

## **COMPARISON WHICH MAY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE BOARD**

(Very similar missions flown at the same time in the same area)

### **MANTA 75**

- High value target in most heavily defended airspace in South Vietnam
  - Pallet of ammunition
- On 18 April 1972, C-130 Manta 75, was shot down by AAA over An Loc
- A right engine was hit and caught fire
- The crew struggled unsuccessfully to keep the aircraft flying
- The aircraft crash landed
- There was no loss of life for the seven crew members
- All six USAF crewmembers received the Silver Star in 1972

### **STINGER 41**

- Two weeks later, on 2 May 1972, Stinger 41 was scheduled to destroy a high value target
  - Pallet of ammunition which landed short
- Crew accepted an extremely dangerous mission over the most heavily defended airspace in South Vietnam, An Loc
- This was a black gunship flying a rare daylight mission in an aircraft designed to fly at night
- They made several attempts to acquire the target while attempting to avoid AAA
- Stinger 41 was hit by AAA and the right engines were destroyed
- The crew struggled unsuccessfully to keep the aircraft airborne
- Three sacrificed their lives in the crash so their crewmembers could live
- Seven crew members successfully bailed out and were rescued from a hostile jungle environment

### **Another way to say it:**

- Missions were within days of each other in the same hostile area
- Both high value ammunition pallets
- One mission to drop the pallet the other mission to destroy short drop
- Both aircraft hit by AAA in the right wing
- Both aircraft were not able to stay airborne
- Both crashed in hostile territory
- None died in one--three died in other to save others
- Both aircraft--survivors rescued
- One crew all were awarded Silver Stars (6)
- Other crew awards were downgraded (2) or denied (6)

These two missions are eerily similar. The crew members of Stinger 41, if adjudicated as they would have been in 1972 had their awards had not been lost, would most likely have received awards at the same level as Manta 75.