

ADJ3 EDWIN E. RUST
SECOND CRRWMAN'S STATEMENT
ANGEL 004 SH-3G/149735

On the night of 19 March 1972, I was flying as the second crewman in a HELSUPPRON ONE, DET ONE SH-3G.

We had been flying in the plane guard pattern for around forty-five minutes when an A-7 pilot from VA-192 ejected, after engine failure.

As the pilot flew our helo towards the survivor, I began getting all of my swim and rescue gear ready for a water entry. By the time I was completely prepared for the water entry, we had a visual contact with the survivor's strobe light and .38 caliber flares.

After making our approach over the survivor, first crewman John MASAVEG dropped a matrix light to use for a reference point, then he talked our pilot back over the survivor and lowered me down the hoist into the water.

As I was being lowered down the hoist I noted that the survivor was giving me a thumbs up signaling that he was alright. He also looked anxious to get out of the water because of the presence of two fishing boats in the area. After I got in the water and free of the hoist, I swam over to the survivor, checked him for shroud lines or any other gear which could complicate the rescue. Next I asked the survivor about his condition, looked him over for obvious injuries, and gave the first crewman a thumbs up to tell him I was ready to hook up to the hoist. The first crewman then talked the helo back over us and lowered the hoist to me. I hooked the survivor to myself and myself to the large hoist hook and gave another thumbs up to say we were ready to be hoisted up. When we reached the cargo door I positioned the survivor between the door and myself and pushed him inside as the first crewman gave us slack on the cable.

After I had us both safely inside the aircraft, I shut the cargo door behind us.

It was apparent that the survivor was in good shape so from then on he and I sat, strapped in to the troop seats, drinking pineapple juice, smoking cigarettes, and enjoying the ride.