

Helicopter UH-1C 65-09551

Bandit Gunship lost at Nui Dat 12 Aug 1968

Information on U.S. Army helicopter UH-1C tail number 65-09551

The Army purchased this helicopter 0566

Total flight hours at this point: 00001398

Date: 08/12/1968

Accident case number: 680812221 Total loss or fatality Accident

Unit: 118 AHC

The station for this helicopter was Bien Hoa in South Vietnam

Number killed in accident = 0

Injured = 0

Passengers = 0

Csting 216914

Original source(s) and document(s) from which the incident was created or updated: Defense Intelligence Agency Helicopter Loss database.

Army Aviation Safety Center database.

Also: OPERA (Operations Report.) Loss to Inventory

Crew Members:

AC W1 LETTS LK

P W1 ALEXANDER NR

Accident Summary:

The aircraft was the lead ship in a fire team sent to Nui Dat shortly after 0700 hours and arrived at Nui Dat's Kangaroo pad for refueling at 0755 hours. The aircraft commander reduced his power to flight idle as the gunner and crew chief exited the aircraft to begin refueling. The crew chief found the fuel at the point was not flowing and dispatched his gunner to inform the men operating the pumps to have the fuel turned on. When the fuel came on the crew chief proceeded to fill the tanks. After taking on 600 pounds of fuel, bringing the total on board to 1325 pounds according to the fuel gauge, the crew chief stated that the aircraft caught on fire in the fuel cell and he pulled out the nozzle and attempted to shut it off. The nozzle at that refuelling point had notches to catch the trigger and allowed the fuel to flow without any pressure being applied by the crew chief. The crew chief was not able to disengage the trigger and ran with the hose until he noticed the flames following him. He dropped the hose at that time and the trigger disengaged from the notches upon impact with the ground and shut off the fuel. The pilot and aircraft commander had heard the fuel ignite and noticed flames entering the left cargo compartment and pilots door. They exited the aircraft out the right side. The gunner was on the way back from the pumps and noticed the crew chief running away from the aircraft hollering that it was on fire. He grabbed a fire extinguisher next to the refuelling point but could not work it. The two

Australian soldiers operating the POL point noticed the aircraft was on fire and cut the fuel off to the points and immediately drained the lines. They then moved a 150 pound fire extinguisher on wheels to within 50 feet of the aircraft and tried to put out the fire. They had succeeded in suppressing the flames on one side of the aircraft but by that time the small arms ammunition and rockets began exploding and they were forced to clear the area. The crew of the ship was on the other side of the runway by this time

This record was last updated on 08/08/1999

Send comments and questions to the [VHPA at \(webmaster@vhpa.org \)](mailto:webmaster@vhpa.org)

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<http://www.gorilla.net/~118ahc/Resources/65-09551.HTM>