

AIR RESCUE SERVICE



LINEAGE

Air Rescue Service established, 13 Mar 1946

Redesignated Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, 8 Jan 1966

Redesignated Air Rescue Service, 1 Aug 1989

STATIONS

Orlando AFB, FL

McClellan AFB, CA

Scott AFB, IL, 20 Jun 1968

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Transport Command, 13 Mar 1946

Twenty-Third Air Force, 1 Mar 1983

Military Airlift Command, 1 Aug 1989

COMMANDERS

Col Wallace S. Ford, 29 May 46

Col Richard T. Kight, 1 Dec 46
Col J. C. Bailey, 9 Jul 52
BG Thomas J. DuBose, 19 Aug 52
BG Joseph A. Cunningham, 1 Aug 59
Col Theodore P. Tatum, 22 Jun 63
BG Adriel N. Williams, 1 Aug 63
Col (BG/MG) Allison C. Brooks, 8 Mar 65
BG Frank K. Everest, Jr., 24 Apr 70
BG Glenn R. Sullivan, 1 Mar 73
MG Ralph S. Saunders, 1 Aug 74
BG (MG) Cornelius Nugteren, 29 Sep 79
BG (MG) William J. Mall, Jr., 21 Aug 81
BG Philip S. Prince, 1 Mar 83
Col Owen A. Heeter, 1 Oct 83
Col Robert S. Michelsen, 1 Oct 85
Col Charles R. Hagerhjelm, 26 Feb 88
Col Eric E. Wheaton, 1 Aug 89
Col John D. Woodruff, 1 Aug 90

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

13 Mar 46 Headquarters Air Rescue Service (HQ ARS) was established at Andrews Field, Maryland, and was assigned to the Air Transport Command (ATC). The primary mission of ARS was search and rescue (SAR) activity within the United States.

29 May 46 Colonel Wallace S. Ford became the first commander of ARS.

1 Jul 46 HQ ARS moved from Washington DC area to Morrison Field, Florida.

1 Dec 46 Colonel Richard T. Kight assumed command of ARS.

14 Jul 47 HQ ARS moved from Morrison Field to MacDill Field, Florida.

3 Dec 47 HQ ARS moved from MacDill Field, Florida, to Gravelly Point, Washington DC.

1 Jun 48 ARS was reassigned from ATC to the new Military Air Transport Service (MATS). ARS began to spread beyond the continental area. Flights were organized at Goose Bay in Labrador, Lajes Field in the Azores, Kindley Field in Bermuda, Dhahran Airfield in Saudi Arabia, and Wheelus Field in Libya.

On 7 December 1948 a C-47 crashed on the Greenland Ice Cap. On 8 December an ARS SB-17 dropped supplies. Several subsequent rescue attempts were unsuccessful, leaving two downed aircraft, two downed gliders, and a total of 12 persons stranded on the Ice Cap. On 28 December a MATS pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Emil G. Beaudry, landed successfully with a C-47 equipped with skis and jet assisted takeoff (JATO) equipment. All personnel were successfully evacuated.

9 Jul 1952 Following the departure of Colonel Richard T. Fight, Colonel J. C. Bailey assumed temporary command of ARS, pending the arrival of Colonel Thomas J. DuBose.

15-31 JUL 1952 Project Hop-A-Long. Two ARS H-19s completed a transatlantic helicopter flight, touching down five times en route between Westover AFB, Massachusetts, and Prestwick, Scotland. This test demonstrated the possibility of ferrying helicopters over long distances. Captain Vincent. H. McGovern and First Lieutenant Harold W. Moore piloted the H-19s.

19 Aug 52 Colonel (later Brigadier General) Thomas J. DuBose assumed command of ARS.

14 Nov 52 Reorganization of ARS Units. Most of the former ARS squadrons with digits 1 through 12 were redesignated AR groups. Concurrently, the men and equipment of the former ARS flights were assigned to new AR squadrons with digits 26 through 84. These new squadrons were assigned to the aforementioned groups. ARS then consisted of a total of 11 groups and 41 squadrons. The various groups and squadrons outside the contiguous United States were attached to the USAF commanding generals in the appropriate theaters for operational control.

21 Sep 1953 As part of the post Korean War drawdown, eight ARS squadrons were inactivated.

Apr 54 ARS inactivated four more squadrons during the post Korean War drawdown.

29 Jul 54 The 11-man crew of a Navy P2V-5 bomber, forced to ditch 110 miles northeast of Montauk Point, Long Island, was picked up by an ARS HU-16 from Westover AFB, Massachusetts.

5 Sep 54 Third AR Group launched two SB-29s and four SA-16s to aid survivors of a United States Navy P2V which was shot down in the Sea of Japan by aircraft from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The SA-16s found nine survivors in an inflated raft and returned them to Misawa AB, Japan.

18 Aug 1955 Floods in the wake of Hurricane Diane threatened the northeastern United States. ARS forces flew 72 sorties in 176 hours, and evacuated 54 people.

1956 National SAR Plan. The first National Search and Rescue (SAR) Plan was published. The object of the plan was to coordinate all United States SAR resources and activities. USAF was responsible for coordinating SAR activities in the contiguous United States (or "Inland SAR Region"). USAF delegated this responsibility to the Continental Air Command (CONAC) and ARS supported CONAC between 1956 and 1961.

25 May 56 Operation Wring Out. HQ USAF announced important forthcoming changes in the organization of ARS. The number of ARS groups and squadrons would diminish, and the number of small detachments, equipped with lightweight helicopters, would increase. At the same time, these detachments would be spread over a broad area, since studies had indicated that 70 percent of all aircraft accidents occurred within 20 miles of assigned bases.

Jun 1956 Four ARS groups and nine squadrons were inactivated. At the end of 1956 ARS was comprised of eight groups and twenty-nine squadrons.

8 Jan 1958 Three groups and two squadrons were inactivated.

May 58 Following an assault by a mob in Caracas, Venezuela, against Vice President Richard M. Nixon, the 2157th AR Squadron moved a helicopter from Eglin AFB, Florida, to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, for possible emergency rescue use. However, no further violence occurred.

30 Jun 58 ARS was assigned one group and nineteen squadrons. The command had been cut approximately 50 percent in units and personnel since 1956

19 Oct 59 Brigadier General Joseph A. Cunningham assumed command of ARS.

18 Mar-31 Dec 1960 Severe Reduction of ARS Units, During 1960 a total of 14 AR Squadrons were inactivated. At the end of 1960 ARS was assigned three squadrons and 1,450 personnel. Concurrently, USAF and MATS were investigating new missions for ARS, such as the administration of the Inland SAR Region and overseas joint SAR centers, and a Local Base Rescue (LBR) program involving rescue services in the vicinity of local bases.

1 Feb 1961 The CONAC transferred responsibility for the Inland SAR Region to ARS. The Rescue Coordination Centers (RCCs) at Robins AFB in Georgia, Hensley Naval Air Station in Texas, and Hamilton AFB in California were renamed the Eastern, Central, and Western Air Rescue Centers (ARCs), respectively.

22 Jun 1963 Colonel Theodore P. Tatum served as acting commander after the 1 Aug 63 departure of Brigadier General Joseph A. Cunningham and prior to the arrival of Brigadier General Adriel N. Williams.

1 Aug 63 Brigadier General Adriel N. Williams assumed command of ARS.

26 Aug 63 An HH-43 aircrew saved the lives of three crewmen involved in the crash and subsequent burning of a B-58 on the runway at Bunker Hill AFB, Indiana. The HH-43, which was airborne at the time of the crash, landed near the burning bomber and effected the rescue.

10 Oct 63 Northern Italy was struck by devastating floods. An HH-43 air crew from Detachment 10 at Aviano AB succeeded in saving 15 lives, and the detachment airlifted medical personnel and supplies to areas in need.

27 Mar – 4 Apr 1964 Following a massive earthquake that shook Alaska on 27 March 1964 and leveled sections of Anchorage and Seward, ARS personnel of the RCC at Elmendorf APB directed a massive humanitarian effort. Seven ARS aircraft were flown to Alaska from the "lower 48." The ARS aircraft performed a wide variety of missions, including the evacuation of injured and homeless persons, airdropping medical supplies, and performing reconnaissance along the shorelines throughout the quake area.

8 Mar 65 Colonel (later Major General) Allison C. Brooks assumed Command of ARS.

8 Jan 66 ARS was redesignated the ARRS. The ARCs became Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Centers (ARRCs), and the AR squadrons became Aerospace Rescue and Recovery (ARR) squadrons.

16 Mar 66 The Gemini 8 mission was aborted after only six orbits and made an emergency splashdown about 500 miles east of Okinawa. An ARRS three-man pararescue team jumped from an EC-54 and secured the spacecraft. These pararescuemen were: Staff Sergeant Larry D. Huyett, Airman First Class Eldridge M. Neal, and Airman Second Class Glenn M. Moore. The astronauts were Neil A. Armstrong and David R. Scott. The USS MASON picked up the five men.

20 Oct 66 Captain Leland T. Kennedy, piloting an H-3, again qualified for another Air Force Cross, On this mission two H-3s attempted to rescue two F-4 pilots downed near Dong Hoi. The first aircraft, piloted by Major A. D. Youngblood, picked up one of the pilots, but the H-3 was damaged and he was forced to land in the vicinity of the pickup site. Then Captain Kennedy descended and rescued the H-3 crew and the F-4 pilot. The crippled H-3 was destroyed by a "Sandy," and another H-3 pilot, Captain Henderson, ultimately rescued the other F-4 pilot.

2 Apr 67 The first air-to-air recovery (ATAR) was performed by ARRS. HC-130H aircraft were equipped to "catch" the high altitude sampling device launched by Air Weather Service (AWS). The device was launched on a balloon to a height of between 80,000 and 135,000 feet. Then the package was released from the balloon and it parachuted downward. The HC-130, which was specially equipped with a winch and grappling hooks, snatched the package. Because of the size and shape of this gear, the pickups were called "Ash Can" missions.

11 Jun 67 Captain John A. Firse and his H-3 aircrew from the ARRS detachment at Udorn, rescued two downed A-1E pilots in North Vietnam. The first downed pilot was rescued without difficulty, but enemy fire was encountered during the second attempt. The second survivor was pulled into the H-3, but the pararescueman was wounded and the helicopter was heavily

damaged before departure.

16 Dec 1967 Extremely heavy snows in northeastern Arizona, and related floods around Nogales in southern Arizona, caused emergency conditions. The western ARRC dispatched a control team, which coordinated relief and rescue efforts by personnel of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and many civilian agencies. The lives of 12 persons were saved, 676 persons were assisted, and 349,000 pounds of food and supplies were delivered.

9 Feb 1968 In response to the Pueblo crisis, ARRS organized a provisional squadron and three provisional detachments in Korea on 9 February.

20 Jun 1968 HQ ARRS moved from Orlando AFB, Florida, to Scott AFB, Illinois.

16 Aug 1968 Heavy rains along the south coast of Korea caused severe flooding, stranding many Koreans. The HH-43 crews from Detachments 4 and 10, Pacific ARRC, saved the lives of 75 Koreans.

15 Apr 1970 Maj Travis Wofford and Captain Travis W. Scott, Jr., both won the Air Force Cross during a rescue operation near Dak Nay Puey, Vietnam. Two H-3s were scrambled from Da Nang AB, Vietnam, to rescue survivors of a downed UH-1. The first H-3 to go into the rescue area made three attempts, but enemy ground fire downed this aircraft, piloted by Captain Scott, who was killed upon impact. The copilot, Major Wofford, dragged the other two crewmen from the burning aircraft. With his bare hands he extinguished the flames still burning on their bodies. The second H-3 evacuated the survivors of the first H-3 but was unable to rezone personnel in the downed UH-1. Major Wofford later received the Cheney Award for 1970.

22 Apr 70 Brigadier General Frank E. Everest, Jr., assumed command of ARRS.

15 Aug-24 Aug 1970 First Transpacific Helicopter Flight. ARRS personnel proved the possibility of ferrying two factory-issued HH-53s from Eglin AFB, Florida, to Da Nang AB, Vietnam, with the aid of ARRS HC-130 refueling. Intermediate stops were: Minot AFB, North Dakota; Fort Nelson, British Columbia; Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Shemya AFB, Alaska; Misawa AB, Japan; Kadena AB, Okinawa; and Clark AB, Republic of the Philippines. The mission commander was Major James L. Butera.

1 Sep 70 ARRS helicopters at Luke AFB, Arizona, and Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, began participation in the Military Assistance for Safety and Traffic (MAST) Program. This program provided emergency transportation from remote areas for victims of accidents whose lives were endangered.

20 Nov-21 Nov 1970 Raid on Son Tay Prison. Forty-two men assigned to ARRS, manning one HH-3, five HH-53s, and two HC-130Ps, participated in the daring raid on the POW compound at Son Tay, about 23 miles west of Hanoi, Vietnam. These men trained intensively with other Army and Air Force personnel at Eglin AFB, Florida, between August and November 1970. On 20 and 21 November 1970 the raid was carried out as planned, but no POWs were found. One HH-3

was lost due to impact with a tree at the prison, and Technical Sergeant Leroy Wright broke his foot. All personnel returned safely to Udorn AB, Thailand.

10 Mar-24 May 1971 Operational Transpacific Ferrying of Helicopters. In a mass transpacific ferrying deployment and redeployment of HH-53 helicopters between the United States and Southeast Asia, ARRS personnel flew five HH-53Cs from Eglin APB, Florida, to Udorn Airfield Thailand, and redeployed two HH-53Bs from Da Nang AB, Vietnam, to Hamilton AFB, California. This movement was planned in four separate flights, two westbound and two eastbound. However, the fourth (eastbound) flight did not take place due to the war-weary condition of the older HH-53s. Intermediate stops along the transpacific route were: McChord AFB, Washington; Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Shemya APB, Alaska; Misawa AB, Japan; Kadena AB, Okinawa; and Clark AB, Republic of the Philippines. All flights received en route refueling from ARRS HC-130P/Ns.

15 Sep – 16 Sep 1971 ARRS HH-43s airlifted 91 persons to high ground when Hurricane Fern caused flash floods in the Rio Salado Valley, approximately 45 miles south of Nuevo Laredo, Texas.

2-5 Nov 1971 Another Transatlantic Helicopter Flight. ARRS ferried two HH-53s from Goose AB, Canada, to Woodbridge RAF Base, United Kingdom, with an intermediate stop at Keflavik, Iceland. The flight left Goose AB on 2 November and landed at RAF Woodbridge on 5 Nov. When the cost was tallied it was determined that shipment by airlift or sealift would have been less expensive. However ferrying was a viable option and airlift or sealift might not be available.

20 Feb 72 Operation Long Flight. ARRS established a new world record for turbo-prop aircraft distance in a straight line for 14,052 kilometers (or 8,732.09 miles) on 20 February 1972. Lieutenant Colonel Edgar L. Allison, Jr., was pilot of the HC-130. The flight originated at Chung Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, and touched down at Scott AFB, Illinois, after 21 hours and 12 minutes of total flight time. The flight broke the previous distance record as it passed over Portland, Oregon. Later, during 1974, Lieutenant Colonel Allison (Retired) was awarded the Harmon International Trophy in recognition of this achievement.

11 May 72 General John D. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, directed that the mission of ARRS be primarily oriented toward combat rescue operations.

6 Oct 72 General John D. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, ordered a sizeable reduction in the number of ARRS local base rescue elements and detachments during Fiscal Year 1973.

1. Mar 73 Brigadier General Frank K. Everest, Jr., retired from the Air Force, and Brigadier General Glenn R. Sullivan assumed command of ARRS.

15 Mar 76 ARRS became the intermediate gaining command for the 403d ARR (later RWR) Wing of AFRES, located at Selfridge Air National Guard Base (ANGB), Michigan. The 403d Wing was assigned the 301st, 303d, 304th, and 305th ARR Squadrons of AFRES, all of which had been affiliated with ARRS since 1956 and 1957.

1 Jul 76 The Western Pacific (WESTPAC) Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) was activated at Kadena AB, Japan. The facility consolidated the functions of three previously separate RCCs in that area.

20-29 Nov 1978 Guyana Contingency. Three HH-53s, one WC-130 and two HC-130s, 29 Nov 78

deployed to Guyana following the mass death of 914 persons associated with the Peoples Temple religious sect. ARRS flew 30 sorties between Jonestown and Georgetown and evacuated 903 human remains. MAC C-141s airlifted 911 bodies back to Dover AFB, Delaware.

31 Mar 79 Major James E. McArdle, Jr., and his H-3 crew from the ARRS detachment at Osan, safely evacuated 28 persons from a wrecked ship off the west coast of Korea. Maj McArdle later received the MacKay Trophy as result of the this mission

25 Sep 79 Major General Ralph S. Saunders retired from the Air Force, and BG (later Major General) Cornelius Nugteren assumed command of ARRS.

30 Oct 79 ARRS air-to-air recovery (ATAR) mission responsibilities were passed to AFSC.

28 Jan 1980 ARRS provided rescue support for the Winter Olympics at Lake Placid, New York. Four UH-1Ns flew 150 flying hours and 59 sorties, resulting in five saves.

29 Jan 80 The United States Coast Guard (USCG) cutter Blackthorn sank after colliding with the oil tanker, Capricorn in Tampa Bay. Resources of the Air Force, Coast Guard, and Army searched for missing crewmen. A total of 27 persons were saved, six bodies were recovered, and 17 persons remained missing.

14-17 May 1980 In the wake of the unsuccessful United States attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran on 24-25 April 1980, the nation's leaders searched for replacement helicopters for use in another joint rapid deployment force in case of future contingency actions. The ARRS HH-53Hs Pave Low III aircraft were just becoming operational after a lengthy period of operational testing and evaluation. These aircraft possessed capabilities to fly in adverse weather, at low level, and at night. Therefore, on 14 May 1980, the USAF Vice Chief of Staff ordered the reassignment of the nine HH-53Hs from MAC/ARRS inventory to the 1st special Operations Wing (SOW) of TAC at Hurlburt Field, Florida. Compliance by ARRS was immediate. On 17 May eight of these aircraft were flown from Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, to Hurlburt Field, Florida. The ninth HH-53 was under modification at Pensacola NAS, Florida.

May 1980-Jan 1981 Support for Project Honey Badger. Significant ARRS resources were allocated to Honey Badger, a joint readiness testing project centering at Hurlburt Field, Florida. In addition to the reassignment of the nine HH-53Hs, six H-53B/C aircraft were on temporary duty (TDY) with this project and eight HC-130s were modified for special mission activities. More than 300 ARRS personnel were on extended TDY causing significant Military Airlift Command (MAC) funding impacts, and curtailing other important ARRS missions. Supplies

and equipment were generously loaned. ARRS expended more than 23,000 man-days on Honey Badger. Colonel Lewis Harrington served as ARRS mission coordinator for this project.

17 Nov 1964 The USAF officially announced the relocation of the Air Rescue Service from Orlando AFB, Florida, to Scott AFB.

Jun 1974 The Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service activated the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Scott AFB.

AIR RESCUE SERVICE

Based on a study completed by Lieutenant General Hoyt S. Vandenberg after the end of hostilities in WWII, the Air Rescue Service(ARS) was stood up under Air Transport Command (ATC) on 13 March 1946 and based at Washington National Airport. In December of the year, Colonel Richard T. Kight took over command of ARS. Colonel Kight had been tasked to either build up ARS or shut it down.

His first reaction was to wash it out. But before he scrubbed Rescue out of existence he felt he had to make a survey not of paper but of people. He went on a tour of his units. What he saw and heard were a revelation.

He found physical conditions as bad as he thought they were. They had nothing, no decent airplanes to fly--there was not in existence one single airplane designed specifically for Rescue work. He also found out that despite all the issues, his Rescue kids owned a collective morale that was high and wide and screaming. He didn't understand it, they were ready to whip the world with nothing. It didn't make any sense until one day a young Lieutenant told him, "I'd rather save people than kill them." Kight understood and realized that he had found his own mission in the Air Force.

He became an avid supporter of the organization and implemented plans and programs that pushed for the improvement and expansion of the service and its rescue culture. He wrote the rescue code and motto, created its emblem, and fought hard for more resources. In 1947, Colonel Kight also initiated the formal founding of USAF pararescue based on heroic precedents in WWII and soon medical parachute jumpers were added to ARS. He held this command until 1952, directing its development and expansion and introducing present day rescue techniques. He personally performed much of the testing of rescue equipment and employment techniques.

He then designed an emblem that would symbolize Rescue: a blue sky streaked with a golden ray of hope and on it an angel with his hands around the world. And on the bottom of the insignia the last lines of the code: "That Others May Live."

The Air Rescue Service was tasked with the search for and recovery of space hardware and support of all manned space missions beginning in 1961. In view of its expanding role in space flight support, the Air Rescue Service was re-designated the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) on 8 January 1966.

During the latter part of that decade, more than 100 ARRS units operated from nearly 90 locations in the U.S., Guam, the Canal Zone, and 14 foreign nations. Besides 18 squadrons and approximately 70 detachments in the U.S. and over-seas, the ARRS also operated several joint search and res-cue centers for the unified commands. Search and rescue facilities, which were strategically located to meet civil and military rescue needs, were governed by ARRS headquarterters at Scott AFB, Illinois, through three rescue wings: the 39th ARRWg at Eglin AFB, Florida; the 40th ARRWg at Ramstein AB, Germany; and the 41 st ARRWg at Hickam AFB, Hawaii.

Continental search, rescue and recovery operations were coordinated by the 39th ARRWg through one of three SAR centers: the 44th ARRSq/Eastern Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (EARRC) at Eglin AFB; the 43rd ARRSq/Central Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (CARRC) at Richards-Gebaur AFB, Missouri; and the 42nd ARRSq/Western Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (WARRC) at Hamilton AFB, California.

Detachment 1 of the 39th ARRWg at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, was the joint SAR center for the Alaskan Air Command, and Detachment 2, at Albrook AFB, Canal Zone, served the U.S. Air Force's Southern Command. Search and Rescue activities in Europe were handled by the 40th ARRWg/Atlantic Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (AARRC), and in the Pacific by the 41st ARRWg/Pacific Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (PARRC). The 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group (which came under control of the 41st ARRWg) at Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam, became the hub for all SAR operations in Southeast Asia.

It wasn't long before the highly adaptable Huskie reached milestones in Air Force service. Serial number 59-1543, one of two H-43Bs attached to Det. 41, EARRC, Loring AFB, Maine, became the first ARS, Huskie to reach the 1,000-flying hour mark. On 17 November 1966, HH-43B s/n 59-1557 logged its 2,000th flight hour on a search mission for a lost hunter, making it the ARRS's high-time Huskie. Credit for the 2,000th LBR scramble went to HH-43B s/n 60-261 of Det. 15 WARRC at Luke AFB, Arizona, on 29 December 1964. That year saw an all-time high in rescue work as the Huskie detachment made 13 pilot bailout recoveries and flew 51 rescue missions involving 99 civilians. The detachment was so heavily relied upon that refueling points were set up through-out Arizona, allowing missions beyond its borders.

Despite their limited range, Huskies penetrated deep into Laos and North Vietnam to rescue downed fliers. The daring forays, which sometimes brought Huskie crews within 40 miles of Hanoi, were accomplished using a number of methods. A distance advantage was gained by positioning a Huskie in east-central Laos at Paksane and another farther south at Pakse. To extend operating range, fuel stocks were prepositioned at forward sites in the Laotian panhandle. Known as "Lima Sites," the refueling points allowed Huskies to leapfrog to the rescue area. Another crude but effective technique utilized a 55-gallon fuel drum lashed in the cabin and tapped into the aircraft's fuel plumbing. When the drum was empty, it was rolled out the back end.

The first pickup by HH-43 of a flier downed over North Vietnam occurred on 17 May 1965. Ground fire brought down an F-105 Thunderchief over the Song Ba River northwest of Vinh. The pilot bailed out safely, only to find himself descending into the midst of a large enemy troop concentration. Luckily, he landed in a dense bamboo forest on a hillside thick with undergrowth that hampered enemy forces trying to reach him.

The incredible achievements of HH-43s in Southeast Asia were not without loss; a number of crewmen were killed or wounded with at least 20 aircraft lost and many damaged. Operational duties as well as combat sorties exacted a heavy toll on HH-43 units. Maintenance sections performed admirably to keep aircraft flyable, often working long hours and under adverse conditions. During early 1968, maintenance personnel of Pleiku's Detachment 9 put a battle-damaged HH-43 back in the air after it received more than 200 holes during a rocket attack on the base. The complete disassembly and repair included new rotor blades, tail section and nose glass, plus a new paint job.

Of a total of 2,039 combat saves accomplished during the peak period 1966 through 1970, by four rescue aircraft types, the HH-43 accounted for 888. By war's end, the Pedro was credited with more than 1,100 saves—not a bad record for a diminutive but tenacious helicopter initially purchased by the Air Force for firefighting.

USAF H-43/HH-43 Assignments

HQ AFSWC Det. 1 Indian Springs AFAF, NV
3638th Flying Training Sq. Stead AFB, NV
40th ARRS Det. 4, 1550th ATTW Hill AFB, UT
Beauvechain AB, Belgium
TUSLOG Det. 84 Incirlik AB, Turkey
TUSLOG Det. 153 Cigli AB, Turkey
Prov. Det. 1 U.S. Mapping Mission, Ethiopia
Prov. ARRSq 1646 Det. 1, Kunsan AB, Korea

The Air Force inactivated the Air Rescue Service and the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center, and formed the Air Force Combat Rescue School at Nellis. 27 May 1993

Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service. Established as Air Rescue Service, 13 March 1946; redesignated Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, 8 January 1966.

The Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service emblem, approved by the Department of the Air Force June 3, 1952, is a sky blue shield containing the following elements:

The angel, a symbol of protection and rescue from danger.
The robe signifies the valor with which the men of ARRS carry out their humanitarian mission
The shield indicates the sky which is the field of operation
The light represents a ray of hope for those in need of help from ARRS
Colors of the emblem are a sky blue shield with a beam of yellow light extending throughout it
in a vertical position, there over an angel with red robe, white wings, and clasping an azure
sphere Longitude and latitude lines are yellow.

The ARRS motto is "That Others May Live."





When the TAC helicopter troops had to leave TAC and enter MAC. When we stood the 23rd AF up at Scott under MAC in 1983 some of them made up the patch. There was no love lost between TAC and MAC in those days. They even had a big MAC patch burning party down at Hurlburt but they eventually got over it. The 23rd moved from Scott to Hurlburt in 86 and in the late 80's became the AFSOC. The AFSOC picked up all rescue helicopters until recently when combat SAR went back to ACC (the old TAC). Go figure. You can please some of the troops some of the time but you can't please all the troops all the time.



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Sources
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