

From: Wayne Laessig <qadvocate@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 11:35 AM
To: 'Mike Drzyzga (drzyzga513@hotmail.com)'
Subject: KIA Protocol: [AC-119Gunships] Featuring the crash of Shadow 76....

I didn't want it gone, just clarified; & reinforce the protocol.

I'm not going to respond further & don't want to make this a topic at Bd Meeting.

"IF" any discussion of KIAs come up anytime I'd appreciate you reinforcing that I just need to be in the loop before we put stuff out to the membership, our Fb folks, or public.

Just FYI, Bob Knapic was a bit disturbed with the opinions he read & that Bob Allen refused to clarify. He only wanted to know what really happened & it's complex. He was OK with where we ended up last time & I'll help him try to get a Safety Report if he decides to try again. I just think we can help reduce any pain if I engage the KIA families ahead of time.

If you want, maybe run this by Andrea to see if she understands the what & why involved. That way we'll have a better idea if the protocol makes sense or not. Thanks! Wayne

From: EVERETT SPROUS [ac119gunner@hotmail.com] **Sent:** Wed, Apr 11, 2018 11:12 AM **To:** Wayne Laessig; 'Mike Drzyzga' **Subject:** Re: [AC-119Gunships] Featuring the crash of Shadow 76....

GONE

From: Wayne Laessig qadvocate@sbcglobal.net **Sent:** Wednesday, April 11, 2018 12:48 PM **To:** 'Ev Sprou'; 'Mike Drzyzga' **Subject:** FW: [AC-119Gunships] Featuring the crash of Shadow 76....

Greetings!

Ev, I do not want you to take this message as criticism. I greatly appreciate everything you do to help our Facebook members understand what we experienced – pictures, stories, etc that help others understand who we were, what we did, what happened, etc.

I simply want to refresh why we have a KIA POC & our protocol on anything to do with the KIAs.

I know this story came from our History Book.

Back then, we didn't pick up that it included "opinions" that could cause pain in the KIA families later on.

But, it did.

In hindsight, we might have edited the story, with Gale's approval, to reflect that his story included the facts as he experienced them, but some of it was just his opinion. Specifically, there was never any facts that the wrong fire bottle was used. Gale's assertion that the wrong fire bottle was pulled & caused the failure of the good engine was what he believes happened. But, it was not in any reports or ever proven. There are many reasons an engine might go quiet – the pilots may have pulled it to idle to try to keep wings level, the fire bottles may have been wired incorrectly, the T-handles may have been wired incorrectly, etc, etc. NONE of those are proof – they're just possibilities, exactly like Gale's thoughts on the reason the good engine went quiet.

Also, Bob Allen was involved in the crash investigation & corresponded with Bob Knapic (Bernie's son) about the crash & Gale's statements. But, Bob Allen refused to offer any further info or proof & ended up leaving a lot of unanswered questions for Bob Knapic.

There's even more about the crash relating to the Co-Pilot that I won't go into detail here, but again, it was all just opinions versus any proof or evidence.

Bob Knapic & I talked all of this through several times & he's dealt with all of it OK.

Which brings me back to my KIA POC role.

We learned our lessons & try to assure we don't publish anything on our losses that hasn't at least been vetted. Stories like this one, the story Pete Chamberlain did about Clyde Alloway, & others we've published do have a place in our History & on our web & in FaceBook – especially those stories already published in our History Book.

But, it sure helps when I can let the KIA families know we're publicizing something - that caused them pain in the past – again.

In this case, it might re-kindle Bob Knapic's desire to get a Safety Report of the crash (we tried once & were unable to get one). I'll deal with that as needed.

Our protocol is go thru me as the KIA POC so I can help the family be ready before we put anything out there on the website or in Facebook. Simply put, NOTHING should get put into any of our public forums without going through me first. I need to let the KIA families know ahead of time. It doesn't matter whether it's already in our History Book or on our website. The important thing is that if we "RE-Publish" some of those stories, I can help the KIA families avoid or at least be ready to deal with old wounds. I can only do that if I engage them BEFORE we publish. That's our protocol on anything to do with our KIAs.

Ev, on this Facebook entry, can you edit the original entry to include an intro that "The following is one of many stories from our History Book & reflects what Gale experienced."? That way it won't seem like "new" info to Bob Knapic or anyone else reading it. **If you can't edit the original, maybe put a comment in that "Gale's story is one of many from our History Book that reflected what we experienced".**

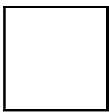
Thanks! Wayne

From: Everett Sprous [notification+k3k1iww_@facebookmail.com] **Sent:** Wednesday, April 11, 2018 7:05 AM **To:** AC-119Gunships **Subject:** [AC-119Gunships] Featuring the crash of Shadow 76....



Facebook

Everett Sprous posted in AC-119Gunships.



Everett Sprous

April 11 at 7:05am

Featuring the crash of Shadow 76....

Gale "Pat" Jones, IO 17th SOS, Tan Son Nhut, 1969-70

The Crash of Shadow 76

Please understand that I am writing this account of the crash of Shadow 76 to the best of my memory and knowledge after thirty-nine years since the accident. It was the night of October 11, 1969 at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon and I was scheduled to fly a mission as Illuminator Operator on Shadow 76. Gunner John Lelle and I had completed our pre-flight inspections of the ammunition, flares, etc. in the gun deck and then performed our usual walk around the plane to check for anything unusual. When we met back in the gun deck, John and I agreed that everything looked ready to go. He and I looked at each other with the same expressions and I said, "John, I just feel something is terribly wrong tonight." John said exactly the same thing, but we shrugged it off and started for the briefing.

The mission briefing went as scheduled with the introduction of our new Aircraft Commander, Major Knapic. It was the first time we had met the Major. My impression of him was very good. He was a professional and the kind of officer everyone respected. As for the rest of our crew, we had been flying together for some time, so it was business as usual.

We loaded up and taxied to the end of the runway for engine run-up tests. Number one engine was torching badly and I called the flight deck to report it. The mission tape verifies my call. Engine run-up continued and I can still remember either the FE or someone else up front saying, "It's bare minimums, but we're going," so, we taxied onto the runway, lined-up and started take-off roll. I could tell the engine wasn't producing normal power and it felt as though we were really rolling slowly down the runway. We finally broke ground and became airborne. I decided to unbuckle and check on #1 engine. The engine was torching badly and I reported such to the flight deck. Only a second or two later, a big bang came from #1 engine and it erupted into a blazing fire. The last time I looked, the engine was engulfed in flames and it seemed to me that the inboard P.R.T. (Power Recovery Turbine) had literally blown off. I tried getting back in my troop seat to strap-in, but the left wing dipped and I had trouble keeping my balance to get in the seat. When I finally got in the seat, I could not for some reason get the damned buckle to close and latch. While I was fighting the buckle, everything went very quiet. (I did not know at that time that the

wrong engine fire extinguisher had been pulled. Someone had activated the fire extinguisher on the #2 engine which caused the good engine to immediately lock-up and fail.) For some reason, I thought we had made a successful closed pattern and were coming in for a landing. Then we dipped again and I can remember a loud bang and nothing more for a few minutes.

I was out cold. When I woke up, I was on my knees somewhere near the forward bulkhead. I remembered at the time that if you are disoriented to put your hands up in front of yourself, which I did. Both of my gloved hands were on fire and I did not know it at the time, but my left eyeball had been knocked out of socket and was lying on my cheek. I really had no idea what was what, other than to know we had crashed. I then yelled to John, hoping he was okay. For a couple of seconds I heard nothing and expected the worst. Then I felt a tug on the back of my chute harness. I was being pulled from the wreckage by John. John had safely gotten out, but came back for me, still in the burning wreckage amid explosions from live ammo, flares, and fuel. He pulled me into a rice paddy or ditch away from the burning wreckage. At that point, I think the fire burning me had gone out. A few minutes later, I was thrown in the back of the rescue helicopter and whisked away to 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon. I survived the crash of Shadow 76 as did John Lelle and Head Gunner, Bill Slater. AC Maj. Knapic, CP Capt. Hathaway, NAV Maj. Alves, NOS Maj. Rice, and FE SSgt. Moore were crewmembers who perished in the crash along with SSgt. Bradford of the USAF 600th Photo Squadron and Vietnamese interpreter Lt. Biu Kien. Shadow 76 crashed into a house off the end of the runway, killing a Vietnamese civilian. May their souls rest in peace.

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