

# 57th MDHA Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance)



The 57th Medical Detachment (HA) The unit was the first Aero-medical Evacuation DUSTOFF unit deployed to the Republic of Vietnam, arriving in country on 26th April 1962 from Fort Meade, Maryland, USA. This unit, the 57th Medical Detachment (Air Ambulance) with only 5 Bell UH-1A "Huey" helicopters, in country was to service the 8000 United States troops then on the ground in Vietnam. During this time the 57th Medical Detachment flew it's first mission on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1962 when one of it's helicopters flew 40 miles up the coast from Nha Trang to Tuy Hoa to pick up a U.S. Army Captain suffering from an extreme fever. The unit was stationed at Nha Trang close to the US 8th Field Hospital. And remaining until deactivation at TAN SON NHUT Air Base, on 14 March 1973. During the 57th Medical Detachment's service in Vietnam, the unit's dedicated unhesitating service to the fighting forces, combined with an excellent medical support system, contributed to the lowest mortality rate for the United States Armed Forces of any conflict in military history. The period of service in Vietnam also provided the 57th Medical Detachment (HA) with it's motto, "THE ORIGINAL DUSTOFF", when all aero-medical evacuations became known by the 57th Medical Detachment's original radio call-sign "DUSTOFF". When the 57th Medical Detachment (HA) was sent to Vietnam, it became the first unit to use the UH-1 helicopter for MEDEVAC in actual combat operations, evacuating more than 100,000 patients within the combat zone

. On 29 March 1973, the Detachment returned to the United States and was assigned to fort bragg.