

SECRET

AMERICAN CASUALTIES IN LAOS

(1973)

The three main civilian air contractors in Laos advise that they have had a total of 47 American personnel killed, 11 wounded, and two missing in action in Laos since 1961. The attached chart shows their breakdown by year and general location north or south Laos. Records do not indicate the specific activity in which the personnel were involved in at the time of the casualty incident, nor which U.S. Government agency was sponsoring the air mission. However, all flights during this period were either passenger movement or logistical support; the contractor aircraft are not assigned armed missions. Of the 47 deaths reported by the contractors, 25 were attributed to flight accidents, 10 were the direct result of battle damage, and 12 were the result of air accidents possibly caused by battle damage.

The policy on public announcement calls for the American Embassy in Laos to release a press statement giving the general circumstances of the cause of death. Air accidents in Laos involving Continental Air Services, Inc., or Air America, Inc. are described either as routine passenger flight or as routine refugee relief flight under contract to AID/Laos between points being flown.

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