

MANNED SPACECRAFT RECOVERY OFFICE

The Manned Spacecraft Recovery Office remained responsible for supporting Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier as Commander Task Force 130. Commander Task Force 130 planned, implemented and coordinated all aspects of recovery operations in support of Manned Spacecraft programs in the Pacific Command Area.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration conducted four Apollo missions during 1969. Apollo 9 was an earth orbital mission and was used primarily to check-out the lunar-module. Apollo 10's purpose was to operate in lunar orbit, and Apollo 11 and 12 placed "MAN ON THE MOON." All missions terminated with successful recoveries; Apollo 9 in the Atlantic and Apollo 10, 11, and 12 in the Pacific.

APOLLO 9

Apollo 9 was originally scheduled for launch on 28 February 1969; on 27 February the mission was slipped for three days due to astronaut illness. On 3 March 1969, Apollo 9 was successfully launched. CTF 130 participation consisted of planning for and deploying forces for secondary landing and contingency landing support in the Pacific Command area. For this 10-day earth orbital mission with recovery in the Atlantic, a total of 402 news stories were released concerning the recovery crews of the three Pacific recovery units. CTF 130 Public Affairs Officer manned a press desk in the Pacific Recovery Control Center, Kunia, Hawaii. Units participating in this mission under the operational control of CTF 130 were USS NICHOLAS (DD 449), USS COCHRANE (DDG 21), USS LEONARD

F. MASON (DD 852) and eight Air Force HC-130 aircraft assigned to 41ST Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing. (See attachment #6 for Detailed Final Summary Report)

APOLLO 10

This second lunar orbital mission and second APOLLO mission was scheduled for Pacific recovery. CTF participation in Apollo 10's mission consisted of planning for and deploying forces for planned and contingency landing support in the Pacific Command Area and the location and retrieval of the astronauts and command module after reentry. The Task Force was ready in all respects to perform the assigned mission. Forces assigned included USS PRINCETON (LPH 5), USS ARLINGTON (AGMR 2), USS CHIPOLA (AO 63), USS CARPENTER (DD 825), Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron FOUR Detachment with 10 SH-3D helos, personnel from Underwater Demolition Team ELEVEN, Air Force HC-130's and Pararescuemen Teams assigned to 41ST Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing. CTF 130 Public Affairs Office supervised the embarkation of 94 civilians, including 51 newsmen and technicians, on the prime recovery ship, USS PRINCETON. PRINCETON with HS-4 and UDT 11 Detachment embarked and ARLINGTON in company deployed from Pearl Harbor to abort stations in the South Pacific along the Mid-Pacific recovery line. CARPENTER deployed from Pearl Harbor to station in the Mid-Pacific recovery zone and after translunar injection proceeded to the alternate target point in the end-of-mission landing area. CHIPOLA deployed from Pearl Harbor to provide logistic support to CARPENTER, ARLINGTON and PRINCETON. Air Force HC-130 aircraft were stationed initially at

Hickam Air Force Base for the earth orbital portion of the mission and then deployed to Pago Pago, American Samoa for the end-of-mission phase. The recovery was executed as planned, terminating with the pickup of the command module by USS PRINCETON at 15-02S 164-39W on 26 May 1969 with support from Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron FOUR and Underwater Team Demolition Team ELEVEN. Following recovery, the astronauts were flown from PRINCETON to American Samoa and then to Houston, Texas. During the transfer, CTF 130 Public Affairs representatives arranged and supervised a small ceremony at Pago Pago, American Samoa. (See attachment #7 for Detailed Summary Report)

APOLLO 11

Apollo 11 was the first lunar landing mission. Apollo 11 was launched on 16 July 1969. Task Force 130 participation in Apollo 11 mission consisted of planning for and executing the location and retrieval of the astronauts and command module for a landing in the Pacific Command Area. Task Force 130 was ready in all respects to accomplish the mission. Forces assigned included USS HORNET (CVS 12), USS GOLDSBOROUGH (DDG 20), Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron FOUR with eight SH-3D helicopters, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 111 Detachment 12 with four E-1B aircraft, two C-1A's from Fleet Tactical Support Squadron THIRTY, personnel from Underwater Demolition Team ELEVEN and TWELVE, Air Force HC-130's and pararescue teams assigned by 41ST Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing, two US-2C aircraft from Fleet Composite Squadron ONE, and one WC-121 aircraft from Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE. CTF 130 Public Affairs Office (CTF PAO) supervised the embarkation of 118 civilians, including 70 news-

men and technicians, on the prime recovery ship HORNET. In addition, CTF PAO provided one officer and one enlisted representative aboard HORNET. HORNET with HS-4, VAW 111 DET 12, VR 30 DET, UTD 11 and 12 DETs, and VC-1 DET A embarked, deployed from Pearl Harbor to abort station along the Mid-Pacific recovery line and then to the end-of-mission target point. GOLDSBOROUGH deployed from Pearl Harbor to station in the Mid-Pacific recovery zone and after translunar injection returned to Pearl Harbor.

At launch, the planned end-of-mission target point was 10-56N 172-24W. After transearth injection and the subsequent mid-course correction burn, target point was refined at 231857Z to 11-01N 172-02W. A forecast of marginal weather for this point resulted in changing the target point at 240406Z to 13-19N 169-10W with a predicted landing time of 241650Z. HORNET was on assigned station at 241400Z. Initial recovery force contact with Apollo 11 was established at 241639Z when HAWAII RESCUE 1 reported visual contact. HAWAII RESCUE 1 and 2 had S-band and recovery beacon contact. RECOVERY SWIM 1 and SWIM 2 all had recovery beacon contact on SARAH. At 241649Z, SWIM 1 observed Apollo 11 splash-down with the command module immediately going to the stable II position. The flotation bags uprighted the command module about five minutes later HORNET had established voice contact with the astronauts at 241646Z. Except for the period the command module was in the stable II position, good voice communication between HORNET and Apollo 11 were maintained throughout the recovery operation. At 241658Z the first swimmer went into the water and the collar was installed and fully inflated by 241704Z. At 241720Z the command module hatch was opened to permit the decontamination

swimmer to place the astronaut's BIG's (biological isolation garmets) inside the command module. At 241728Z the astronauts had donned their BIGs and the hatch was reopened. By 241730Z the astronauts were in the raft and the command module hatch was secured. By 231743Z all three astronauts had been coated with decontaminant. RECOVERY helicopter had all three astronauts aboard at 241752Z and landed aboard HORNET at 241757Z. At 241807Z the astronauts entered the mobile quarantine facility. By 241915Z all decontamination procedures were completed. The auxiliary lifting loop was then lowered by helicopter and installed. At 241932Z HORNET commenced the approach to pickup the command module. By 242050Z the command module was secured and all HORNET aircraft were aboard and the ship was underway for Pearl Harbor. Downrange television of the splashdown and recovery of Apollo 11 was covered live via satellite. President Richard M. Nixon and several aides, as well as Admiral John S. MCCAIN, Jr., USN, CINCPAC, embarked on HORNET observed complete recovery operations.

Following recovery of the astronauts and command module, HORNET returned to Pearl Harbor with the astronauts embarked in the Mobile Quarantine Facility, designed to prevent possible contamination of the earth by lunar microbes or organisms. HORNET arrived on 26 July 1969 and was welcomed by 6,000 persons at Pier B25-26, U.S. Naval Station, Pearl Harbor. This 20-minute welcoming ceremony welcoming Apollo 11 Astronauts Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Edward Aldrin was televised world-wide. The Mobile Quarantine Facility with the astronauts inside was unloaded from HORNET and trucked to Hickam Air Force Base and flown to Houston Texas. (See attachment # 8 for Detailed Summary Report).

The success of the Apollo 11 mission in landing the FIRST MAN ON THE MOON was enhanced by a precision-perfect recovery. TASK FORCE 130 received the National Aeronautic and Space Administration's Group Achievement Award for its performance during the Apollo 11 mission. Captain Robert T. Tolleson, CTF 130's Project Officer, Manned Spacecraft Recovery Division, and Captain C. J. Seiberlich, Commanding Officer, USS HORNET (CVS 12) were awarded the Legion of Merit for their role in the recovery.

APOLLO 12

Apollo 12, the second, manned, lunar, ten day mission was launched on 14 November 1969 and was recovered in the Pacific on 24 November 1969. Task Force 130's participation in the Apollo 12 mission consisted of planning for and executing the location and retrieval of the astronauts and command module after landing in the Pacific Command Area. CTF 130 was ready in all respects to accomplish the mission. Forces assigned included USS HORNET (CVS 12), USS JOSEPH STRAUSS (DDG 16), Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron FOUR with eight SH-3D helicopters, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 111 Detachment 33 with four E-1B aircraft, three C-1A's from Fleet Tactical Support Squadron THIRTY, personnel from Underwater Demolition Teams ELEVEN and THIRTEEN, Air Force HC-130's and pararescue teams assigned by 41ST Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing, and one C-1A aircraft permanently assigned to HORNET. HORNET with HS-4, VAW 111 DET 33, VR-30 DET, and UDT 11 and 13 DETs embarked, deployed from Pearl Harbor to abort station along the mid-Pacific recovery line and then to the end-of-mission target point.

JOSEPH STRAUSS remained in Pearl Harbor on 30 minute readiness to deploy for the mid-Pacific recovery zone and was released to normal operational control, after translunar injection. HORNET was on assigned station at 242040Z. Initial recovery force contact with Apollo 12 was established at 242046Z when HORNET had radar contact at 604 nm. HAWAII RESCUE 1 and 2 acquired S-band and recovery beacon signals. RECOVERY, PHOTO, SWIM 1 and SWIM 2 all had recovery beacon contact on SARAH. At 242058:25Z HORNET observed Apollo 12 splashdown with the command module immediately going to the stable II position. The uprighting bags functioned properly and the command module went to stable I about 5 minutes later. At 242055Z HORNET heard Apollo 12 on Astro Primary; AIR BOSS did not hear Apollo 12 and directed a shift to Astro Secondary. Two-way UHF communications was established at 242058Z, just prior to splashdown. Except for the period that the command module was in the stable II position, good voice communications between HORNET and Apollo 12 was maintained throughout the recovery operation. At 242106Z the first swimmer was in the water. The collar was installed and fully inflated by 242115Z. At 242135Z the command module hatch was opened to permit the decontamination swimmer to place the decontamination bag inside the command module; 242140Z the astronauts had donned their respirators and flight suits and the hatch was reopened. By 242143Z the astronauts were in the raft and the command module hatch was secured. RECOVERY helicopter had all three astronauts aboard at 242152Z and landed aboard HORNET at 242158Z. At 242206Z the astronauts entered the mobile quarantine facility and at 242230Z HORNET commenced the approach to pickup the command module, which was secured aboard HORNET at 242250Z. By 242300Z HORNET was under-

way for Pearl Harbor. HORNET with Astronauts Charles Conrad, Richard Gordon and Alan Bean arrived at Pearl Harbor on 28 November 1969. Hawaii Governor and Mrs. John A. Burns were among the celebrities participating in dockside ceremonies at Pearl Harbor. America's second set of "moon travelers" were off-loaded and trucked over to Hickam Air Force Base and flown to Houston, Texas. The command module was sent to Hickam Air Force Base for deactivation. This was the first time that the command module was deactivated at a site other than Houston, Texas. (See attachment # 9 for Detailed Final Summary)

Recovery training for assigned recovery forces was conducted prior to each mission. Air crews and pararescuemen from the 41ST Air Wing were kept current in Apollo recovery methods. Other training was accomplished in conjunction with the development of biological isolation techniques and the continuing evaluation of recovery methods.

Major documents prepared during the year in support of manned spacecraft operations were:

- COMHAWSEAFRON OPORD 332-69 (Apollo 9)
- COMHAWSEAFRON OPORD 333-69 (Apollo 10) with Change One
- COMHAWSEAFRON OPORD 334-69 (Apollo 11) with Change One & Two
- COMHAWSEAFRON OPORD 335-70 (Apollo 11 Presidential Support)
- COMHAWSEAFRON OPORD 336-70 (Apollo 12) with Change One & Two