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RECORD4 :

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Case Summary Information:

Refno : 1184 Name : ROBERTSON, JOHN HARTLEY
Service : A LossRank : E7 Idate : 5/20/68 Status : XX
Ctry : LA Province : SALAVAN
OffscopeCase : N PriorityCase : N FateDetermined : NA

Narrative :

On 20 May 1968, SFC John H. Robertson was the only American aboard a Vietnamese Air Force H-34 which was attempting to resupply an American Special Forces unit which had been under heavy enemy fire. As the helicopter approached a landing zone near the unit's location it received heavy enemy ground fire. The pilot attempted to pull away and, losing engine power, turned the aircraft toward the northeast. The helicopter then struck a row of trees, exploded into flames, and crashed on a hillside. American witnesses, both on the ground and aboard nearby aircraft, saw the aircraft crash and burn. According to these witnesses, there was no indication that anyone survived the incident.

U.S. Government Information:

WartimeLivesight : N SpecialReporting : N
WartimeCrashGrave : N WartimeMediaRpts : N
DogtagRpts : N PostwarMediaRpts : N
UncorrelatedRpts : N SignifUsInfo : N
RemainsReportedPrior : N

Narrative :
NA

Joint Investigations Information:

NumberofInvestig : 0.00 JTFWitness : NA
FoundCrashsite : NA SignifInfoJointInvest : N
PotentialLocations : Y

Narrative :
NA

Unilateral Information:

UnifInfo : N CtryProvidedFilm : NA
CtryofInfo : NA CtryProvidedRemains : NA
ValueofInfo : NA SignifInfoUniAction : N

Narrative :

SUMMARY: Mr. Ho Si Thi, a former militia commander in the area of the loss, has been interviewed twice regarding the incident. During an interview conducted in 1991, Mr. Thi stated that on 20 May 1968 communist forces, comprised of the Huong Son village militia and PAVN soldiers from Unit 643, Station 42, shot down a helicopter and later found two bodies on a hill near the crash site. He described the bodies as being so decomposed and swollen that it was impossible to determine if they were Vietnamese or American. In an interview conducted two years later, however, Thi stated that he had viewed two bodies near the wreckage a week after the crash and they were ARVN soldiers. He further stated that his observations were cursory and he did not examine the aircraft wreckage for any additional bodies. Mr. Thi reported that the crash site was located at the bottom of a hill, but that due to the passage of time he

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would be unable to find the exact location. He identified the area on a map as being near YC565710.

Postwar Source Reporting: JCRC Liaison Bangkok, msg 090929Z Oct 91, reports the initial interview of Mr. Thi. AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE msg 280352Z Dec 93, recounts the second and final Thi interview.

Knowledgeability Information:

SeaCtryKnowLoss : Y

WhichCtryKnew : VN

MoreInfo : P

KnowledgeNarr :

Source, Mr. Ho Si Thi, appears to have direct knowledge of the crash site. See Unilateral Narrative

Future Pursuit Information:

FurtherPursuitJust : Y

CtryForUnilatPursuit : VN

PursueWho : Z

HowToUnilat : UA,UW

CtryForJointPursuit : VN,LA

TypeOfUnilatLeads : S

HowToJointPursue : JI

KindOfUSPursuit : R

Narrative :

JTF should proceed with an investigation of the crash site to determine the presence of any skeletal remains. While the Vietnamese witness, Mr. Ho Si Thi, has provided conflicting information on the ethnicity of the bodies, his recollection of the crash site appears to correlate with the loss site of the Vietnamese H-34.

Future Pursuit Deferred Information:

WhyDeferPursuit : NA

HowWhereOffScope : NA

Narrative :

NA

No Future Pursuit Information:

WhyNoFurther : NA

PrevAttemptRecov : NA

Narrative :

NA

INITIALCOORD : A--JOINT INVESTIGATE FAX COORD 31 MAY

RECOORD1 :

RECOORD2 :

RECOORD3 :

RECOORD4 :

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Case Summary Information:

Refno : 1185

Name : LEMCKE, DAVID EARL

Service : A

LossRank : E4

Idate : 5/21/68

Status : BB

Ctry : VS

Province : QUANG TRI

OffscopeCase : N

PriorityCase : N

FateDetermined : NA

Narrative :

On 21 May 1968, SP4 David Lemcke and four other soldiers were in a bunker in the vicinity of YD268375, approximately five kilometers east of Gio Linh Town, Quang Tri Province. One of the soldiers was cleaning his weapon when it accidentally discharged into a box of illumination grenades, setting the bunker on fire. Numerous types of explosives and ammunition being stored in the bunker were cooked off by the fire. Two of the individuals in the bunker who had been standing near the entrance were able to escape, and remains of two others were later recovered and identified. Despite thorough digging and sifting of the soil at the bunker location, no remains of SP4 Lemcke could be located.

U.S. Government Information:

WartimeLivesight : N

SpecialReporting : N

WartimeCrashGrave : N

WartimeMediaRpts : N

DogtagRpts : N

PostwarMediaRpts : N

UncorrelatedRpts : N

SignifUsgInfo : N

RemainsReportedPrior : N

Narrative :

Information in this case has been limited to US eyewitnesses.

Joint Investigations Information:

NumberofInvestig : 1.00

JTFWitness : N

FoundCrashsite : Y

SignifInfoJointInvest : N

PotentialLocations : N

Narrative :

On 24 August 1994, during the 25th JFA, a joint team investigated Case 1185 in Gio My Village, Gio Linh District, Quang Tri Province. The team interviewed two witnesses who provided information on the alleged recovery and sale of a dental plate with four teeth which was sold to an unknown individual. The team surveyed the site identified by the individuals and the incident location listed in US records. The two sites are about 500 meters apart. The team canvassed local villagers for information concerning US personnel and remains with negative results. Due to large amounts of live ordnance in the area the team did not conduct any further activity. No remains, material evidence, or personal effects were obtained during this investigation.

Unilateral Information:

UnifInfo : N

CtryProvidedFilm : NA

CtryofInfo : NA

CtryProvidedRemains : NA

ValueofInfo : NA

SignifInfoUniAction : N

Narrative :

There is no unilateral information in this case.

Knowledgeability Information:

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