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Aerospace Rescue and Recovery— Southeast Asia to Apollo

[Brigadier General Allison C. Brooks](#)

Shortly before noon on 15 March 1966, the Gemini VIII capsule was traveling at approximately 17,000 miles per hour, 150 miles high, over Red China. At the same time an HC-54 of Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) was traveling at 180 miles per hour, 1½ miles high, some 400 miles east of Okinawa. At 1222 hours local time, both these vehicles arrived at 25° 02' N, 136° W, and Gemini VIII, making a contingency landing, splashed down in the rolling swells of the Pacific. Moments earlier, the HC-54 crew had sighted the spacecraft descending, and the rescue crew commander quickly executed a standard pattern to put the pararescue team in the water. Within a few minutes, the first two swimmers were attaching the flotation collar to the spacecraft. A third pararescueman was then deployed. Thus, some 20 minutes after sighting, the spacecraft was secure, and the world knew that the astronauts were A-OK.

During the same week, from the rice paddies of South Vietnam's delta to the jungles of North Vietnam, other rescue crews in Southeast Asia (SEA) made 15 combat saves; and some 8000 miles away a Rescue HH-43B helicopter saved seven civilians from drowning during the floods in western Turkey.

Routine activity during this period included participating in two NORAD exercises, flying 12 orbits for tactical fighter aircraft transiting the Atlantic and the Pacific, and maintaining precautionary orbits for other operations of a classified nature. All these missions had one thing in common: they were performed by crews of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service and were in response to mission requirements which are today—after two decades of service in peace and war—a way of life in Rescue around the world. Three hundred sixty-five days a year, ARRS is involved in planning for or conducting operations ranging from the rice paddies and jungles of SEA to the sophisticated aspects of astronaut and hardware recovery as an integral part of DOD participation with NASA in the U.S. space program.

For 19 years the command was known as Air Rescue Service. Then in January 1966 the name was changed to Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, to denote the increasing scope and diversity of its mission.

mission

As a major subcommand of the Military Airlift Command, ARRS constitutes the Air Force's primary search, rescue, and recovery force. Broadly stated, its mission is to provide a worldwide capability to search for, locate, and recover personnel and aerospace hardware in support of USAF and other DOD global aerospace operations. Rescue missions, carried out in all areas of the free world, fall into four broad categories: aircrew recovery, manned space flight recovery, precautionary and emergency search and rescue. On an average of more than 100 times every 24 hours, there is a requirement for rescue operations of one kind or another over a wide area of the globe.

The United States has traditionally placed a high value on human life. While the broad concept of search and rescue is essentially humanitarian, its military application provides many real and practical advantages. Throughout its history, ARRS thinking has been oriented to the recovery of downed combat aircrewmembers. Since trained aircrew members represent an invaluable national resource, their rescue or recovery, especially in combat, is directly in the national interest. In the space program, the recovery of costly aerospace hardware is important to related research and analysis, and the return of high-value

items that would otherwise be irretrievably lost is of definite monetary significance.

organization

Presently ARRS has over 90 units of various types at 84 locations in the United States and 17 foreign countries. Its headquarters is in Orlando, Florida. Overall command and control is exercised through five centers—three in the United States, one in Germany, and one in Hawaii. The 3d Group in Tan Son Nhut is the focal point for all Southeast Asia operations. Flying Operations are carried out by 14 squadrons and 62 detachments, which are responsive to the ZI and overseas theater commanders' operational control in their respective areas. Rescue also operates several joint search and rescue (SAR) centers that provide professional know-how for the unified commands in their areas of responsibility.

resources

Approximately 4800 officers, airmen, and civilians constitute the personnel resources of the command.

Equipment resources are presently undergoing a major modernization program for the first time since the Korean conflict. ARRS is authorized a total of 277 aircraft, 90 of them fixed-wing, 187 rotary-wing. Exclusive of different models, three types of fixed-wing and two types of rotary-wing aircraft comprise the current inventory.

For over 17 years an old workhorse and veteran of two wars has done yeoman service—the HU-16 Grumman Albatross. It has been the only fixed-wing aircraft capable of performing a rescue on water, and its effectiveness today will be readily attested to by over 80 aircrew members who have been recovered from the Gulf of Tonkin since 1964. Over the years it has proved to be a very versatile aircraft. It has a 2500-mile cruising range and can land on water, ice, or snow. Its usefulness is limited, however, by its slow speed, low altitude, and age, and it is being phased out.

The Boeing HC-97G Stratocruiser was especially modified in 1964 for rescue work and is still serving in limited numbers as an interim aircraft until ARRS units are fully equipped with the new HC-130H Lockheed Hercules. The Stratocruiser has done an excellent job, its range, speed, and altitude providing a substantial increase in capability over another old workhorse, the HC-54, which was utilized most effectively from 1956 until July 1966.

The modernization program, insofar as fixed-wing aircraft are concerned, is based on the introduction of the HC-130H. This aircraft will be the primary fixed-wing rescue aircraft for some time to come. It has substantial range and an average speed of 300 miles an hour. It can cross the Atlantic nonstop and the Pacific with one refueling and can remain airborne for more than 22 hours. Powered by four turboprop engines, it is fitted with specialized rescue equipment and has a capability for both surface-to-air and air-to-air recovery. Its relatively short landing and take-off distances provide added flexibility, which significantly increases the capability for rescue and recovery on a global basis. The HC-130H will play a key role in the recovery of astronauts and all space equipment, particularly in combination with the new helicopters utilizing air refueling.

Of rotary-wing aircraft, the Kaman HH-43 Huskie has been in our inventory since 1961. It has been employed around the world local base rescue (LBR) units and utilized effectively and extensively in SEA in both an LBR and aircrew recovery (ACR) role. A limited number of them have been converted to F models the addition of armor plate and installation a new and more powerful engine. Both versions in Vietnam are fitted with an extra-long 217-foot hoist cable which, with the forest penetrator, has made it possible to effect many rescues from the heavy jungles in that area.

The newest helicopter we have operational is the Sikorsky HH-3C/3E. The C models are assigned to Detachment 15, EARRC, Patrick AFB, Florida, the unit responsible for providing an air recovery force in the Cape Kennedy launch site area. The HH-3E model provides an all-weather amphibious capability and is one of the first aircraft specifically designed for duty in rescue and recovery operations. It is a long-range, heavy-duty helical with a relatively high cruising speed of 140 knots.

The HH-3 series is equipped with a 10,000-pound-capacity external cargo hook, a 2000- pound-capacity cargo winch, and a 600-pound personnel hoist for use under a wide variety of sea conditions, as well as in jungle and mountainous terrain. It has a hydraulically operated rear ramp for straight on-loading of equipment or for personnel. These aircraft are being equipped with a refueling probe, and in combination with the HC-130H tanker version, they will provide a flexibility for search, location, and recovery of personnel and equipment on a scale heretofore not possible.

Another helicopter with increased capability and even more advanced rescue systems, the Sikorsky HH-53, will be introduced into the inventory early in 1967. This aircraft will be equipped for aerial refueling and will provide range, speed, altitude, and lift capability exceeding that of any previous operational rotary-wing aircraft.

precautionary and emergency missions

Any Air Force fighter pilot who has flown across one of the oceans is familiar with the DUCKBUTT, which is a precautionary orbit mission flown to provide navigation, communications relay, and on-the-spot rescue assistance for transoceanic deployment. In the Pacific there are 21 DUCKBUTT positions, and in the Atlantic 20. Several of these may be required simultaneously, depending on the nature of the aircraft deployments and exercises. As many as nine aircraft per day are required for these missions.

Major users are TAC, PACAF, USAFE, and ADC. Even though Rescue aircraft are flying DUCKBUTT missions at oceanic and remote locations, an immediate scramble capability is required at each of the 12 squadron locations 24 hours a day. These alert aircraft respond to any emergency and are the initial forces deployed for emergency search purposes. Emergency response is also required for intercept and escort of lost or disabled aircraft, or for parachuting medically qualified pararescue teams to distressed personnel.

Depending on the circumstances, flotation or sustenance gear may be provided to survivors, or recovery may be made with the HC-130 surface-to-air recovery system or the HH-3 helicopter. These capabilities, combined with the precautionary posture, constitute the normal day-to-day worldwide support provided to Air Force crews by rescue aircraft.

local base rescue

Local base rescue units are located at 62 bases in the United States and overseas. These units operate the HH-43 Huskie helicopter, and a detachment normally consists of two or three helicopters and 12 to 18 officers and men. Their primary responsibility is to perform the rescue function within a 75-mile radius of the air base on which they are located.

The Huskie was the first to use a new technique for suppressing aircraft fires. The unusual rotor configuration of this helicopter makes it admirably suited to its job. The rotor wash, which is directed slightly forward and swirls outward, enables firemen to make maximum use of the cooling blast of fresh air, which blows away smoke and helps spread the foam that smothers the fire. For this purpose, the Huskie carries fire-fighting equipment known as a fire Suppression kit (FSK). It is a 10000-pound

device with water and chemical agents that form about 850 gallons of foam. The system combines the speed and agility of the helicopter over rough terrain with the fire-fighting ability of a fire or crash truck. Since taking over the LBR mission, these units have saved more than 2000 lives.

hurricane evacuation

One little-known rescue mission that is primarily the responsibility of the Headquarters Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service is hurricane evacuation. ARRS prepares the Joint Military Aircraft Hurricane Evacuation Plan (OP PLAN 507) for the Continental U.S., and it is binding on all military bases.

When a hurricane threatens, as many as 6000 military aircraft from 117 Eastern and Gulf Coast bases are programmed to deploy to 143 refuge bases throughout the United States. Continuous coordination with these 260 bases involves working out the many problems required to ensure an effective evacuation and reception. Consideration must be given to types of aircraft involved, fuels required, ranges, runway lengths, and numerous other variables directly dependent on the nature of the threatening storm and the types and missions of aircraft in jeopardy. In 1966, during hurricane Alma, 944 aircraft were evacuated from 21 bases, 900 being moved in one 28-hour period. In 1964 and 1965 a total of 6735 aircraft were evacuated to refuge bases.

inland SAR

In 1961 the Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force, appointed the Commander, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, the executive agent for inland search and rescue operations. Under the provisions of the National SAR Manual, a Joint Services publication, ARRS is charged with the coordination of all SAR activities. The three ZI centers located at Robins AFB, Georgia, Richards-Gebaur AFB, Missouri, and Hamilton AFB, California, handle these missions. Dependent upon the nature of the incident, these centers can call upon any federal agency having the capability to assist. This includes other units of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and Civil Air Patrol.

In addition, the centers are continuously in coordination with state and local governments, police, sheriff, and fire departments, local skin diver clubs, and other rescue organizations. Whether it be a lost hunter, fisherman, or private pilot, these three centers are charged with the responsibility of directing and coordinating the search. In prosecution of inland SAR missions, the Civil Air Patrol has consistently performed in an outstanding manner. These pilots make their service and aircraft available on very short notice, often leaving their places of employment for several days during the course of a mission. While they are reimbursed for gas and oil, they bear all other expenses themselves. Over the years their services have been invaluable on literally thousands of missions. During a typical year, 1965, the three centers participated in a total of 439 missions involving 6348 aircraft and 1170 people.

reserve units

In addition to the regular rescue units, ARRS is also responsible for providing supervision of training and flying safety programs for five Reserve Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadrons located at Homestead AFB, Florida, Luke AFB, Arizona, March AFB, California, Portland IAP, Oregon, and Selfridge AFB, Michigan. Three of the reserve squadrons currently fly the HU-16 aircraft, and the two squadrons at Selfridge and March have been converted to the HC-97.

During the past years these squadrons have participated in almost every type of mission that ARRS has been required to support. In order to utilize these resources for preplanned missions, reservists must

volunteer to accept the flights, provide qualified crews, and obtain Continental Air Command approval to allocate the man-days required. In case of an emergency SAR mission, crews may be launched without prior approval, but CAC is notified as soon as practicable in the course of the mission.

Considering the nature of the reserve squadron operation and the fact that the reservists do not maintain an alert posture, their response and speed into action on actual missions have been remarkable. They have typical Rescue *esprit de corps*, and participation in these missions provides them realistic training and a real sense of belonging to the Rescue team.

space recovery operations

Although Rescue has provided recovery support to NASA since the first Mercury flight, NASA activities are expanding so greatly that by 1968 total requirements will outstrip present Rescue capability to meet both Air Force and NASA commitments simultaneously. NASA requirements are levied on Rescue by the DOD Manager for Manned Space Flight Support Operations. These requirements include helicopters to cover the launch pad, HC-130s in the launch abort area from Bermuda to the African Coast, and aircraft for contingency areas around the globe between 40° N and 40° S.

In the Atlantic and Pacific, air and naval task forces operating under the DOD Manager are broken down into two broad groups, each of which covers half the world. The Commander, Task Force 130, exercises command and control from Hawaii, and CTF 140 from Cape Kennedy. Both report to the DOD Manager, who is located in Houston, Texas, with his NASA counterparts.

In typical deployment for an Apollo lunar mission over 30 HC-130H aircraft will be involved, the majority deployed over a wide area of the world for periods ranging from seven to fifteen days. (See accompanying map.) The HC-130 is capable of flying well over 2000 miles and loitering for an acceptable period of time. Employing a sophisticated tracking gear, designated the AN/ARD-17, it can pinpoint and track the spacecraft to its landing area. This equipment operates in both the UHF and "S" band spectrum and provides a permanent record of tracking data. It furnishes visual indications of the strength and spectrum of the signal being received and provides an audio tracking indication. With four to nine HC-130s deployed in an array, a rapid series of cross-plotted positions can be established to obtain an accurate azimuth during a spacecraft reentry and splashdown. Incidentally, this same equipment has proved invaluable for locating downed aircrew members electronically at ranges heretofore unachievable, on a 24-hour basis under all weather conditions.

Rescue's ability to respond to a contingency operation was clearly demonstrated during the early landing of GT-VIII in the western Pacific, when the HC-54 actually observed the spacecraft before it hit the water. Since the Gemini program ended, detailed planning is under way for Apollo. This is a much more complex mission and poses more difficult recovery problems than have been faced before. Studies are in progress which point toward an all-air recovery force. The concepts are feasible, and significant dollar savings could be achieved over an extended period of time.

aircrew recovery

The most pressing mission today is aircrew recovery in Southeast Asia. After the Korean War, Rescue Service was reduced to an all-time low, and even the wartime mission clause was withdrawn from the mission statement. But in 1965 ARRS was once again given its traditional mission of rescuing combat personnel from hostile areas in time of war. With the introduction of tactical forces into the Vietnam conflict in 1964, the requirement for an aircrew recovery force was quickly recognized. Unfortunately,

in the years following Korea, Rescue capability had been seriously impaired, and technology in the ACR area had not kept pace with the buildup and modernization of tactical forces. In 1963 the decision was made to undertake the first step in the modernization of the Rescue forces, and in early 1964 the first Rescue aircraft were introduced into SEA on a temporary duty basis. Since that time there has been a sizable buildup in men, aircraft, and equipment. During the past twenty months Rescue activities in that area of the world have expanded by leaps and bounds.

The mission narratives covering hundreds of rescues often read like the Hollywood script of a Western movie with the cavalry coming to the rescue in the final moments. Operating over some of the most difficult terrain and in some of the most hazardous weather in the world, Rescue has established a record equal to or surpassing that achieved in the Korean War.

Working closely with the tactical forces of the Seventh Air Force, ARRS has employed a number of highly effective techniques and procedures. These are constantly being refined as the introduction of new equipment and periodic changes in the hostile environment dictate. While many of the reports are classified because of their relationship to the tactical operation, a number of rescue missions have been covered in the press and other national news media. Statements such as the following describe typical missions:

. . . when we reached a hover and started looking we also received heavy ground fire. . . copilot kept us clear of the trees and while we were in a hover the “Sandys” (A1-E’s) strafed to our right. They too received intense ground fire, taking several hits. The “Sandys” then laid a smoke screen with white phosphorous bombs, and strafed as we came in for the pick up. Our paramedics saw the man and direct me until he was under us. The copilot again kept us out of the trees while we were hovering until we got the pilot on the forest penetrator and brought him up. . . .

On the water, Rescue crews have been involved in many equally difficult recoveries.

. . . the open sea conditions gave us a few bad moments, and as a result the aircraft experienced a badly damaged right elevator. Immediately after touchdown, all hell broke loose in the form of extremely heavy enemy fire from the shore. Several large explosions occurred within 50 yards of the aircraft, and the sound of small arms fire was continuous. As we approached the downed pilot, a pararescueman dove into the water with a rope tied around his waist. As other crew members attempted to pull the pilot into the aircraft, it was found that the rope that was fastened to his chute harness was tangled around his legs. . . the radio operator raced back and with his knife cut the rope, and then assisted in bringing the pilot and pararescueman back aboard. A high speed taxi run was initiated directly away from shore. Several explosions were rapidly approaching the aircraft from the rear, and we made a quick 60° turn. Our new heading made for a difficult takeoff, but it was successfully accomplished followed by a routine return to base. Special notice must be taken of the unusual support provided by the Rescap aircraft. As we departed the area, I looked back and saw about a three mile stretch of shore that was completely blacked out by smoke, dust and flying debris.

The support provided by fighters is indicated by a typical comment:

The Skyraider pilots really did the work today. . . . They marked the area where the pilot was, and flew close cover for us. . . . It would not have been possible to

conduct the mission without the A-1's excellent cover and fire support while we made our approach and pickup. The A-1 delayed the fifth VC attack long enough for our helicopters to dash in and out making the save.

The support provided by the tactical units of the USAF, as well as by comrades-in-arms from the Navy and the Army, has been uniformly superb. One unit in particular must receive special recognition. Operating day in and day out with the "Jolly Green" helicopters, the A-1E "Sandys" (also affectionately known as "Super Spads") have performed with the highest standards of professionalism and valor. In SEA today Rescue is truly a teamwork operation, and the "Jolly Green" and "Crown" crews have been proud to fly in the company of such gallant and dedicated men from all the tactical units.

While teamwork is the essence of all rescue operations, one segment of the team deserves special mention—the pararescuemen. These men, all volunteers, are highly trained in four specific skills: they are scuba qualified by the Navy, trained in all phases of parachute work by the Army, and qualified as expert medical technicians and survival specialists by the Air Force. After volunteering they go through approximately one year of very rigorous and intensive training before receiving the coveted maroon beret. They provide the capability to go beyond the confines of the machine and effect a successful recovery under a wide range of weather and terrain conditions.

When he jumps into the open sea, the pararescueman's equipment weighs somewhere between 160 and 180 pounds, often more than the man himself. In addition to his scuba tank, he carries two parachutes, two different types of flotation gear, a medical kit, knife, shark repellent, radio, etc., all of which may be necessary to cope with the environment in which he finds himself.

Time and again pararescuemen have parachuted to the aid of injured survivors, and they have been increasingly employed in the space recovery program. They are a highly dedicated professional group, and some of them have given their lives in the course of carrying out combat assignments. A1C William Pitsenbarger was the first member of Rescue to win the Air Force Cross (posthumously), the award being presented to his parents by the Chief of Staff on 22 September 1966.

international cooperation

From Thule in the north to New Zealand in the south, Turkey to the east and Vietnam and Japan to the west, Rescue crews have served as unofficial good-will ambassadors in the performance of missions that accrue important dividends as by-products of the primary mission. They have given assistance over a wide area of the free world in many diverse situations. Indicative of the magnitude of this contribution to international good will is the simple fact that Over 100 persons in 15 foreign countries have been rescued or provided assistance over the past year and a half. The value of this service cannot be translated into finite terms, but it rests firmly on its own merits as a magnanimous contribution of friendship and good will.

Several typical instances might be mentioned:

- In the summer of 1966 Captains James A. Darden and Robert S. Henderson rescued 37 Italian civilians in Aviano, Italy, flying their HH-43B helicopter under difficult and demanding conditions in extremely adverse weather. For their selfless action they received the Cheney Award.
- Earlier that same year two pararescuemen of the 79th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron jumped into the open sea and rescued the survivors of a Japanese fishing vessel

that had run aground during a storm near Guam.

- The 58th ARBS Squadron at Wheelus Air Base in Libya demonstrated the search and rescue capabilities of its HC-130H aircraft to a group of Libyan government officials, bringing the U.S. Ambassador's thanks for "a helpful adjunct to our diplomatic efforts."
- Haiti has issued a stamp commemorating the ARRS assistance following a disastrous windstorm at the town of Dame-Marie.
- ARRS help in searching for and rescuing a Panamanian aircraft brought expressions of gratitude from a high official of the government of Panama.

In a very real sense, these and all our rescue activities represent a clear-cut example of the U.S. as a stalwart friend in time of need. They have been effective again and again as a tangible demonstration of our national principles of humanitarianism in both peace and war. Although it is difficult to assess the direct value of such actions, certainly tangible dividends do accrue to the United States Air Force—and in a broader sense to the United States. Few organizations have the opportunity to reap such rich human-interest dividends from such a modest investment. Letters and citations from U.S. ambassadors and citizens and governments of many foreign countries clearly indicate the importance of our far-flung rescue efforts.

future developments

ARRS is in a period of major change. Requirements in all areas are increasing, and the command is presently involved in a major modernization program unequalled since its inception. The formation of the HC-130H/HH-3E and HC-130H/HH-53 air-refueling teams will form the basis of operations for several years to come. The HC-130H, as indicated previously, provides a major increase in capability. The surface-to-air and air-to-air recovery systems, coupled with in-flight refueling of the helicopter, gives it a flexibility for rescue and recovery unequalled by any previous rescue aircraft.

Planning actions have been in progress for some time to develop concepts and define equipment for the period on through 1975. While current emphasis is naturally being placed on combat aircrew recovery in Southeast Asia, it is vital to look ahead to other pressing requirements that have been generated by the major air commands, DOD, and NASA.

Night recovery techniques, involving low light-level TV or passive infrared, are natural extensions brought about by concurrent developments in research and development. This will provide a quantum jump in capability, since it will essentially double the time in which Rescue has traditionally performed search, location, and recovery operations. Long-range studies under way envision a Rescue structure which will enable the flying units to respond even more effectively to the requirements levied on them.

A major study is under way of a recovery version of the V/STOL aircraft, which must possess a relatively low downwash velocity. Speeds around 400 knots and ranges well in excess of 500 nautical miles with internal fuel are typical of the considerations presently under study. In the ACR role there is a requirement to incorporate armament, terrain avoidance radar, a night-viewing system, and in-flight refueling. Consistent with state-of-the-art development, aircraft of this type could actually accompany tactical forces to the strike areas so that response for recovery operations would be immediate. Under certain conditions midair recovery may be feasible, and exploration along this line is under way. Surface-to-air recovery of packages, capsules, or personnel is already a proven technique. Recently Rescue HC-130s have completed several missions at ranges in excess of 4000 miles. Package pickups,

midway during an 18-hour flight profile, were successfully executed in a routine manner.

One of the greatest lessons learned from a study of the post-Korean period is that development of Rescue forces must keep pace with the development of the tactical forces which they support. In this regard, the 48th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron at Eglin AFB, Florida, is undergoing expansion. Ultimately it will be the Rescue Tactical Training Unit (TTU) for five different types of aircraft and will be the centralized training agency for all new techniques, such as the air-to-air and surface-to-air recovery systems. Colocation with the Special Air Warfare and Tactical Air Warfare Centers provides a unique opportunity for development of concepts and doctrine and for joint testing and evaluation by the Tactical Air Command and ARRS.

Recently approval was received for the establishment of an operating location in Hq TAC. This will provide for close coordination and liaison on a first-hand basis with one of Rescue's biggest customers. In the conventional area, Rescue provides instructors to the United States Coast Guard School at Governors Island, New York. This relationship is the culmination of years of close cooperation and coordination between the USCG and ARRS on a wide variety of common objective missions.

Support of Apollo and other space programs, coupled with traditional requirements, fairly well defines the course for ARRS in the years ahead. ARRS has a logical mission in space along with the rest of the Air Force, limited only by the state of the art and space flight techniques. The basic requirement is valid and is receiving steadily increasing emphasis as man progresses farther into space. Rescue in space is a logical extension of the traditional humanitarian role, with certain added political and public-opinion impacts.

Since the organization of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service in May 1946, rescuemen have saved over 12,000 people from certain death and 88 aircraft from destruction. In addition, direct aid or assistance has been provided to over 50,000 people and 59,000 aircraft. In total, over 111,000 different rescue missions have been accomplished during more than half a million flying hours. The pace keeps increasing, and the present rate now exceeds some 40,000 individual sorties of all types in a year. It is impossible to assess the morale value of this effort in finite terms or to calculate the tangible savings to this country of rescued personnel, yet whenever the spine-tingling "Mayday, mayday, mayday, mayday" is heard, Rescue forces will be on the way.

Rescue is receiving detailed attention and consideration at the highest military and political levels. Every effort is being made to justify the confidence placed in ARRS and to further develop and enhance its capability to respond rapidly and effectively around the world.

On 19 January 1966 President Johnson awarded the 38th Air Rescue Squadron the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary gallantry. The citation read in part:

. . . they repeatedly jeopardized their own lives by exposing themselves to hostile air and ground fire while flying unarmed aircraft in order to rescue survivors downed in hostile territory. . . . the extreme heroism displayed by this unit in effecting rescues under the most perilous of circumstances has had a most beneficial effect upon the morale of all who fly over hostile territory in Southeast Asia. . . .

In less than two years, ARRS has brought back over 500 combat personnel to fight another day, this number representing over three full wings of aircrew members.

Around the world, whether our recovery activities are in connection with sophisticated space operations

or in rice paddies and jungles, Rescue crews are alert and ready to perform their duties quickly and efficiently in order “That Others May Live.”

Hq Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service

Contributor

Brigadier General Allison C. Brooks (B.S., University of California) is Commander, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service. After completing cadet training in 1940, he served as flying instructor at Randolph AFB and at bases of the West Coast Training Center. He transitioned to four-engine bombardment aircraft in 1942, then served as a squadron commander and as Deputy Commander, 34th and 88th Bomb Groups. He went to England with the 401st Bomb Group in 1943, and in mid-1944 became Executive Officer, then Commander, 1st Air Division P-51 Fighter Scouting Force. Postwar assignments have been in the Tactical Air Command; as student, Air Command and Staff School; instructor, Army Command and General Staff College; student, Air War College; in wing command and headquarters staff assignments in the Military Airlift Command in Europe and the United States; and as Deputy Commander, 2d Air Division, Vietnam, prior to his current assignment in March 1965.

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