-1Fs and two CH-3Es have been lost.[138]

(U) Base Personnel helped to alleviate the shortage of pilots by moving pilots up in the pipeline to make them arrive in country sooner than originally planned. Some gunners were obtained from Spooky and Shadow operations.[139]

(C) In the maintenance section, the primary problems were malfunctioning fuel controls and a shortage of Speed Decreaser Gearboxes (SDG). The former problem was attributed to fuel contamination, and a program to change fuel filters more often was instituted. At the end of the reporting period the supply of SDG's was still short. Undermanning was a problem, but not a critical one.[140]

(U) Four aircraft arrived at Nha Trang AB this reporting period, which brought the local resources to a more suitable level. Two came from SAC Missile Support in the States and two from the 20th SOS detachment at Udorn, Thailand.[141]

(U) Maintenance performed an outstanding job despite shortage of aircraft and heavy flying schedule during the quarter.

(U) During the reporting period the 20th SOS flew 5,170.9 hours and was programmed for 5,325 flying hours. The CH-3Cs were credited with 1,152.8 hours flown while the UH-1Fs flew 4,018.1 hours. During the quarter the unit flew 8,716 sorties, again with the UH-1Fs accounting for most of the effort with 7,463 sorties versus 1,253 for the CH-3Cs. The squadron flew 99.6 per cent of its fragged missions during the quarter.

(U) The squadron expended 1,033,455 rounds of ammunition and 1,939 rockets and carried 9,806 passengers and 250.8 tons of cargo.

(U) The 20th's operating location at Tan Son Nhut flew 1,416 sorties totaling 460.6 flying hours and carried 2,818 passengers and 28.1 tons of cargo during the quarter using only two aircraft.

(S) The mission of the squadron's operating location at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, remained the same as last quarter, with support for Tacan sites in and out of country receiving first priority. The second priority was support to special air warfare as sponsored by Controlled American Sources (CAS). The third priority was support of special air warfare training of U.S. Special Forces and civic action projects.

(U) Lieutenant Colonel Theodore D. Silva replaced Lieutenant Colonel E.L. MacQuarrie as OLAB commander on 17 June.

(S) Only two of the eight Pony Express rescue CH-3Es were equipped with the SEAOR 43 Hoist. Acquisition of this hoist for the remaining aircraft was requested, since it would increase their capabilities by giving them 240 feet of usable cable versus 135 feet.[142]

(U) The Pony Express maintenance section was relocated to the forward edge of pad 10, in order that sufficient space would be available at the back portion of the pad for the construction of a new hangar. The temporary maintenance buildings limited the operating space required to do helicopter maintenance.[143]

(S) A review of manpower requirements was conducted this quarter before the consolidation of the CH-3Es in Thailand. The review indicated a savings of approximately 39 spaces, of which a minimum of 14 were highly skilled helicopter aircrew members. Approval of the consolidation was expected.[144]

(S) Two UH-1Fs were transferred back to Nha Trang on 28 June. The squadron at Udorn now has two UH-1Fs and five pilots to man the helicopters. The two remaining UH-1Fs were expected to remain at Udorn until approximately 1 September at which time they are expected to be transferred to Nha Trang.[145]

(U) During this quarter the squadron continued its efforts at the Udorn Community Orphanage by putting plywood in one room. The paneling was painted by the same crew in their off-duty time. Squadron members also donated about 35 hours of their time playing with the children of the orphanage. They also donated soap, liquid

vitamins, baby cl s, plastic pants, crib sheets, and pads to the children. Affton istian Church of Affton, Missouri, sent Captain Berger of the squa n six boxes of clothes and shoes for the McKean Leprosy Hospital, ing Mai, Thailand.

(U) During the quarter, men of the 20th SOS rec iv d one Silver Star, 15 Distinguished Flying Crosses, five Bron z Star Medals, 139 Air Medals, eight Purple Hearts, and two Air Force Commendation Medals.

FC: 5300

HISTORICAL DATA RECORD	REPORTING PERIOD FROM	TO	REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL
	1 APR 69	30 JUN 69	AU-D5

FROM: (NAME AND LOCATION OF UNIT SUBMITTING THIS REPORT)	TO:
20th Special Operations Squadron 14th Special Operations Wing APO San Francisco 96205	14th Special Operations Wing (DXI)

IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED FOR ANY ITEM, ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS INDICATING APPLICABLE ITEM NUMBER.

SECTION I — ASSIGNMENT

MAJOR AIR COMMAND	NUMBERED AIR FORCE	AIR DIVISION	WING	GROUP
PACAF	7th Air Force		14th Special Operations Wing	

SECTION II — SUBORDINATE UNITS

There are seven flights located at three operating locations. A, B, and C flights are located at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. D, E, F, and G flights are located at Nha Trang AB, RVN and Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN.

SECTION III — MISSIONS

A. PRIMARY

A, B, and C flights: Support of Controlled American Sources (CAS) personnel, counterinsurgency, and utility transportation. D, E, F, and G flights: Unconventional warfare, reconnaisance, film courier, base defense, SAW training, psychological warfare, and logistical support of USAF units and US-sponsored activities.

B. SECONDARY (OR OTHER)

A, B, and C flights: Rescue, utility, and civic action.
D, E, F, and G flights: Rescue, VIP courier, and utility.

SECTION IV — PERSONNEL

STATUS	OFFICERS	AIRMEN	CIVILIANS	TOTAL
ASSIGNED	102	193	2	297
AUTHORIZED	88	235	1	324
ATTACHED	1	-	-	1

SECTION V — EQUIPMENT

A. AIRCRAFT

UH-1F 19
CH-3E 6

B. WEAPONS (INCLUDING MISSILES)

Mini-Guns (7.62mm.) 13
M-60 (7.62mm.) 9
Rocket Launchers 16

C. ELECTRONICS

D. OTHER

[redacted]

[redacted] [redacted]

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

[redacted] AIR FORCE EYES ONLY

1. Interview of Lt Colonel David K. Sparks, Commander, 20th Special Operations Squadron by 20th SOS Historical Officer, 3 July 1969.	1. This interview covered the major problems encountered by the 20th, including aircraft losses, during the reporting period.
2. Awards and Decorations files, UH-1F missions.	2. Narratives and records of awards of 20th SOS; location Awards and Decorations section, 20th SOS.
3. Interview of Major Rands, Squadron Civic Actions Officer, by Historical Officer, 6 July 1969	3. Discussed current Civic Actions program of 20th SOS.
4. Historical Reports, Tan Son Nhut Location, 20th SOS for April, May, June 1969.	4. These reports are unclassified and located in the Squadron historical file, Nha Trang AB.
5. Historical Reports, Udorn RTAFB location 20th SOS for the reporting period. Compiled by Major Bruce L. Anthon, location Historical Officer.	5. These reports are classified Secret. Location: 20th SOS historical files, Nha Trang AB.
6. Management and Trends reports: April, May, and June 1969, 20 SOS Nha Trang AB.	6. Statistical operating report for 20th SOS. Location: 20th SOS General File, Nha Trang AB, RVN.
7. Interview of Lt Moulton, 20th SOS Maintenance Officer By Historical Officer, 3 July 1969.	7. This interview covered problems and data from the maintenance department.

[redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] EYES ONLY

The 20th Special Operations Squadron - Nha Trang AB, RVN

(U) 1. There were no organizational changes to the structure of the 20th SOS during the reporting period.

(S) 2. During the period from 1 April 1969 to 30 June 1969 three UH-1F helicopters were lost. On 13 April 1969 aircraft No. 65-7937 was lost when Captain Johnson was wounded and Captain Lynch was killed by enemy ground fire. On 21 April 1969 aircraft No. 63-13152 was shot down while attempting to extract a reconnaissance team. All crew members and the team were rescued after a prolonged battle. On 19 May 1969 aircraft No. 63-13151 was lost due to a fuel control malfunction which may have been caused by fuel contamination. A major aircraft accident resulted, and the aircraft was brought back to Nha Trang to be stripped of usable parts. Since 26 November 1968 eight UH-1F's and two CH-3E's have been lost. (1)

(S) 3. Due to the loss of aircraft and untimely loss of personnel, it became evident that the squadron would run out of trained personnel and would have to curtail operations or stand down for a training period. Fortunately a 10-day partial stand-down for training was obtained in May and much was accomplished during this time. Personnel losses other than the noted combat losses were due to emergency leave, one Medal of Honor candidate, and PCS moves. During the month of June, six pilots, all flight examiners and/or instructor pilot qualified, finished their combat tours. (1)

(U) 4. The shortage of pilots has been alleviated greatly by CBPO moving up pilots in the pipeline to make them arrive in country sooner than originally planned. We have also been able to obtain some gunners from the "Spooky" and "Shadow" operations. (1)

(S) 5. In the maintenance section, the primary problems have been malfunctioning fuel controls and a shortage of Speed Decreaser Gearboxes (SDG). The former problem is attributed to fuel contamination, and a program to change fuel filters more often has been instituted. The supply of SDG's is still short. Undermanning has also been a problem, but it is not a critical one, according to the maintenance officer, Lt. Moulton. (7)

(U) 6. In the early part of May two aircraft arrived from SAC missile support in the States, and in late June two aircraft from the 20th SOS detachment at Udorn were brought to Nha Trang, thus bringing the local resources to a more suitable level. (7)

(U) 7. We must recognize the outstanding job done by maintenance during the reporting period, especially since there was a shortage of aircraft and a heavy flying commitment during most of this time. (1)

[redacted] [redacted]

[redacted] EYES ONLY

(S) 8. The 20th Special Operations Squadron has encountered some of its heaviest fighting during the months of April and May, as is evidenced by the quantity of awards submitted by our Awards and Decorations section. Some of the more significant incidents are as follows:

(C) 9 April 1969: A Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol was pinned down by enemy small arms and mortar fire. The team was located and a pair of gunships went down to tree-top level to attack the enemy positions. The left mini-gun on Gun 2 malfunctioned after the first pass. Rocket passes were initiated followed by more mini-gun passes. The gunships then flew a few dry passes to check for additional ground fire. Receiving none, they cleared the slick in to pick up the team. This was successfully accomplished, even though the team had to move about 75 yards to get to a suitable landing zone. Two of the team members had been wounded by the mortar attack. There were nine confirmed enemy killed by the gunships, and the team killed an additional four. Enemy strength was estimated at twenty to forty.

(S) 12 April 1969: Operating out of Duc Co, the fleet had re-supplied one reconnaissance team and extracted another when they were informed that a third team was in contact with enemy forces. Gunships 3 and 4 located the team and set up rocket and mini-gun passes, attempting to drive off or kill the enemy. Gun 4's left gun jammed on the first pass and was inoperative during the rest of the 40-minute fire fight despite the gunner's attempts to put it back in commission. The left gunner provided what cover he could with his M-16. After 35 minutes Gun 4 ran out of ammunition and both gunners reverted to using their M-16's,--not really an adequate weapon for the situation, but better than no weapon at all. Guns 1 and 2 arrived to replace 3 and 4. Slick 2 had made two attempts to pick up the team during this time, but had been driven off by ground fire. Guns 3 and 4 and Slick 2 returned for fuel. Later Slick 4 also returned for fuel while guns 1 and 2 kept up the fight. Finally Slick 3 was able to pick up the team, despite ground fire during approach to the LZ, pickup, and departure. Gun 4 received two hits, one in the main rotor and one glancing off the pilot's attitude gyro in the engine compartment. Gun 3 sustained two hits, one in the main rotor, and one striking but not penetrating the co-pilot's seat. It might be noted that those armored seats really work.

(S) 13 April 1969: This was the second mission of the day, consisting of extracting a reconnaissance team, and was a cold mission until after the team was picked up. A few seconds after pick-up, Gun 2 received ground fire which killed the co-pilot, Captain Lynch, and seriously wounded the aircraft commander, Captain Johnson, in the left leg. Captain Johnson landed the craft in a nearby clearing, even though he was nearly unconscious from loss of blood. Slick lead and Slick 2 rescued the crew and took them to Pleiku hospital. The aircraft had to be destroyed.

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(¢) 17 April 1969: A somewhat inexperienced reconnaissance team had come in contact with enemy forces and had requested an exfiltration. The clearing they were near was not adequate for the helicopter to land, and the team was requested to move to a suitable landing zone. Due possibly to their inexperience, they could not be persuaded to move for nearly an hour. During this time Guns 1 and 2 provided protective fire power to the point of running out of mini-gun ammunition and rockets and resorting to M-16's until relieved by Guns 3 and 4. Eventually the team was persuaded to move to the nearby landing zone and were subsequently rescued. One enemy was confirmed killed by the gunships.

(¢) 21 April 1969: A reconnaissance team had come in contact with a large enemy force very close to the enemy base camp. They had had no water for the past 36 hours and were in very poor physical shape. The team leader had difficulty speaking on the radio due to his dehydrated state. After many passes by the gunships, an attempt to extract the team was made. During the attempt the slick was shot down. Army gun birds were able to assist in suppressing the enemy while the Air Force gun birds went back to re-arm and refuel. It was necessary to refuel and re-arm many times, since the gun fight lasted from approximately 1135 to 1900 before three Army Light Observation Helicopters, "Loaches" by nickname, were able to rescue all eleven people on the ground. Well over 200,000 rounds of mini-gun ammunition and 500 2.75-inch rockets were expended on this rescue operation. This is a very inadequate description of the true action, which would require many pages to accurately report the fine performance of nearly every person involved in the operation. To appreciate what actually happened, one must read the individual write-ups of the crew members.

(¢) 6 May 1969: An eleven-man reconnaissance team was completely surrounded by enemy forces. 20th SOS gunships provided suppression fire, and they encountered moderate ground fire. At times during the gun fight all four mini-guns were out of commission, and the gunships were forced to make dry passes over the enemy. One of the gunners was able to fire an M-79 grenade launcher and thereby keep the enemy under fire. With some of the guns back in operation, the fight was resumed. The team on the ground reported that at least one enemy had been wounded, judging by screams heard. One of the team members was wounded, and Slick 2 landed to pick up the wounded man plus four team members, even though ground fire had not been fully suppressed. Slick lead was able to rescue the rest of the team when Slick 2 departed the landing zone. The wounded man died six to eight minutes after being rescued.

(¢) 7 May 1969: A reconnaissance team was in contact with the enemy to the north, east, and south. Gunships strafed enemy positions with rockets and mini-guns, and, after a few passes, flew a dry pass to check for ground fire. The enemy fired at the gunships on their dry passes, and the gunships resumed the fire fight. On dry runs a few minutes later

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there was no ground fire received, and the slick was called in to extract the team. This was done successfully with the slick hovering two feet above the ground due to stumps and logs in the landing zone. Ground fire was again encountered while departing the LZ, but there were no hits scored.

(S) 8 May 1969: Again a reconnaissance team was in contact with a superior-size enemy force and requested rescue. The gunships began their firing passes, and on the third pass Gun 2 aircraft commander was hit in the leg by shrapnel from a bullet that had hit the bottom of his armored seat. Not knowing the extent of his wound, Captain Byers gave his co-pilot control of the aircraft and took over copilot duties himself, monitoring engine instruments and keeping the team in sight. He ordered his crew to continue the attack. In due time, the slick was able to enter the landing zone and successfully remove the team, even though ground fire had been observed during the approach to the clearing.

(C) 12 May 1969: A reconnaissance patrol came in contact with enemy soldiers and could not elude them. Rescue was requested, and the gunships were able to force the enemy to abandon pursuit of the team. The team was subsequently picked up by the slick and returned to the Forward Operating Location.

(C) 13 May 1969: This was nearly a duplicate of the previous day's activity, with the same result that the team was rescued from an enemy force of superior strength and returned to their base.

(S) 21 May 1969: Guns 1 and 2 were launched to support exfiltration of a team in contact with the enemy on three sides. The gunships located the team about 30 minutes prior to the arrival of the FAC and slicks and set up defensive fire for the team. During the fight, both aircraft were hit by ground fire. Both guns on Gun 2 went out of commission, as did Gun lead's left mini-gun. When the slicks and the FAC arrived, the team was rescued under the protective cover of one mini-gun and three M-16's.

(C) 22 May 1969: Gunships again supplied suppression fire against the enemy for a reconnaissance team, and, as the slick went in for the pick-up, both gunships used up the final rounds of their combined 18,000-round load and supplied cover for the remainder of the extraction with their personal weapons.

(S) 23 May 1969: A reconnaissance team well into enemy territory reproted they had captured a POW (it later turned out they had captured two) and desired to be brought back to their FOL. Upon arrival at the pick-up area there was no ground fire, but the clearing was not satisfactory for a landing. Rope ladders were deployed, and the team came aboard. As the slick, an Army UH-1H, attempted to leave the clearing it either received ground fire or had inadequate power to climb with its 13-man load. It struck trees and crashed on its side, pinning and killing three under the wreckage, --one American, one indigenous team member, and one of the POW's. Slick 2 dropped off its medic and was forced to depart the area due to ground fire and numerous hits on the aircraft. Gun 3 hovered near the crash site and lowered a PRC-25 radio on a gunner's belt. Slick 3

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attempted to rescue some of those on the ground but was driven away when one of their gunners was wounded. After refueling and re-arming, Guns 3 and 4 returned and saturated hostile positions with rockets. Army slicks evacuated some of the downed people under Army gunbird coverage, and the 20th SOS gunbirds provided cover for a med-evac helicopter which was receiving ground fire while hoisting out a wounded man. Eventually all living personnel were evacuated, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to destroy the aircraft. Needless to say, this is a much abbreviated account of the action.

(C) NOTE: Slick helicopters refferred to in accounts of 21 through 23 May were Army UH-1H's filling in for our own slicks which were being utilized for much-needed training flights in the Nha Trang area.

(C) 7 June 1969: At approximately 0230, Ban Me Thuot-East came under heavy rocket and mortar attack. The four gunships were launched and attacked the enemy positions. The fight lasted about four hours, during which time it was necessary to land and take on fuel at Ban Me Thuot City, even though it too was under attack. With the help of the helicopters, the attack was repulsed. Evidence was found later that morning that the enemy had suffered many dead and wounded. Before withdrawing, the enemy had destroyed two buildings, some barracks, and killed three indigenous personnel in the Special Forces camp. (2)

(U) 9. CIVIC ACTIONS: The work of the 20th SOS brings our men into contact with villagers in somewhat remote areas. Due to this fact, our civic action projects have been conducted primarily in the villages of Duc Co, and, with the assistance of Army MSgt Libby of Ban Me Thuot, Buon Kreh and Buon Ea Jong "B," which are located a few miles southeast of Ban Me Thuot. During the reporting period 16 boxes of clothes, shoes, sewing materials, and school supplies have been received from stateside sources, as well as some garden seeds. $35.00 has been donated through TSgt Smart by hometown friends for the purchase of soap, towels, and toothpaste to be distributed in hygiene to the children at Duc Co. 200 toothbrushes have been obtained through the 12th USAF Hospital at Cam Ranh Bay, and the squadron has purchased approximately 200 tubes of toothpaste and tooth powder.

(U) 10. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS: During the reporting period the following awards were approved for presentation:

Silver Star ——— 1
Distinguished Flying Cross — 15
Bronze Star Medal— 5
Air Medal ——— 139
Purple Heart——— 8
Air Force Commendation Medal — 2

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(U) 11. Quarterly Statistics:

UH-1F	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
Sorties/Mission	6.78	8.32	6.29
Missions Flown	395	389	378
Missions Fragged	397	390	380
Sorties Flown	2680	2405	2378
Passengers	2219	2031	2251
Cargo (Tons)	58.0	45.5	41.4
Ordnance Expended	332,600 rounds(7.62) 563 rockets	454,055(7.62mm.) 912 rockets	246,800 (7.62mm.) 464 rockets
CH-3E			
Sorties/Mission	8.94	5.83	7.40
Missions Fragged	51	68	54
Missions Flown	51	68	54
Sorties Flown	456	397	400
Passengers	1159	1066	1080
Cargo (Tons)	36.5	40.2	29.2

Flying Hours:	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
TOTAL:			
Flown	1874.1	1689.8	1607.0
Programmed	1775	1775	1775
UH-1F			
Flown	1454.0	1319.5	1254.6
Programmed	1275	1275	1275
Alert Hours	6180	6180	6180
CH-3E			
Flown	420.1	380.3	352.4
Programmed	500	500	500

(6)

(U) 12. THE 20TH SOS AT TAN SON NHUT AB, RVN: The mission of the 20th SOS detachment at Tan Son Nhut continues to be transportation of intelligence film and VIP flights for 7th Air Force staff. During the reporting period the detachment logged 1416 sorties and 460.6 hours flying time, carried 2818 passengers, 28.1 tons of cargo, and 105 VIP's. This is a definite increase over the preceding 3-month period. (4)

13. THE 20TH SOS AT UDORN, RTAFB, THAILAND:
(S) The mission of the 20th Special Operations Squadron at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand remained the same during the reporting period. No missions were flown over North Vietnam in support of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACSOG) due to the presidential restriction of 1 November 1968. Support of TACAN sites in and out of country remained the first priority of operation. The second priority mission consists of support of Special Air Warfare as sponsored by Controlled American Sources (CAS). The third priority mission is support of Special Air Warfare Training of US Special Forces and Civic Action Projects. (5)

a. (U) Lt Colonel E.L. MacQuarrie transferred to the 7/13 Air Force as the Assistant Director of Operations Special Activities on 15 June 1969. Lt Colonel Theodore D. Silva assumed command of the 20th SOS (OLAB) on 17 June 1969.

b. (S) Problems: SEAOR 43 Hoist: Improvement in the Pony Express rescue capabilities would occur with acquisition of SEAOR 43 Hoist. At present only two of the eight Pony Express CH-3E's are equipped with this hoist. The new hoist would give 240 feet of usable cable versus the present 135 feet.

c. (U) Maintenance Section: The Pony Express maintenance section has been relocated to the forward edge of pad 10, in order that sufficient space will be available at the back portion of the pad for construction of a new Pony Express hangar. The relocation of our temporary maintenance buildings has further limited the operating space required to perform helicopter maintenance. The estimated completion date of the hangar construction is 15 Jan 1970. CH-3E 795 was picked up from the IRAN facility at Bangkok on 28 Jun 1969. This aircraft was delivered to Iran on 26 Mar 1969.

d. (S) Consilidation of Helicopter Resources in Thailand:
(1) On 10 July 1968, the Deputy Chief of Staff/Plans hosted a 7th Air Force Helicopter conference at Tan Son Nhut. (Ref. 7 AF msg (S) 20/1247Z Sep 68) The purpose of this meeting was to provide a forum for a general discussion of the helicopter force, its role and missions, and current and programmed force structure. A discussion item was the possibility of consolidating all CH-3 helicopters in Thailand into a single squadron. On 10 Sep 1968, the 14 SOW and 56 SOW were queried as to their opinions on the proposal.
(2) The responses to the proposal were at odds:
(a) The 56 SOW concurred in the proposed consilidation of Thailand-based helicopters into the 21st squadron provided the enlarged squadron was not wholly based at NKP. The 56 SOW primary concern was that there would be insufficient room to accommodate the augmented squadron at NKP. (Ref. 13 AF msg (S) 27/1400Z Sep 68)
(b) The 14 SOW voiced objection to the proposal, pointing out that although location of one of the wing's units in Thailand offers some added management problems, none are different from those offered by numerous other flights of the 14 SOW dispersed in RVN. The 20 SOS is unable to fulfill all CAS and SOG requirements due to the limited number

of airframes available and suggested that excess 21 SOS assets be transferred to the 20 SOS. (Ref. 14 SOW msg (TS) 16/0215Z Sep 68)

(c) 13th AF concurred in the proposal, pointing out that the commander of the 21 SOS would have all the CH-3 assets available to meet the varied mission requirements under a priority system. The UH-1's should remain assigned to the 20 SOS because of the peculiar maintenance they require. (Ref. 13 AF msg (S) 27/0400Z Oct 68)

(d) The DC 7/13 AF recommended that the organizations and aircraft remain as assigned for the present and that three CH-3 aircraft form the 21 SOS be fragged by 7/13 AF for CAS and SOG support. (Ref. 7/13 AF msg (S) 09/1200Z Oct 68)

(e) 7th AF completed a study of Thailand Helicopter Organizations on 5 Mar 69 with the following recommendations: (Ref. 7 AF DPLG Form 4 (TS) 5 Mar 59)

(i) The interim UE of the 21 SOSshould be changed to 15 CH-3 aircraft with unlimited growth to the 21 UE upon delivery of six CH-53 aircraft in FY 4/70.

(ii) The CH-3 assets of the 20 SOS should be assigned to the 21 SOS.

(iii) 7/13 AF should retain fragginf authority of the 21 SOS.

(iv) The four UH-1's at Udorn should be returned to RVN and headroom identified to accommodate them.

(f) CINCPACAF recommends to CS Air Force (Ref. CINCPACAF (S) msg 03/0336Z Jun 69):

(i) Increase CH-3E UE of 21 SOS from 12 to 15 aircraft.

(ii) Delete CH-3E UE 10 aircraft from 20 SOS.

(iii) Reflect 21 SOS UE 15 CH-3E's and 6 CH-53's during FY 4/70.

(iv) Consolidation and MSB CH-3E's at NKP favored because of existing aircraft/engine maintenance capability and proximity to primary operating areas. Six CH-3E's to be located FOL status Udorn for CAS/SOG support.

(v) Review of manpower requirements subsequent to the consolidation of CH-3's indicating savings of approximately 39 spaces of which a minimum of 14 are highly skilled helicopter aircrew members.

(g) PACAF anticipates approval prior to 30 Jun 69. Request 14 SOW take the necessary action to move two of the Thai-based UH-1's back into RVN by 30 Jun 69 with no additional manpower authorization for the 20 SOS. The two remaining Thai-based UH-1's will be temporarily retained at Udorn. We propose to move the remaining UH-1's to RVN subsequant to Sep 69. (Ref. 7 AF msg (S) 25/0231Z Jun 69)

(h) As of 30 Jun 69, this squadron is awaiting the final word to merge with the 21 SOS.

e. (S) On 14 April 1969 Captain G.R. Be.anger led an emergency exfiltration of a wounded SGU team member deep in enemy territory. A stop at a forward operation installation in Steel Tiger was required to receive an intelligence briefing and to pick up a replacement team member for the wounded man. The wounded man, who had been shot two days earlier when his team made contact with the enemy, was brought to a forward operating

location by helicopter and was airlifted by a fixed-wing aircraft to the nearest medical facility. (5)

f. (S) On 21 April 1969 an infiltration of 215 SGU assault-force troops was led by Maj Fred Forbey. This mission was fragged to gain a position of advantage on a hill overlooking a main road that was controlled by the enemy. Five CH-3E's, three UH-1F's, eight A-1 (Hobos), an O-1 Raven FAC, and the CAS contact in a Porter aircraft were utilized to accomplish this hazardous mission. Our helicopters picked up the troops from a forward operating location in Steel Tiger. Four of the Hoboes were fragged to suppress ground fire and to sanitize the HLZ, as directed by the FAC. The other four Hoboes were designated as cover aircraft for all of the helicopters. Weather was an estimated 2000 feet overcast with occasional light rain and thunderstorms in the area. The first wave of helicopters landed in the HLZ, deplaned their troops and equipment while the Hoboes were striking a hill overlooking the HLZ. After the first two helicopters departed the HLZ they received ground fire, and the second helicopter took a hit through the sponson. Maj Forbey directed the following helicopters to turn right when departing the HLZ to avoid the ground fire. The first half of the infil was completed without further incident. The helicopters returned to the forward operating location to transport the remainder of the troops to the HLZ but had to wait an hour due to a line of th understorms. While making a second attempt to infiltrate the group, they were informed by the FAC that the original HLZ was receiving mortar fire. A secondary site ½ mile west of the primary was selected. The first two CH-3E's landed and departed the HLZ without problems. The next two CH-3's received ground fire on final approach. The lead aircraft in the second wave, piloted by Capt John O'Neill, received three hits. One of th e rounds penetrated the floor, wounding one of the SGU troops in the leg. Capt O'Neill maneuvered his helicopter away from the ground fire while directing the Hoboes to suppress it. While this was taking place, the number four CH-3 landed from another direction and deposited his troops and equipment. Capt O'Neill assessed his battle damage, determined that he could make the landing, then utilized the same rout the number four CH-3 took. He was able to land, and offloaded the men and equipment, with the exception of the wounded man whom he delivered back to the FOL. The remaining three helicopters landed and departed without further indident. The overall mission was a complete success, demonstrating the superb airmanship of the Pony Express crews, even under extremely adverse conditions. (5)

g. (S) On 27 April 1969 our aircraft were fragged on a mission that required crossing a road highly concentrated with enemy 37 and 57 mm. anti-aircraft guns. Eight F-4 aircraft were deployed to strike the road at our crossing point just prior to the sheduled helicopter crossing outbound and again on the return trip. The SGU troops were picked up from Nakhom Phanom on this mission instead of the normal forward operating camp.

The mission was hampered by thunderstorms and low ceilings at the road crossing point, however the F-4's were able to make the initial strike. The helicopters completed their infil/exfil and returned to the road area where weather conditions would not permit the f-4's to strike the hazardous area. Our helicopters crossed the road utilizing the weather as cover against the big anti-aircraft guns. The mission was successful, and, thanks to the f-4's and the weather, no enemy fire was observed. (5)

h. (S) On 2 May 1969 Major Donald Berger and a crew consisting of Captain Gordon Lowery, Sgt M. Laite, and Sgt S. Wing, flew to Ban Lao, Thailand, to sling a Thai U-10 aircraft that had crashed. The crash site site was in a valley with a 3000-foot ridge line over which the U-10 wreckage had to be lifted in order to sling it to Maung Nan. Major Berger coordinated with the Thais on how he wanted the U-10 prepared for its movement. The U-10 wings were removed and placed inside the CH-3, and cables were attached to the fuselage of the wreckage and then attached to the sling of the hovering helicopter. The U-10's weight was approximately 2400 pounds. The aircraft was successfully airlifted over the 3000-foot ridge to Muang Nan, where it was loaded into a C-123 for further shipment. (5)

i. (S) On 10 May 1969 Major Fred Forbey was leading a mass exfiltration consisting of 5 CH-3's, 3 UH-1F's, 1 Durex helicopter, and 2 A-1's from Steel Tiger. While still deep in hostile territory Major Forbey's heavily loaded CH-3 began to malfunction. The main transmission oil pressure began to fluctuate, and the oil pressure low light illuminated making a precautionary landing necessary. Major Forbey nursed the aircraft to a friendly CV site in enemy country and landed his craft without damage. SSgt McLaskey immediately determined the garlock seal of the transmission oil pump was leaking and would require parts and special tools to repair it. Guards were posted with the aircraft, and Major Forbey, his crew, and passengers were returned to a nearby base on one of the other helicopters in the flight. Additional guards were airlifted from a forward operating location to the LIMA site to insure the security of the aircraft forthe night. Early the next morning two CH-3's with parts and maintenance men launched, along with a pair of A-1's for cover, to retrieve the downed CH-3. The two maintenance men, Sgts Barber and McLaskey, repaired the aircraft and had it ready to go in an hour and a half,--a job that would have taken three hours under normal conditions.

j. (C) Lt Col E.L. MacQuarrie and Lt Col McCluney were flying a mission to channel 99 on 12 May 1969 when they intercepted a MAYDAY distress call from an Army UH-1 helicopter. They immediately switched to guard channel to assist the aircraft in distress. They were informed by the Army pilots that due to an engine failure they were autorotating to a position approximately 60 miles southwest of NKP. INVERT, a control agency from NKP, and Crown, airborne rescue control aircraft, fixed the downed UH-1's position and directed the CH-3 to aid the them. The CH-3 arrived in less than 20 minutes. Lt Col MacQuarrie rescued 9 of the 12 persons on board, including an Army Colonel. The Army crew remained with the UH-1 to guard it and attempt a repair to the engine. (5)

k. (S) Captain Davids made an emergency landing in a UH-1F No. 163 eight miles southeast of Udorn, while on a functional check flight on 9 May 1969. Captain Davids was entering a required practice outorotation to check the availability of sufficient right rudder pedal when the engine stabilized momentarily and then flamed out. He tried throttle and manual fuel in an attempt to restore engine power without success, and continued the autorotation to a soft landing. Later it was determined that the fuel line was clogged with a deteriorated O-ring seal which caused fuel starvation. It was determined that due to field conditions it would be more practical to change the entire engine, rather than attempt to repair the fuel control. This was done, but the new engine was discovered to have a cracked combustion chamber. The aircraft was left under guard overnight and for the next few days until 12 May when a new engine was received from Nha Trang. The new engine was airlifted to the UH-1F on 13 May. The engine was installed, and the aircraft was test-flown and returned to Udorn by 1130 the same day. (5)

l. (S) A mission of 16 May 1969 resulted in leaving CH-3 No. 692 overnight at a forward operating location in enemy country (Steel Tiger). Major C. Taylor, Captain F. Berger, the pilots, shut down the helicopter to refuel and were unable to restart number one engine. The helicopter was secured and placed under indigenous guard for the night. Because of the aircraft location and lack of equipment it was estimatdd that two workdays would be required to get the helicopter ready to fly. It was determined to expedite the recovery of the helicopter from enemy country by flying it out on one engine. An early morning takeoff was scheduled on 17 May 1969, with only two pilots, Major D. Berger and Major C. Taylor as crew. All extra equipment was removed from the CH-3 to insure the lightest weight possible for takeoff. The aircraft took off and was able to accomplish a 5-foot hover. Major Berger climbed the helicopter out over the forward operating base, gaining sufficient altitude to get out of the small arms ground-fire envelope. The trip to NKP was successfully completed. The engine was changed at NKP, and the helicopter was returned to home station on 18 May 1969. (5)

m. (S) Two CH-3's and one UH-1F, Pony Express helicopters 10, 11, and 12, were conducting an infiltration of two teams in Steel Tiger when they received a MAYDAY call at approximately 1500L 14 Jun 1969. The Pony Express mission commander, Captain J. Roberts, contacted INVERT and determined that no rescue force was immediately available. The Pony Express flight was on the 126° radial of channel 89 at 36 miles at the time. Pony 11 was directed to return to base. When the Pony flight approached within 30 miles of the downed aircraft, Nail 19, the on-scene commander, was contacted. Nail 19 briefed the flight on the local conditions and directed that "B" pilot be rescued first. Pony 12, a UH-1F piloted by Major Paul McClellan and Major William Bunn picked up pilot "B." However, the hoist stuck in the down position, due to a broken wire in a cannon plug. The crew flew approximately 5 KM to a flat area with the pilot on the jungle penetrator. A landing was made there, and the pilot was recovered inside the helicopter. Hoist pre-flights had been successfully

accomplished at Udorn and again at NKP prior to the flight. The on-scene commander also directed the rescue of pilot "A." Pony 10, a CH-3E, commenced the rescue, and while hovering over an extremely steep slope, the hoist, with 135 feet of usable cable, was lowered to its full extent. It was determined that there was insufficient cable to reach the downed pilot, and it became necessary to descend the helicopter down between the trees and karst to allow the penetrator to reach the ground. While maneuvering to get the penetrator to the pilot, the helicopter blades struck vines and trees that surrounded the area, causing a vibration to develop. The helicopter crew chief observed the pilot on the ground to get on the penetrator and give the signal to be raised. While coming through the trees the pilot was at time obscured from the hoist operator's view by the jungle. When the rescuee cleared the top of the trees he was observed to be hanging from the penetrator by his hands. At this time he was about 60 feet from the helicopter door and coming up. The rotor vibration increased to a magnitude that made continued hovering extremely difficult. The pilot moved the helicopter horizontally to gain translational lift and to prevent imminent loss of control. While doing this, he moved over a ravine where the rescuee released his grip and fell to the ground approximately 350-500 feet below. The penetrator strap was not used by the pilot. A turn was immediately initiated, and the helicopter crew tried to locate the downed pilot. After approximately five minutes the search was abandonned by Pony 10 because the rotor vibration had reached a severe intensity making it necessary to depart the area and later put the helicopter on the ground in a semi-secure area in Laos. At this time Sandy 1, an A-1, took over as on-scene commander since Nail 19 was low on fuel. It is most distressing that this heroic attempt of rescue by the Pony Express 10 crew was not successful. Both Pony Express 10 and 12 went beyond the normally expected rescue procedures witha completely positive attitude, in an effort to rescue the downed crew. CH-3 681 was left overnight in the semi-secure location. It was determined that all 5 main rotor blades required changing. Early on 15 June 1969, maintenance personnel and flight crews were airlifted to the location of the damaged aircraft. It was repaired and arrived back at Udorn at 1730 the same day. (5)

n. (S) The Pony Express helicopters were involved in a mass infil of 3 SGU companies on 23 June 1969. Five CH-3 and 3 UH-1F helicopters were utilized, including three helicopters from CAS resources. These were a UH-1 and two H-34's. This CAS mission took place deep in the Steel Tiger area. Three hundred and one SGU personnel and approximately 7000 lbs. of equipment were moved by the Ponies. (5)

o. (S) On 27 June 1969, the Pony Express was fragged to make an emergency exfil deep in the Barrel Roll area. A neutralist camp was being attacked by approximately 800 NVA and was expected to fall into enemy hands. The camp personnel were to be evacuated at the earliest possible time. The Pony Express helicopters, 5 CH-3E's and 2 UH-1F's were employed in the exfil along with 3 Buff HH-53's and 3 Knives from the 21 SOS, 9 H-34's and 4 Hueys from a CAS resource. A total of 26 helicopters were committed, as were 4 A-1's, 4 F-4's, and many FACs. The HLZ was located in an extremely hostile area, at an altitude of 3800 feet. CH-3E No. 692 received battle damage to one main rotor blade. The 21SOS lost one CH-3 to

ground fire shortly after taking off with a load of evacuees. The pilot successfully landed the damaged helicopter. The crew and evacuees were picked up by CAS helicopters and returned to a forward operating base. The CH-3 was directed to be destroyed by A-1's because of the extremely hostile area and the impossibility of recovery. The Pony express crews evacuated a total of 153 personnel and 1700 lbs. of cargo. (5)

p. (S) Two UH-1F's, 163 and 155, were transferred back to Nha Trang on 28 June 1969. The squadron now has two UH-1F's and five pilots to man the helicopters. The two remaining UH-1F's will be retained at Udorn until approximately 1 Sep 69 at which time they are expected to be transferred to Nha Trang. (5)

q. VIP ACTIVITY:

(1) (U) Col Ernest E. Bradley, DCSO 14th SOW, Lt Col David Sparks, Commander 20th SOS were here on the 23 April 1969 for a staff visit. (5)

(2) (U) Ambassador Unger and Consulate Francis were transported by our Pony Express pilots, Maj M. Spotts and Maj P. McIntyre, in a UH-1F on 26 and 27 April 1969.

(3) (U) Maj R. Gibbs and crew transported the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Seamans, on an inspection trip around the U-Tapao RTAFB on 28 May 1969.

(4) (U) Lt Col MacQuarrie briefed Lt Gen Giddion, Commander 13 Air Force on 30 May 1969 and Maj Gen Petit, Commander 7/13 Air Force on 31 May 1969, concerning the Pony Express activities from 1 Jan 1969 to the present time and the projected future status of the organization. (5)

(5) (U) Maj Gen Petit, Commander of 7/13 Air Force was transported by the Pony Express UH-1F to Mukdahan, Thailand on 2 June 1969. Maj Gen Kirkendhall, Director of Intelligence for 7th Air Force, visited the Pony Express squadron on 5 June 1969. Lt Col MacQuarrie briefed him on the squadron activities, and he was then transported by UH-1F to Mukdahan and on to NKP. (5)

(6) (U) Col Bradley, the DCO Special Operations for the 14th SOW visited this squadron on 27 and 28 June 1969.

r. (U) CIVIC ACTION: Udorn Community Orphanage: During the month of April a combined effort of the Pony Express and Field Maintenance Squadron put up plywood paneling in one room of the orphanage. The paneling was apinted by the same crew in their off-duty time. Squadron members donated approximately 35 hours of their time tothe children of the orphanage, exercising and playing with them. Donations for the month were four dozen bars of soap, liquid vitamins, baby clothes, plastic pants, crib sheets, and pads. During the month of May, squadron personnel donated approximately

30 hours to the children. Donations for the month included $20.00, towels, wash cloths, soap, baby powder, diapers, crib sheets, baby oil, liquid vitamins, plastic pants, baby clothes, and toys. During the month of June three bottles of liquid vitamins were donated to the orphanage.
McKean Leprosy Hospital, Chaing Mai, Thailand: Affton Christian Church of Affton, Missouri sent Captain Berger six boxes of clothes and shoes for the leprosy hospital. These will be delivered on 21 July 1969. (5)

s. (6) Aircraft Maintenance Status:

CH-3E	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
O/R Rate	83.3%	79.0%	80.8%
A/C Utilization Rate (hours per aircraft)	68.1	64.2	65.2
A/C Utilization Rate Authorized	65	65	65
A/C Possessed	6	6	6
Possessed A/C Hours	4116	4535	3856
NORS	2.3%	6.6%	0.4%
NORM	14.3%	14.3%	18.8%

UH-1F			
O/R Rate	92.6%	80.5%	77.2%
A/C Utilization Rate	49.0 Hrs	50.9	55.7
A/C Utilization Rate Authorized	60	60	60
A/C Possessed	4	4	4
Possessed A/C Hours	2521	2849	2768
NORS	5.0%	14.1%	15.6%
NORM	2.4%	5.4%	7.3%

(5)

warfare operations assigned under 7AF Operations Order 460-48, "Combat Spear," classified Top Secret.

(U) Squadron manning remained at a stable level during this period with no personnel problems reported.[60]

(C) The squadron possessed four C-130E aircraft airlifting 701.1 tons of cargo, 7,017 passengers and logged 872 combat hours. Of 155 fragged missions scheduled they flew 145 for 93% of fragged missions flown.[61]

(S) The bombing halt and other restrictions have made unconventional activities outside of the Republic limited. The use of the Fulton Recovery System was virtually eliminated since in-country rescues can be more readily made with helicopter operations.[62]

(S) The 15SOS continued to have problems satisfying training requirements. Mission requirements continue to limit the amount of time available for training. The amount of training time accomplished this quarter was twice that of last but still below prescribed.[63]

20TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON

(U) The 20th Special Operations Squadron was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel David K. Sparks.

(S) Through 31 July there were seven flights at three operating locations. A, B, and C flights were located at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand until their consoldation with the 21SOS of Nakhom Phanom, Thailand. D, E, F, and G flights were located at Nha Trang AB, RVN until 5

September 1969 when the squadron moved to Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. The detachment at Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN remains in operation as before. A, B, and C flights: Support of Controlled American Sources personnel, counterinsurgency, and utility transportation. D, E, F, and G flights: Unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, film courier, base defense, SAW training, psychological warfare, and logistic support of USAF units and US-sponsored activities. A, B, and C flights: Rescue, utility, and civic action. D, E, F, and G flights: Rescue, VIP courier, and utility.

(S) Organizational changes were effected after the 20SOS moved to Tuy Hoa. The 20SOS detachment at Udorn was transferred to Nakhom Phanom RTAFB, Thailand becoming part of the 21SOS.[64]

(U) Two 20SOS pilots TDY to the detachment at Tan Son Nhut were killed when the O-2 they were riding in sustained combat damage and crashed on the morning of 13 September 1969.[65]

(U) During the months of July and August the 20th lost three UH-1P aircraft to major accidents. Each accident was attributed to materiel failure of the T-58-3 engine. There were four minor injuries in the three accidents however, the aircraft were lost.[66]

(U) During this same time frame there were four incidents causing only minor aircraft damage and no personnel injuries, again the cause factor was materiel failure of the T-58-3 engine.[67]

(S) The entire fleet of UH-1P aircraft was suspended from flying after 31 August because of the apparent unreliability of the T-58-3 engine. On 9 September, the GE COSMAT team and representatives of

OCAMA and WRAMA assembled at Tuy Hoa AB to begin work on the engine malfunction problem.[68]

(U) On 5 September the 20SOS moved its squadron headquarters to Tuy Hoa. With the move, the NORS-G rate increased considerably waiting for parts to arrive from Nha Trang and considerably slowed the efforts of maintenance.[69]

(S) Prior to the close of the period, the gunship resumed flying with restrictions imposed on the aircraft. The gross weight was reduced from 9000 to 8500 in late September, however, the reduced gross weight made mission support and accomplishment impossible due to the decreased fuel load.[70]

(S) A plan was under study to drop the "slick" portion of the mission and giving it to the Army because the present engine was not adequate for the cargo and passenger hauling mission. Nothing further has been heard regarding the proposal at the close of the period.

(Security classification - if classified) SECRET

HISTORICAL DATA RECORD

REPORTING PERIOD: FROM 1 JUL 69 TO 30 SEP 69

REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL: AFO-88

FROM: (NAME AND LOCATION OF UNIT SUBMITTING THIS REPORT)
20th Special Operations Squadron
14th Special Operations Wing
APO San Francisco 96316

TO: 14th Special Operations Wing (DXI)

IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED FOR ANY ITEM, ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS INDICATING APPROPRIATE ITEM NUMBER.

SECTION I ASSIGNMENT

MAJOR AIR COMMAND	NUMBERED AIR FORCE	AIR DIVISION	WING	GROUP
PACAF	7th Air Force		14th Special Operations Wing	

SECTION II SUBORDINATE UNITS

Through 31 July there were seven flights at three operating locations. A, B, and C flights were located at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand until their consolidation with the 21st SOS of Nakhom Phanom, Thailand. D, E, F, and G flights were located at Nha Trang AB, RVN until 5 SEP 69 when the squadron moved to Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. The detachment at Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN remains in operation as before.

SECTION III MISSIONS

A. PRIMARY: A, B, and C flights: Support of Controlled American Sources personnel, counterinsurgency, and utility transportation.
D, E, F, and G flights: Unconventional warfare, reconnaisance, film courier, base defense, SAW training, psychological warfare, and logistic support of USAF units and US-sponsored activities.

B. SECONDARY (OR OTHER)

A, B, and C flights: Rescue, utility, and civic action.
D, E, F, and G flights: Rescue, VIP courier, and utility.

SECTION IV PERSONNEL

STATUS	OFFICERS	AIRMEN	CIVILIANS	TOTAL
ASSIGNED	51	84	1	136
AUTHORIZED	45	90	-	135
ATTACHED	-	-	-	-

SECTION V EQUIPMENT

A. AIRCRAFT

CH-3 (Until 31 JUL): 6
UH-1P: 17

B. WEAPONS (INCLUDING MISSILES)

Mini-Guns:
Rocket Launchers:
M-60 Machine Guns:

C. ELECTRONICS

D. OTHER

BIBLIOGRAPHY

SOURCE	LOCATION
1. Reports of Major Aircraft Accidents for 65-7929, 65-7930, and 66-1217.	1. 20 SOS Operations Office.
2. Incident reports: 65-7929, 63-3146, 64-15476, and 65-7927.	2. 20 SOS Operations Office.
3. Interview with 20 SOS Commander, Lt Col David K. Sparks.	
4. Interview with 20 SOS Administrative Officer, Capt Maurice A. Lange.	
5. Interview with 20 SOS First Sergeant, MSgt Elmer W. Mitchell.	
6. Interview with 20 SOS Assistant Civic Actions Officer Capt David T. Spencer.	
7. 20 SOS Awards and Decorations Files.	7. 20 SOS Awards and Decorations section.
8. Tan Son Nhut Detachment Historical Reports for July, August, and September 1969.	8. 20 SOS Historical File.
9. 20 SOS Udorn RTAFB Detachment Historical Report - July 1969.	9. 20 SOS Historical File. Part of Udorn Report is attached to this report.

1. (S) There were no organizational changes to the 20th SOS at Nha Trang and later Tuy Hoa AB, RVN, but on 1 August 1969 the 20th SOS detachment at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand was transferred to Nakhom Phanom RTAFB, Thailand to become part of the 21st SOS at that location.

2. (U) Two 20th SOS pilots who were TDY to the detachment at Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN, Captains Thomas W. Norman and James F. Cameron, were killed when the O-2 they were riding in sustained battle damage and crashed on the morning of 13 Sep 69.

3. (U) During the reporting period one enlisted man went AWOL and was dropped from the rolls IAW AFR 35-73.

4. (U) During the months of July and August, the 20th lost three aircraft to major aircraft accidents. Each accident involved only single aircraft and was attributable to mechanical difficulties.

(U) 14 July 69 aircraft 65-7929 was involved in an accident at Pleiku AB, RVN. The pilot, a flight mechanic, and an engine mechanic were on board. The only injury sustained was a minor back injury to the pilot. The aircraft was being flown on a Functional Check Flight after an engine change. This occurred due to an engine failure the previous day. After takeoff two topping checks were initiated, and during the second check the engine lost power. The aircraft was autorotated to an unsuccessful landing onto a slope and rolled to the right. The main rotor blades struck the ground, propping the aircraft up in such a way that it did not roll completely on its side. Findings of the accident investigation board were:

(U) 1. Primary Cause: Material failure in that the engine lost power due to compressor stall.
2. Contributing Cause: Maintenance factor in that the T.O. was not followed in the adjustment of the inlet guide vane actuator rod.
3. Contributing Cause: Supervisory factor in that inspections were not performed to preclude T.O. deviation.
4. Contributing Cause: Unsafe condition in that the terrain had no suitable area for autorotation landing.
5. Possible Contributing Cause: Minor foreign object damage was found during initial teardown.

Recommendations:
1. All engines be inspected, trimmed, and topped in accordance with existing directives.
2. A rigorous maintenance training program be initiated to assure complete understanding by all personnel concerned.
3. A General Electric representative be assigned to the 14th Field Maintenance Squadron, Propulsion branch.
4. Command assistance be requested to provide highly qualified supervisory personnel for the T-58 jet engine propulsion branch.
5. All UH-1P pilots be rebriefed on the hazards of flight over mountainous and hilly terrain.
6. Compliance with existing Air Force directives and programs for the elimination of FOD be adhered to with special emphasis given to the engine inlet area. (1)

(U) 19 July 69 aircraft 65-7930 was involved in an accident at Phan Rang AB, RVN. The aircraft was on an administrative flight and had shut down at Phan Rang. During takeoff a loud explosion was heard. A slide-on landing was attempted to a taxiway. Touchdown impact was severe, causing the main rotor to dip and sever the tail of the aircraft. This action started the aircraft spinning as it skidded along the taxiway. Approximately three fast spins were completed before the aircraft stopped at the edge of the taxiway, still in an upright position.

The pilot and copilot sustained minor back injuries which did not result in hospitalization. Other personnel on board were not injured.

Findings of the accident investigation board were:

(U) 1. Primary Cause: Material failure in that the engine failed due to FOD in all stages of the compressor section.
2. Contributing Cause: Maintenance factor in that the bellmouth boot was deteriorated, and the foam rubber gasket in the air intake filter was removed.
3. Contributing Cause: Supervisory factor in that aircraft records were overdue supervisory review, indicating insufficient control of the forms and allowing potentially hazardous delayed discrepancies to go uncorrected although parts were available.

Recommendations:
1. That a properly designed engine intake screen be installed.
2. That the chief of maintenance assure accurate and timely review of aircraft records with particular emphasis on delayed discrepancies.
3. That the chief of maintenance enforce strict compliance with existing directives on the engine inlet area and screen assembly. (1)

(U) 25 August 69 aircraft 66-1217 took off from Ban Me Thuot East on an FCF to check for a vertical one-to-one beat. During a hard climbing turn at approximately 300 feet above terrain the engine lost power. An autorotation was initiated and a landing was attempted in a sloping field. Upon impact the left skid gave away, and the aircraft rolled and pivoted over the left front corner of the cockpit, coming to rest on the top left side of the fuselage. The flight mechanic suffered minor injuries while the pilot was unhurt.

Findings of the accident investigation board were:

(U) 1. Primary Cause: Material failure in that the engine lost power for undetermined causes.
2. Contributing Cause: Pilot factor in that a steep climbing turn was accomplished at an altitude that would not assure a safe autorotational landing.
3. Contributing Cause: Pilot factor in that the FCF was not conducted in the area designated by 20th SOS OI 55-30 which is more suitable for emergency landings.

Recommendations:

(U) 1. That command emphasis be placed on the priority TDR of G.E. T-58-3 engine, serial number 279024 to assure that the exact cause of power failure be determined.
2. That OCAMA and WRAMA conduct a reliability study of the T-58 engine as compared to other power plants to determine suitability for further use in the UH-1P.
3. That OCAMA investigate the feasibility of installing a centrifugal filter in the air inlet of the T-58 for SEA operation.
4. That command assistance be given in bringing the G.E. COSMAT team to the Nha Trang T-58 engine facility to assist and advise.
5. That 14th SOW Field Maintenance conduct daily rustlick and water wash on all T-58 engines operated during that day.
6. That the provisions of 20th SOS OI 55-30 be thoroughly rebriefed to all 20th SOS pilots.
7. That all operating instructions and/or directives pertaining to flying operations be placed in the squadron CIF. (1)

5. (U) Four incidents involving engine malfunctions occurred during the reporting period:

(U) 13 July aircraft 65-7929 was approaching Duc Co on the normal mission. Upon initiation of the descent for landing the engine lost power. A successful autorotational landing was made on the airstrip at Duc Co with no injury to personnel. Damage to the aircraft was limited to a bent crossover tube.

(U) 7 August aircraft 63-3146 was taxiing back to the parking area after a VIP flight at Tan Son Nhut AB when a rapidly intensifying whine was heard coming from the engine. An immediate precautionary landing and shutdown was made. Initial inspection revealed that at least two blades were missing from the compressor.

(U) 28 August aircraft 64-15476 was hovering, ready for takeoff after refueling, when the low RPM warning horn and light came on momentarily. Engine instruments showed everything normal, and takeoff was continued. The horn and light came on again, and RPM dropped to 5800.

Maximum airspeed attainable was 30 knots with 55 pounds torque indicated. The engine continued to operate, and a successful slide-on landing was made. Oil and fuel samples were taken.

(U) 31 August aircraft 65-7927 was launched from Ban Me Thuot East in support of a Special Forces recon team. Shortly after takeoff the engine compressor stalled. Autorotation was initiated, and two more stalls were experienced during the descent. Partial power was available for the landing. Landing was accomplished safely in a field about one mile west of the airfield. Investigation revealed that the starter switch had stuck, and the starter failed due to the overload and lost parts into the engine intake. (2)

6. (S) After 19 July it became apparent that there was a definite downward trend in the reliability of the T-58-3 engine. From the latter part of July the squadron found itself unable to perform the mission due to these engine failures and the subsequent suspensions from flying. This can be easily noticed by observing the flying time logged for the three months of the reporting period. In July 763.7 hours were flown. August had 563.5, and September shows only 223.9, of which a good part was FCF time. The normal mission at Ban Me Thuot requires approximately 600 hours per month.

7. (S) The entire 20th fleet was suspended from flying after 31 August. Following this action, on 9 September, the G.E. COSMAT team and representatives of OCAMA and WRAMA assembled at Tuy Hoa AB to begin working on the problem of engine malfunctions. The team

(S) accomplished an airframe/engine inspection, and a review of engine records. A program was formulated as is detailed in the attached COSMAT report.

8. (U) While the squadron was still located at Nha Trang AB, an Operation Inspection team came to determine if there was any correlation between the rash of engine failures and the operational procedures. It was determined that there was no such correlation.

9. (U) On the 5th of September the 20th SOS moved from Nha Trang AB to Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. In many ways this move further weakened our ability to perform the mission.

(U) It was thought by the Commander that a delay in the move would be favorable for correcting the engine problems. This was made known to the Wing Commander of the 14th SOW, but no changes resulted, and the 20th moved to its new location as originally scheduled. During the move the NORS G rate increased considerably due to the necessity of waiting for parts to arrive from Nha Trang. The work and confusion of the move considerably slowed the efforts of the maintenance section.

(U) Once established at Tuy Hoa AB, the squadron found itself in a better position from the maintenance viewpoint. A tiedown pad was built for our use, --the first ever in South Viet Nam. This facility enables the maintenance section to top and trim the engines before Functional Check Flights, thus reducing the cost of operation and increasing the safety factor.

10. (U) The positive, willing-to-help attitude shown by the 31st Materiel section has been very encouraging to the squadron. Another great aid has been the service rendered by the Bell and G. E. representatives. (3)

11. (U) At present the 20th SOS is sharing a building with the 308th TFS. Conditions in the squadron office area are not the best, since all offices are in what use to be the 308th briefing room. Clerk typists are still at a premium with the present manning level at 75%. Equipment, particularly typewriters, is also scarce. The Administration Office personnel have been keeping abreast of the workload with numerous hours of voluntary overtime.

(U) More than the normal amount of funds has been expended this quarter buying up supplies that were formerly not available. This may cause some problem later in the fiscal year. (4)

12. (U) Construction of the new 20th Operations/Maintenance building is in progress. This structure will provide office space for both Operations and Maintenance. In addition, there will be space to bring one aircraft at a time inside the building for in-the-shop maintenance.

13. (U) It is the concensus of the 20th SOS, especially the Commander, Administrative section, and all the pilots, that the vehicle transportation situation is totally inadequate. Before leaving Nha Trang one truck was taken in for repair, but its condition and age were reason to salvage it. The vehicle was not replaced. Shortly after the end of the reporting period a second vehicle which had also been

used for crew transportation was salvaged in the same way, again with no replacement. This leaves the crew transportation department with one truck and two jeeps, one of which is the Commander's vehicle. Neither jeep is hardly suitable for crew transportation. Replacement vehicles have been requested, but all requests have been disapproved due to a general lack of vehicles in country. The squadron realizes that this is a time of decreasing hostilities and an overall reduction in funds, but we will still endeavor to receive the needed vehicles. (3)

14. (U) Some significant achievements during the reporting period are first having recognized the reason for the engine problems and starting to correct it, and second the improvement of living conditions at Ban Me Thuot. The latter has been a combined effort by the Army and the Air Force. Plans are made to resurface the landing strip from which the 20th operates. This should make living in the area more enjoyable and decrease the FOD by holding down the dust. Plywood panelling is being put up in the crew quarters. This too will alleviate the dust problem in the quarters. Trees have been planted along some of the walkways. A new office for the Mission Operations Officer has been built, and new water heaters have been installed in the latrine building. (3)

15. (S) During the time the 20th was not flying, the mission was handled by the Army with their own helicopters. Recently the 20th has been able to resume the gunbird portion of the mission.

(S) The gross weight of the UH-1P was reduced from 9000 pounds to 8500 pounds in late September. This reduction in the maximum weight made it impossible to support the mission due to the decreased fuel load. It is expected that the maximum gross weight will be re-established at 9000 pounds in the near future. (3)

16. (S) As of the end of the reporting period, final word had not been received, but a plan was drawn up which would create a major change in the mission in that the 20th will only be providing the gunbirds for the mission, and the Army will provide the slicks. This is due to the limited performance capability of the T-58-3 engine in hot weather. Since the end of the reporting period a message has been received approving the aforementioned change.

(S) An all-gun mission will affect the flying hours of the individual pilots. Since fewer aircraft will be needed to support the primary mission, each pilot will fly less than he did previously. At the moment, the squadron has considerably more pilots than it has had in some time. This will also make the burden lighter for each man. There are 49 pilots assigned to the squadron. Many of these are new personnel who have only arrived in the last half of the reporting period. With the exception of one man in this group, all are new or nearly new conversion pilots. For this reason the squadron finds itself at a fairly low experience level. There was a lack of training available during the reporting period, due to the aforementioned engine problems. A plan has been formulated by the

Squadron Commander whereby two aircraft in addition to those on the mission will be sent to Ban Me Thuot for the purpose of training pilots and gunners. These aircraft would be available to the mission as backup aircraft.

17. (S) Factors that have played a major role in the decision to drop the slick portion of the mission are a lack of an engine conditioning program and improper maintenance during the past three years. It is the concensus of the G.E. and Bell representatives that the present engine in the UH-1P is not adequate for this mission. It is an engine intended for use in SAC missile support and is well-suited for that purpose. It has been mentioned that the T-58-5 engine which has 125 more shaft horsepower would be an adequate engine for this job. It is not known if this has been submitted as an official suggestion. (3)

18. (U) The morale of the 20th has been fairly low due to the unreliability of the engine and the long period of inactivity while the aircraft were being inspected and repaired. Now that the squadron is back working on the mission, and due to the improved living conditions at Ban Me Thuot, morale has again improved to the level necessary for the successful accomplishment of the mission. (3)

19. (U) Living quarters are quite crowded with 72 enlisted men living in quarters designed for 54. Their nearest latrine/washroom facilities are over 100 yards away. Due to the recent maintenance activities, some of the men have not had a day off for quite a while.

Hopefully this situation will be improved soon. Similarly, the officers quarters are quite crowded with most of the rooms each occupied by three men.

20. (U) CIVIC ACTIONS: With the help of Army Special Forces, a Medcap operation was conducted in three or four villages. A medical technician and a dental technician treated approximately 200 people in the Happy Valley Refugee area. The valley is located south of Ban Me Thuot and has an estimated population of 3700. Hygiene kits were distributed. In a visit to Buon Y Jong, a village in the same area, 95 blankets, 200 pounds of nails, 200 pounds of clothes, school supplies, hygiene kits, and toys were distributed. The unit has joined the local Dollars for Scholars drive which was started in September. The drive will be completed some time in October. (6)

(U) The next civic action work by the squadron will probably occur in early November, due to recent trends in the mission at Ban Me Thuot.

21. (U) During the reporting period, the following quantities of awards and decorations were approved for presentation:

Silver Star-----2
Distinguished Flying Cross-----16
Air Medal-----47
Purple Heart-----1
Air Force Commendation Medal-----4 (7)

22. (U) The detachment at Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN possessed two aircraft during most of the reporting period and amassed the following statistics:

Fragged Missions ----109
Missions Flown ---- 104
Operational Sorties ---- 606
Maintenance Sorties ---- 26
Hours Flown ---- 211.0
Cargo ---- 9.4 tons
Passengers ---- 730 (8)

[redacted]

HISTORICAL REPORT
20TH SOS AT UDORN RTAFB, THAILAND
July 1969

1. (S) The mission of the 20th Special Operations Squadron at Udorn RTAFB remained the same during July 1969. No missions were flown over North Vietnam in support of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACSOG) due to the presidential restriction of 1 November 1968. Support of TACAN sites in and out of country remained the first priority of operation. The second priority mission consists of support of Special Air Warfare as sponsored by Controlled American Sources (CAS). The third priority mission is support of Special Air Warfare Training of US Special Forces and Civic Action Projects.

2. (S) The 20th Special Operations Squadron (OLC) Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, known to all as the "Pony Express", as of 1 Aug 1969 will no longer exist, except in the minds of all the old "Ponies". The 20th SOS (OLC) will consolidate with the 21st SOS at NKP as one unit, the 21 SOS. On 22 July 7AF, Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN sent a message *(1) stating that a six UH-1F FOL will be retained at Udorn in accordance with recommendations of the study of consolidation of Helicopters in Thailand. The retention of the FOL will not preclude the temporary redeployment of aircraft between the two bases to satisfy operational requirements. The consolidation plan and schedule are further contained in 13 AF DPL message (2) paragraph 8, which used CSAF message (3) as authority for PACAF to proceed with consolidation action. Although it is not in accordance with the proposed reorganization, 56 SOW will proceed with planning for operational, effective 1 Aug 69 of the 21 SOS at NKP with an Operating Location of the 21st SOS at Udorn with 6 UH-1's authorized. The mission flagging priorities established by 7 AF D.O. will be transmitted by separate message.

a. Lt Col Theodore E. Silva will assume command of the newly consolidated 21st SOS NKP RTAFB, Thailand, known as the "Knives", on 1 Aug 1969. Other personnel movements will take place in the near future, as further planning and consolidation is achieved. A change of command ceremony will be conducted at Udorn by the 56 SOW Commander Col E. White for the commander of the newly consolidated squadron.

*(1) 7AF Secret Msg 2213[illegible] July 69
*(2) 13AF DPL (S) 170745[illegible] Jul 69
*(3) CSAF AFOAPO (S) Msg 021134Z Jul 69

68-368

[redacted]

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years

7th AF Secret Message *(4) States:

Fragging priorities will remain the same as previously determined. The NKP based helicopters will support: (A) ECHO White, (B) MAC SOG missions and the Udorn based helicopter will support: (A) TACAN/Radar Sites, and (B) CAS. The remainder of mission priorities will be: (C) Special Air Warfare Training, (D) Logistical Support of USAF units of US Sponsored Activities. On 1 Aug 69 all 21st SOS missions will be fragged by 7/13AF. MACSOG, giving a minimum 48 hour intent notice, will forward requests directly to 7/13 AF (DOCA) with copies to 7AF DOCO. 7/13AF will in turn Frag 56 SOW directly with info to 7AF and MACSOG.

b. (S) Two UH-1F's are still physically located with the Pony Express, however, a transfer of the two UH-1F's is expected at anytime due to the recent loss of UH-1F's at Nha Trang AB RVN. At this writing the UH-1F's are grounded because of three engine failures of Viet Nam based helicopters, resulting in the loss of two UH-1F's and major damage to another.

c. (C) The UH-1F maintenance personnel assigned to Udorn are in most instances expected to be transfered to the 20 SOS Nha Trang. The number of personnel will be approximately 15. The UH-1F pilots will return to the United States during July and Aug 69 with the exception of one, Capt John Devies. Capt Devids will take over as maintenance officer on the departure of our present maintenance officer, Capt Louis Bodony. The new maintenance officer is not programed to arrive here until mid Oct 69.

3. (U) The "Pony Express" operation has truly been an outstanding one. The squadron has not gained the notoriety that the "Jolly Greens", "Fast Movers" and some other units have received because of the nature and classification of the mission. The actual mission accomplishments will probably never be known however, each "Pony Express" member will know deep down in his heart that the 20th SOS Udorn has made a definite mark on the history of CH-3 operations and that the missions have caused the enemy untold harassment and frustration. To all of the ex "Pony Express" members a thank you and a job well done. The 21st SOS NKP is receiving an outstanding addition to their unit.

4. (C) Two external hydraulic rescue hoists have been received by this unit, for the CH-3 modification. Four additional units have shipped and are expected to arrive this month *(5). Installation of this hoist will give the CH-3 the needed additional cable length to reach the ground in the dense jungle to save lives. This unit presently has two CH-3's equiped with high speed hydraulic hoists. TCTO modification of CH-3 63-9681 was started on 29 July 1969.

*(4) 7AF AB RVN Secret Msg 230830Z Jul 69
*(5) WRAMA (C) Msg 262120Z Jun 69

[redacted]

Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years

[redacted]

5. (U) The following [illegible] SUCOR for CH-3 and UH-1 helicopters submitted by [illegible] (CLC):

a. (U) Proposed SUCOR for CH-3 fixed landing gear 9 April 1969.

(1) (C) This SUCOR advocates the acquisition of *(1) fixed landing gear kits for CH-3's assigned. Installation of this equipment will allow a substantial improvement in performance capabilities of the helicopter. Because of limited performance this operation has been forced to operate without the benefit of armor protection in enemy areas that are heavily defended by a variety of weapons.

(2) (C) A class V modification will be required to replace the retractable landing gear with a fixed gear.

(a) Approximately 300 pounds weight reduction in the overall aircraft weight would be experienced by this modification, this will increase the out-of-ground-effect hover capability by approximately 2,000 feet.

(b) The only disadvantage is the loss of aircraft amphibious capability. This capability is not required for mission accomplishment.

(3) (U) Message from CINCPACAF *(2)

(a) Two kits will be shipped for aircraft 67-14718 and 14721. Hard points are not installed on aircraft prior to 66-13278. Kits do not contain hard points. ASD is checking on extent of air frame changes required to utilize fixed gear on old aircraft.

(4) (C) TCTO Kit 1H-3-552 (fixed landing gear) were received 16 May 69. However, one fitting assembly tube was missing. On 20 May 69 a message was sent to WRAMA Robins AFB, Ga. requesting missing parts *(3).

(5) (U) 22 May 69 CH-3B 67-14718 was retrofitted with the fixed landing gear kit.

(6) (U) 28 May 69 WRAMA sent a message *(4) to Sikorsky Aircraft telling them to ship missing kit parts to 20th SOS ASAP.

(7) (U) As of 28 July 69 the missing parts for the fixed gear kit have not been received.

*(1) Letter from 20 SOS (DLC) to 20 SOS (C) 9 Apr 69
*(2) Unclas Msg from CINCPACAF Mar 69 03508
*(3) 20 SOS Msg to WRAMA 20 May 69 06487
*(4) WRAMA Unclas Msg to Sikorsky Aircraft 272139Z May 69

[redacted]

Group 3
Downgraded at 3 year
Intervals; Declassified
after 12 years

[redacted]

(U) (U) Status: [illegible] retrofitted.

b. (SRF) Proposed [illegible] Phase I-C-1 night covert capability. (U) 18 April 69.

(1) (S) This is a project for the addition of avionics and sensors providing a night [illegible] capability for A-1's are planned for this organization. Full [illegible] would allow substantial expansion of the operational [illegible] capability.

(a) (S) [illegible] would [illegible] could expand the acceptable areas of operation to include all those [illegible] protected by optically sighted weapons, [illegible] from personnel [illegible] detection of infiltrated teams. Shifting to night operations [illegible] approximately 20°F reduction in temperature, [illegible] increase aircraft performance, thereby increasing both payload and [illegible].

(b) (S) [illegible] comments have been received at this time regarding night covert capability.

(2) (U) Status: [illegible]

c. (U) Proposed [illegible] for installation of IFF in C-1 aircraft. 23 April 1969.

(1) (U) [illegible] following are dependent upon an IFF system. This system is also [illegible] recovery from combat missions occur near [illegible]. Unidentified aircraft traffic over Thailand and border penetrations [illegible] are expected to be [illegible] strict control procedures in Thailand. Unidentified aircraft or other traffic in Thailand will be fired upon without [illegible].

(2) (U) As of this time no comments or [illegible] have been received.

(3) (U) Status: [illegible]

d. (U) Proposed [illegible] for installation of light weight radar in CH-3 and CH-53 helicopters, [illegible] April 1969.

(1) (S) The environment in which this squadron now operates is becoming increasingly hostile to [illegible] ground fire. In order to continue operations in these areas, it is necessary to fly at altitudes where weather conditions [illegible] without [illegible] radar. Our aircraft are presently required to fly [illegible] clouds when thunder storms are present, which [illegible] in the hostile ground fire envelope.

(2) (S) No [illegible] comments have been received at this time.

(3) (U) Status: [illegible]

64-363

[redacted]

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years

[redacted]

e. (U) Proposed [illegible] for an Improved Navigation System, 6 May 1969.

(1) (SRF) The CH-3 helicopter is required to operate in low visibility conditions over terrain having a minimum of visual navigational fixes and frequently having no radio aids to navigation. The presence of hostile forces makes it mandatory that loitering time be held to a minimum. Landing zones are usually small clearings within enemy held territory. These factors make it essential that a lightweight, high accuracy, selfcontained, projected display navigation system be installed on the CH-3 and CH-53.

(2) (U) As of this time no correspondence has been received on this subject.

(3) (U) Status: Pending

f. (U) Proposed [illegible] for a CH-3 Performance Indicating System, 13 May 1969.

(1) (U) To provide maximum crew safety and mission accomplishment, it is necessary to fly at maximum altitude and airspeed under high gross weight conditions. A CH-3 performance indicating system is required to permit slection of an optimum airspeed for a given set of operating conditions.

(2) (U) Message from Det 6 [illegible] AB, RVN *(5) states; cruise guide indicator for CH-3 is not feasible from the view of the engineers. ASN opposed use of this indicator since there is not a correlation between pitch length load and actual flight loads causing fatigue damage to the HH/CH-3. This subject is considered closed by [illegible] (SCSAB) and ASD (ASZTH).

(3) (U) Status: Disapproved

g. (U) Proposed [illegible] Helicopter Viewing Device, 28 May 1969.

(1) (U) In order to preclude landing in an area controlled by the enemy, it is necessary to have the ability to observe the landing zone before a landing approach is started. The device will also allow the pilots to identify obstructions prior to committing to a landing.

(2) (SRF) The steady influx of enemy troops in areas of our operations has been accompanied by an increase in enemy patrol activity. As a result, there has been a steady increase in the probability that an approaching helicopter will land in the immediate vicinity of enemy ground forces. A stabilized wide-angle high power viewing device is required to allow visual inspection of the landing zone prior to descent from cruise altitude.

*(5) Unclas Msg 300700Z Apr 69 from Det 6 [illegible] AB, RVN

[redacted]

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years.

(2) (U) No correspondence has been received as of this date.

(3) (U) Status: Pending.

h. (U) Propose [illegible] for [illegible] Diesel Electric Refueling Pumps, 2[illegible] June 1969).

(1) (U) This equipment is required to permit rapid refueling at forward operating locations where mission is in progress, in hostile territory. It is frequently necessary to refuel from pre-placed fuel drums. A fast, reliable, and safe system is required.

(2) (U) No official correspondence has been received on the subject.

(3) (U) Status: Pending.

i. (U) Propose [illegible] and installation of M-60/D Machine Guns on CH-3 and [illegible] helicopters, 7[illegible] Jun 69 (U) *(6).

(1) (U) The only weapon presently available on the helicopters consists of M-16 rifles. These are not sufficient to [illegible] small arms fire in the vicinity of the [illegible] area. It is felt that some means of fire suppression be made available [illegible] helicopter overflies the area and the circular search pattern [illegible], due to the greatly increased energy activity in the [illegible] area.

(2) (U) [illegible] M-60 machine guns presently installed. Gun counts and [illegible] through available sources.

(3) (U) [illegible] supports our position and requirements for [illegible]. It also states the requirement for CH-3's of the [illegible] to be [illegible] for mission requirements since [illegible] will be accomplished.

(4) (U) Status: Pending.

*(6) 20 JUN (S) [illegible]
*(7) 7AF Msg ([illegible]) [illegible]

69-365

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year intervals; declassified after 12 years

[redacted]

j. (U) [illegible] for CH/HH-3E and HH-53B Helicopter.

(1) (U) [illegible] and cover weight computers are presently available for all [illegible] unit.

(2) (U) Status: Complete; received by unit.

k. (U) Status of [illegible] III [illegible]. This SEAOR originated out of the Phasing Group meeting 14-1 [illegible], Robins AFB, Ga. SEAOR III Interim [illegible] and auxiliary fuel tanks.

(1) (U) This modification would cause an additional 272 pounds with a radius reduction of 15 NM for the CH-3E and 22 NM for the HH-3E. The material would cause a 3% reduction in the amount of fuel carried and a 2% reduction in useable fuel due to the material adsorption characteristics. A reduction in total helicopter vulnerability of 69.7% would be achieved for the 7.62mm AK [illegible]. This [illegible] was approved on 2 Jan 1969. As a class V modification.

(2) (U) As of this date this unit has not received any further information concerning [illegible].

(3) (U) Status: Approved; not yet received by this unit.

6. (S) On 12 July 1969 a mass infil of 400 [illegible] troops was scheduled to take place in barrel roll. This operation involved 5 CH-3's and 2 UH-1F's from the 20 SOS, 5 CH-3's from the [illegible], 4 H-3's from controlled American sources, 1 [illegible] cover aircraft and [illegible]. The 20 SOS seven aircraft deployed to [illegible] on 11 Jul [illegible] in place for an early morning take off. At 1430 11 Jul the mission was delayed 24 hours because of weather. On the morning of 13 Jul 69 weather conditions were such that the mission was again delayed. On the afternoon of 13 Jul the 20 SOS aircraft returned to Udorn. The mission was again scheduled for 17 Jul 69. All of the 20 SOS possessed aircraft 7 CH-3's and 2 UH-1F's deployed to NKP on 16 July 69 to be in position for the mass infil. Again on the morning of 17 July 69 weather conditions were bad enough to delay the mission. However, the weather improved and a 1000 take off was established. This time 7 [illegible]-3's and 2 [illegible]'s from the 20 SOS and 3 CH-3's from the 21st SOS were scheduled for the mission. The two UH-1F's were to function as high birds, one for each flight of six HH-3s. Capt G.R. Belanger was the mission commander of this mass infill. All of the aircraft were airborne by 1200 17 July 69. One [illegible] aborted because of flex shaft failure and was replaced by a 21st SOS CH-3. The SOU troops were picked up at a forward operating location and the mission proceeded to the target area with [illegible] helicopters and [illegible]'s.

CY 348

[redacted]

GROUP 4
Downgraded at 3 year Intervals; declassified after 12 years

The mission was programmed to take two shuttles from the forward operating location to the target. However, at the arrival time over the target, the weather had deteriorated to the extent that the infil was impossible. Another factor was the lack of radio contact with a team at the target area and no panels or smoke signals were observed. The mission was aborted and the troops were returned to the forward operating location. The mission was delayed until a later date. [illegible] to channel 70.

7. (U) Capt John [illegible] was instructing Lt Col [illegible] Silva on tight HLZ procedures in a [illegible] on [illegible]. As they were making an approach into a small HLZ surrou[illegible] by [illegible] trees number one engine fire warning light illuminated. The [illegible] number one engine and number two engine failed. [illegible] successfully landed the aircraft in the small HLZ without damage to the helicopter or any crew member. A number two engine was required. The crew was picked up by [illegible] Lillian Gunn in a UH-1F and returned 13 miles back to Udorn. The aircraft was secured with guards and remained over night in a training area 23/1 km from Udorn. The engine was changed on the 5 July 69 and returned to Udorn without further incident.

Mission Statistics:

	UH-1P JULY	UH-1P AUGUST	UH-1P SEPTEMBER	CH-3 JULY
Hours Flow	739.3	59[illegible].0	223.9	403.5
Missions F[illegible]ged:	261	279	41	74
Missions F[illegible] :	256	312	34	74
Sorties:	1395	1336	283	449
Passengers:	1387	814	23	860
Cargo (Tons):	25.2	16.9	1.9	41.5
Ordnance Expended:				
7.62 mm.:	29[illegible]	99,800	95,900	---
Rockets:	50[illegible]	171	293	---
Alert Hours:	61[illegible]	6180	6180	0 (SAR)

were merged and personnel with DEROS's of less than 90 days were sent to the CONUS. [65]

(U) To provide coverage for III and IV Corps, the FOL at Pleiku AB was closed down and moved to Bien Hoa AB to replace the 5SOS FOL. The 9SOS is presently the only Air Force psychological warfare squadron in the Republic and is responsible for the entire country for psychological operations. [66]

(U) The operation of all equipment was made more difficult during this period when SEA was reduced to a normal priority for aircraft parts. Both the O-2B and the C-47 need a fairly high parts replenishment rate. Since the 9SOS is the only operator of the O-2B in SEA, many parts are peculiar to this particular series of O-2 and there are very few available. [67]

(U) There were three major problem areas in the maintenance field that affected the squadron. There was a continued shortage of aircraft parts; the curtailment of qualified maintenance personnel with DEROS's of less than 90 days and the recovery from the effects of the relocation of the squadron to Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. [68]

(U) The 9SOS aircrews flew 1,662 hours in C-47s and 4,656 hours in O-2B aircraft. The combined total of leaflets dropped by the both type aircraft was well over 730 million. [69]

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

(U) Two units, the 15SOS and the 20SOS were under the control of the Deputy Commander for Special Operations, Colonel Milton Fuerst. Colonel

[redacted]

Fuerst replaced Colonel Ernest E. Bradley, Jr., during this period. The Deputy Commander for Special Operations is a position unique to the 14SOW with the two squadrons operating highly classified missions which preclude a detailed description of their activities.[70]

[redacted]

[redacted][71]

[redacted][72]

[redacted][73]

[redacted][74]

[redacted]

[redacted][75]

[redacted][76]

[redacted][77]

20TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON

(U) The 20SOS was commanded by Lt Colonel David K. Sparks until relieved by Lt Colonel Stephen Von Phul, 18 November 1969. Mission aircraft were UH-1P Gunship Helicopters.

(S) The mission of the 20SOS was unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, base defense, SAW training, psychological warfare and logistical support of USAF and U.S. sponsored activities.[78]

(S) During this period there were no significant changes in the primary mission. The gunships continued to provide support for the Army helicopters which carry the long-range reconnaissance patrols for the 5th Special Forces - CCS. [79]

(U) The 20SOS was relocated in accordance with the directives of the Nha Trang Proposal, to Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. The facilities greatly enhanced the squadron's operations and are both convenient and adequate. [80]

(U) Adequate replacements have been arriving to cover combat losses and rotations among the pilots. Even though there are many pilots on station at all times, it was often difficult to train the new ones into the mission due to numerous standdowns, assorted maintenance problems and a great deal of bad weather. On 1 December, there were only nine pilots in the squadron who were completely qualified for the mission and training. Training since that date has alleviated the situation. [81]

(S) It has been determined that to maintain four gunships on the mission at all times the squadron must possess a minimum of twelve aircraft. In order to support a slick operation, the requirement increases to at least 18 aircraft. [82]

(S) There were no appreciable changes to the mission flown by the 20SOS at Ban Me Thout. During the previous reporting period the Green Hornet Slicks were replaced by Army UH-1H helicopters and crews. The Green Hornet gunships continue to provide cover for the Army Slicks as they insert and extract the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols. [83]

(U) In late November, the Tan Son Nhut FOL was closed and all personnel at that detachment returned to the parent organization at Tuy Hoa. [84]

(U) A weather restriction has been imposed upon the UH-1P for enroute weather. Except in an emergency situation, the aircraft will not fly with a ceiling less than 500 feet or visibility less than one mile. [85]

(U) On 8 October 1969, a UH-1P gunship positioned itself to be refuled at the fuel pit be[illegible]the airstrip at Duc Co, RVN. After landing, the aircraft went into an unusual attitude, became airborne a short distance and crashed, eventually landing on its side. One gunner was pinned beneath the aircraft and the engine began to burn. After a few tense moments the fire was extinguished and the gunner was removed from the wreckage. He had suffered possible internal injuries and was immediately flown to the hospital at Pleiku AB. [86]

(U) A flight of four gunships, on 21 October, had just entered traffic at 600 feet for landing at Ban Me Thout East, RVN. They were requested to make a 360 degree turn to accomodate a departing aircraft. After approximately 160 degrees of turn, the pilot of the number two gunship heard the low RPM audio signal, observed a rapid decrease of rotor and engine RPM. Auto-rotation was made to a clearing that was covered with five foot tall elephant grass. Flare was initiated with reference being top of the elephant grass. The aircraft settled into the grass, touched down and rolled over on its side. Fire completely destroyed the aircraft with only minor injuries resulting to some of the crew members. [87]

[redacted]

(S) On 8 December 1969, a gunship was shot down while covering an extraction of a reconnaissance team in contact with the enemy. The aircraft, after taking many hits in the engine, crashed into some trees a short distance from the area where the hits were taken. The pilot and gunner were for a short time, trapped in the wreckage being knocked unconscious. The pilot suffered a serious head injury while the gunner only minor injuries, and the aircraft was destroyed. [88]

(U) The foremost problem encountered in the maintenance aspect was again FOD. The T-58 engine is very susceptable to foreign object damage as has been demonstrated by the rash of engine failures during the past six months. The squadron had been losing engines to FOD at the rate of 1.3 per month. A FOD prevention program was instituted and as of 31 December the squadron had experienced 25 FOD free days. [89]

(U) Approval has been received to put all aircraft through the IRAN facility at Corpus Christi, Texas. This action is expected to be complete by 30 June 1970. The first two aircraft will be received from the facility around 30 January 1970. [90]

[redacted]

RCS: 5900

HISTORICAL DATA RECORD

REPORTING PERIOD		REPORTS CONTROL SYMBOL
FROM: 1 OCTOBER 69	TO: 31 DECEMBER 69	AU-DS

FROM: (NAME AND LOCATION OF UNIT SUBMITTING THIS REPORT)
20th SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON
14th SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96316

TO:
14th SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING (DXI)

IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED FOR ANY ITEM, ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS INDICATING APPLICABLE ITEM NUMBER.

SECTION I — ASSIGNMENT

MAJOR AIR COMMAND	NUMBERED AIR FORCE	AIR DIVISION	WING	GROUP
PACAF	7th Air Force		14th SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING	

SECTION II — SUBORDINATE UNITS

Until late November 1969, there were two locations at which the 20th SOS was operating. In late November the 20th SOS Tan Son Nhut FOL was closed and all personnel at that detachment returned to the parent organization at Tuy Hoa AB, RVN. The Tuy Hoa unit continues to operate on a TDY basis from Ban Me Thuot East Field.

SECTION III — MISSIONS

A. PRIMARY

The present mission of the 20th SOS is unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, base defense, SAW training, psychological warfare, and logistical support of USAF units and US-sponsored activities.

B. SECONDARY (OR OTHER)

Rescue, and utility.

SECTION IV — PERSONNEL

STATUS	OFFICERS	AIRMEN	CIVILIANS	TOTAL
ASSIGNED	45	124	-	169
AUTHORIZED	52	110	2	164
ATTACHED	-	-	-	-

SECTION V — EQUIPMENT

A. AIRCRAFT

UH-1P 12
Possessed 12
IRAN 5

B. WEAPONS (INCLUDING MISSILES)

Mini-Guns (7.62mm.) 12
Rocket Launchers 14
M-60 (7.62mm.) 3

C. ELECTRONICS

D. OTHER

[redacted]

Bibliography:

Source:	Disposition:
1. Interview with Lt Col Stephen Von Phul, Commander 20 SOS	
2. Interview with Maj Francis H. Walls, Maintenance Officer	
3. Awards and Decorations Files	3. Awards and Decorations Section 20 SOS, Tuy Hoa AB, RVN
4. Interview with Capt Jerrald W. Smith, Sq. Instructor Pilot	
5. Maintenance Analysis Records	5. Maintenance Analysis Office Bld 1749, Tuy Hoa AB, RVN
6. Interview with Capt Charles T. Keir, Training Section	
7. Civic Action Report	7. Civic Actions Section, 20 SOS, Tuy Hoa AB, RVN
8. Tan Son Nhut FOL Historical Reports (Oct, Nov 69)	8. Historical File, 20 SOS Tuy Hoa AB, RVN
9. Monthly Operational Totals Report	9. Operations Office Clerk's Desk

[redacted]

1. (S) During the reporting period there have been no significant changes in the squadron's primary mission. The 20th SOS gunships continue to provide support for the Army helicopters which carry the Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrols of the 5th Special Forces - CCS.

(U) On 18 Nov 69 command of the squadron changed hands from Lt Col David K. Sparks to Lt Col Stephen Von Phul. Lt Col Sparks was reassigned as special assistant to the commander of 14th Special Operations Wing. Lt Col Von Phul's former position of Operations Officer was filled by Maj Jack H. Wenning.

(U) Since the last reporting period, the 20th SOS has moved to a new location on Tuy Hoa AB. The squadron is now occupying the new maintenance and operations building that was completed in November. The building has adequate room for the operations and administration sections in the upper floor. On the lower floor is located the personal equipment shop and the maintenance bench stock and repair shop. Maintenance offices are located in a smaller building across the driveway. This second building is shared with the 9th SOS. The repair shop is large enough to house two helicopters at a time, thus greatly enhancing the capability of maintenance in their inspection and repair. Besides providing more room and better working conditions, the new buildings are much closer to the UH-1P parking ramp than were facilities previously used by the squadron. Closer supervision of the total operation is now possible.

[redacted]

(U) An extensive FOD inspection and monitoring program has been started and appears to be successful. The FOD rate is down considerably from its previous level.

(U) At Ban Me Thuot East construction has started on a maintenance building, and the old revetments are being torn down to level and pave the parking ramp. New parking revetments will be built to replace the old. It is estimated that both projects will be finished by the end of February '70. (1)

(U) On 28 November 28 TDY maintenance personnel arrived from various stateside and SEA sources due to an increase by 26 slots of the maintenance UDL. PCS replacements will arrive by 31 Jan '70.

(U) During the reporting period adequate replacements have been arriving to cover combat losses and rotations among the pilots. Even though there were many pilots on station at all times, it was often very difficult to train the new ones into the mission due to numerous stand-downs, assorted maintenance problems, and a great deal of bad weather. On 1 Dec 69 there were only 9 pilots in the squadron who were completely qualified for the mission and training. Training since that date has alleviated the situation. (1)

(U) A request has been submitted to receive four more aircraft from Sheppard AFB and/or Hurlburt Field, Florida (Eglin Aux Field 9) and to accomplish in-country the training previously given at Hurlburt. A study of the effectiveness of training received at Hurlburt is in progress.

(U) Pilots arriving on-station directly from training at Sheppard AFB appear to be adequately trained in operation of the helicopter. The training at Hurlburt is supposed to be a Combat Crew Training School, but more often than not is a course of familiarization with the equipment and some further instruction in flying the helicopter. (1)

(S) It has been determined that to maintain four gunships on the mission at all times the squadron must possess a minimum of twelve aircraft. In order to support a slick and gun operation the requirement increases to at least 18 aircraft.

(S) There were no appreciable changes to the mission flown by the 20th SOS at Ban Me Thuot. During the previous reporting period the Green Hornet Slicks were replaced by Army UH-1H helicopters and crews. The Green Hornet gunships continue to provide cover for the Army Slicks as they insert and extract the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols.

(U) Another minor change to the mission is the inclusion of a restriction for enroute weather. Except in an emergency situation, the aircraft will not fly with a ceiling less than 500 feet or visibility less than one mile.

(U) 8 October 1969: Duc Co, RVN:

A UH-1P gunship positioned itself to be refueled at the fuel pit beside the airstrip. After landing, the aircraft went into an unusual attitude, became airborne a short distance and crashed, eventually landing on its side. One gunner was pinned beneath the aircraft, and

the engine began to burn. After a few tense moments the fire was extinguished and the gunner was removed from the wreckage. He had suffered possible internal injuries and was immediately flown to the hospital at Pleiku AB. (3)

(8) 14 October 1969: Vicinity of Duc Co, RVN:

The Green Hornet gunships were supporting a Vietnamese Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol in a second attempt that day to recover the entire team. Earlier, all team members but one had been picked up by the Slick helicopters after the team had come in contact with unfriendly forces. On this second attempt, the last man had been located, and the gunships made passes around the area while the slick tried to pick him up. Gun two was hit by enemy ground fire, and the bullet struck the copilot on the left arm, causing a minor wound. Gun two immediately turned and laid down heavy fire on the spot and silenced the enemy in that position. Guns 3 and 4 launched to replace Guns Lead and two. Meanwhile the slick had been able to pick up the patrol member on a McGuire Rig which is a long rope of approximately 130 feet with a sling at the lower end. The Slick moved the man a short distance to a suitable landing zone and landed to transfer him into the aircraft. While covering this operation, Gun 4 took a hit which went through the left cockpit door, through the copilot's left leg, and hit the pilot on his knee. The Slick in the landing zone also took hits but was able to depart with the team member safely inside. Wounded personnel were taken to medical facilities. (3)

~~SECRET~~

(S) 21 October 1969: V nity of Ban Me Thuot East, RVN:
A flight of four gunshi[p]s had returned from the sub-FOL, refueled at Ban Me Thuot City, and [were] enroute to Ban Me Thuot East for the night. About a mile fr[om] the field, while holding for outbound traffic, Gun two experienced eng[ine] failure and autorotated into a field. Elephant grass in the c[lear]ing was about 4 feet high. When the aircraft touched down the rig[h]t skid broke, and the helicopter rolled onto its right side and began to burn. The right gunner was caught with his head wedged between the ground and the upper frame of the right door. The crew tried to rescue him but were unable to get him out. Within seconds after impact the other three aircraft in the flight landed in the clearing, and the gunners and copilots from these birds ran to assist the trapped man. Nine men rolled the 8800-pound helicopter far enough for the trapped gunner to escape. Scant seconds after the man was rescued the fuel tank exploded, hurling shrapnel in all directions. A gunner and a pilot were hit by the shrapnel. The pilot received only a minor flesh wound on his chest, but the gunner was struck in the thigh and required extensive medical aid. An Army Slick helicopter landed in the clearing to pick up the wounded personnel, and everyone evacuated the area as quickly as possible, since the rockets and mini-gun ammunition on the burning aircraft was exploding. (3)

~~SECRET~~

(8) 8 December 1969: Vicinity of Ban Don, RVN:

A Reconnaissance team was in contact with enemy forces and requesting an extraction. The Forward Air Controller was not able to launch immediately, so the helicopters found the team by themselves and began the operation to remove the team. The gunships began making passes to determine the intentions of enemy gunners. On the first pass, Gun 2 took hits. On the second pass Gun Lead was hit many times in the area of the engine. Engine oil pressure went to zero, and the helicopter was flown away from the area of battle. A short distance away the engine failed and the aircraft was crash landed into the trees. One gunner was cut on the shin and knocked unconscious. The aircraft commander was knocked unconscious , and his feet and legs were trapped in the wreckage. Even though the electrical switchs were turned off, the fuel boost pumps continued to run and pumped a large pool of fuel onto the ground around the aircraft. The copilot and right gunner were able to remove themselves from the wreck and tried to remove the pilot. The left gunner regained consciousness and assisted in the attempt. An Army Slick landed in an LZ nearby, and one of the gunners assisted in freeing the pilot. Enemy gunfire was heard nearby, and one of the Army gunners returned fire with his M-16. The crew of the downed helicopter was loaded on the slick and flown from the area. During the rescue of the helicopter crew, Gun 3 launched and assisted in rescuing the Recon

team.

It was later learned that the pilot had suffered some brain damage. He was flown to the States and is under medical treatment at Wilford Hall Hospital.

Maintenance: (2)

(U) The foremost problem encountered during the reporting period was that of FOD. The T-58 engine is very susceptible to Foreign Object Damage as has been demonstrated by the rash of engine failures during the past six months. The squadron had been losing engines to FOD at the rate of 1.3 per month. An FOD Prevention program was instituted, and as of 31 December the squadron had experienced 25 FOD-free days.

(U) Approval has been received to put all aircraft through the IRAN facility at Corpus Christi Texas. This action is expected to be complete by 30 Jun 70. The first two aircraft will be received from the facility around 30 Jan 70.

(U) The new buildings the squadron now occupies are a great help to the maintenance section. The main building's large working space increases the amount of maintenance and inspection work that can be done.

(U)Maintenance manning has been increased by 26 slots in the UDL.

(U) Weather has been the single greatest hindrance to progress during the months of November and December. FCF flights and outdoor maintenance were hampered many days by rain, low ceilings, and high winds. An increase in corrosion has been noticed lately. This is due to the

(U) proximity of the aircraft to the South China Sea. The winds are constantly off the water in the order of twenty knots and are laden with salt spray.

(U) An extensive unit-level inspection and repair program has been instituted, and by the end of the reporting period six aircraft had been run through the process. It is estimated that the program will be completed by 11 Feb. The extensive work being done on the aircraft should reduce the time each aircraft will spend in the IRAN facility.

(U) During the month of November 56 man-hours were expended for each hour of flying time. During December the figure jumped to 100 man-hours or more. It is calculated that the amount will be reduced to approximately 45 man-hours per flying hour once the extensive maintenance is completed. Sheet metal repair is consuming a large percentage of the man-hours.

(U) Construction has started on a new maintenance hangar at Ban Me Thuot East, and preliminary work to cover the parking ramp with AM-2 matting is under way.

(U) A forward supply point has been established at the Ban Me Thuot FOL. This system and the communication capability of the new SSB equipment make possible control over supply assets to an extent never before available.

(U) . The KY-28 secure speech system is being installed in all aircraft. Five aircraft had been so modified by the end of the reporting period.

(U) Maintenance personnel from the former detachment at Tan Son Nhut AB joined the force at Tuy Hoa when the Saigon unit was closed in early December. 28 TDY maintenance personnel arrived in November to assist the squadron.

(S) Maintenance Statistics:

	OCT	NOV	DEC
O/R Rate:	71.9%	58.8%	81.7%
Aircraft Utilization Rate (Hours per Aircraft)	33.3	9.4	32.1
Aircraft Utilization Rate Authorized	60.0	60.0	60.0
Aircraft Possessed	14.9	12.8	13.2
Aircraft Authorized	15	15	15
Aircraft Assigned	17	17	17
NORS Rate	9.7%	6.3%	4.8%
NORM Rate	18.5%	34.9%	13.5%

(5)

Training:

(U) Formal training for pilots, gunners and maintenance personnel is being conducted on a regular basis. Training for pilots consists of initial briefings and flight checks for incoming personnel, upgrading to aircraft commander, instructor pilot, or flight examiner for experienced personnel. When necessary, proficiency training is given. Emergency procedure training is given at 45-day intervals.

(U) Training for gunners consists of the normal incoming briefings, training rides and a check ride. Ground crew and gunners are further

(U) trained in the OJT program. Most of the enlisted personnel are TDY a large percentage of the time and are therefore unable to have good continuity in their OJT training. It is believed that the increased maintenance UDL will alleviate this problem. It is anticipated that 35% of the maintenance personnel will be able to participate in an upgrading training program.

(U) Approximately 50% of the maintenance personnel are fresh outputs of USAF formal schools. In certain ways the training has not been adequate. The new arrival is equipped to perform the mission but is not prepared to upgrade. (2) (6)

Civic Actions:

(U) During the month of October the Squadron contributed $259.10 to the Dollard for Scholars drive.

(U) Montagnard children in the vicinity of Ban Me Thuot were given 144 dental hygiene kits, 22 haircuts, and 9 pairs of tennis shoes. Several packages from the ZI have been received and distributed. An effort to increase this input to the civic actions work will be made. (7)

Awards and Decorations:

(U) During the reporting period the following numbers of awards and decorations were approved for presentation:

Air Force Cross	1	Air Medal	190
Silver Star	6	Purple Heart	6
Distinguished Flying Cross	34		

(3)

20th SOS at Tan Son Nhut FOL:

(U) The 20th SOS FOL at Tan Son Nhut AB was closed during the reporting period. The process of closing the detachment was accomplished in many gradual steps over a long period of time. Therefore, no specific date can be given as the date the unit ceased to exist. Operations were ceased on 19 November 1969 when the last of the two aircraft was flown to Tuy Hoa to join the force at that location. A skeleton crew remained at the FOL to take care of closing out supply accounts and transferring supplies and vehicles to Tuy Hoa. The last 20th SOS man and vehicle departed Tan Son Nhut 13 December 1969.

(U) TSN FOL Statistics:

Missions Fragged	56
Missions Flown	52
Operational Sorties	223
Maintenance Sorties	24
Flying Hours	94.1
Cargo (tons)	7.5
Passengers	359

(U) 20th SOS Operational Statistics:

	OCT	NOV	DEC
Missions Fragged	152	23	150
Missions Flown	141	15	149
Flying Time	496.5	120.9	432.9
Total Sorties	803	165	622
7.62 mm. Rounds Expended	199,000	8,000	363,500
Rockets Expended	641	27	386
Cargo (ton	9.1	1.0	0.9
Passengers	304	27	18