

Navy Helicopter Crew Rescued After Crash Near Mt. Hogue, California



The MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter that crashed, assigned to the “Longhorns” of Helicopter Search and Rescue (SAR) Squadron, conducts a one wheel during a simulated SAR training exercise in February. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ryan M. Breeden*

NAVAL AIR STATION FALLON, Nev. – A Navy MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter crashed near Mt. Hogue, California, at approximately 5 p.m. on July 16, while conducting search and rescue (SAR) operations, the Navy said in a July 17 release. All four crewmembers survived the crash without injury and have been safely recovered.

The aircraft, call sign Longhorn 02, was supporting Mono County search and rescue efforts to locate a lost hiker in the rugged high-altitude terrain in the National Forest south of Boundary Peak, 120 miles south of NAS Fallon. The aircrew consists of four personnel – a pilot, co-pilot, and two crewmen.

The crash site is at 11,700 feet above sea level, in very rugged terrain. The crew were able to communicate following the impact, but a follow-on helicopter mission launched on the evening on July 16 from NAS Fallon was unable to retrieve them. An overnight kit was dropped to the survivors, who spent the night on mountain.

On the morning of July 17, an additional MH-60S, Longhorn 01, launched from NAS Fallon, and provided on-scene coordination, but could not affect a rescue. A CH-47 Chinook from Mather Air Force Base was called in for its superior high-altitude performance characteristics. It dropped off a ground SAR team

that met up with the survivors while the CH-47 returned to Mammoth Lakes for fuel. The Chinook returned to the scene, and at approximately 2 p.m., the crew of Longhorn 02 was safely recovered aboard the CH-47.

All military support for civil mutual aid SAR missions are coordinated by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. Pursuant to the National SAR Plan of the United States, military aircraft may also be used for civil SAR/medevac needs to the fullest extent practicable on a non-interference basis with primary military duties according to applicable national directives, plans, guidelines and agreements.

The cause of the crash is unknown. The Navy will conduct a mishap investigation, with support from the Naval Safety Center. Following the on-site investigation, the aircraft will be removed from its current position on U.S. Forest Service land.