

Helicopter Losses During the Vietnam War

Updated 3 February 2018

There were about 12,000 helicopters that served in the Vietnam War (the VHPA has specific tail numbers for 11,835 from all services). We have records showing 5,607 helicopter losses or about half. Please note that there are some discrepancies in this data. As example, we have records on 16 CH-3Cs that were destroyed but only 11 tail numbers. Also we know that UH-19s were used, but we do not have any tail numbers for them. We continue to learn more as we discover more records so these numbers will continue to change a small amount over time.

<u>Model</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>KIAs</u>	
			<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Crewmembers</u>
204B	3	1	1	1
205	4	1	1	2
AH-1G	824	303	235	12
AH-1J	3	3		
AH-47A	4	2	2	6
CH-21C	148	18	9	11
CH-37B	10	3	2	2
CH-37C	9	1		
CH-3C	11	16	1	1
CH-3E	11	4	6	7
CH-46A	187	109	46	66
CH-46D	186	87	41	67
CH-47A	327	91	33	87
CH-47B	96	27	17	32
CH-47C	165	37	25	42
CH-53A	79	19	15	18
CH-53C	2	2	2	
CH-53D	20	6	2	7
CH-54A	42	9	5	7
HH-1K	1			
HH-3E	43	20	8	9
HH-43B	11	8	6	6
HH-43F	11	6		1
HH-53B	6	2	2	3
HH-53C	14	7	10	12
HH-53E			2	3
OH-13S	275	173	21	16
OH-23G	231	97	12	14
OH-58A	312	48	19	22
OH-6A	1,422	964	233	251
SH-34G	3	4		1
SH-3A	13	9	6	9
UH-1	53	75	19	12
UH-1A	8	1		

UH-1B	711	378	151	157
UH-1C	712	417	180	182
UH-1D	1,856	1,021	252	275
UH-1E	155	100	39	44
UH-1F	32	18	4	5
UH-1H	3,445	1,291	494	544
UH-1L	5		1	2
UH-1M	7	1	6	5
UH-1N	1	2		1
UH-1P	2		3	1
UH-19				1
UH-2A	9	6		
UH-2B	6	6	3	2
UH-34D	360	211	67	78
Fixed wing			24	6
Other			160	682
Total =	11,835	5,607	2,165	2,712

Bell Helicopter built 10,005 Hueys from 1957 to 1975. Prior to 1957, there were three XH-40 prototypes and six YH-40 test helicopters manufactured. Of the 10,005 production Hueys, the first 732 were designated HU-1A and HU-1B prompting the nickname Huey. Model names were normalized in 1962 to UH-1s. Distribution of the first 10,005 Hueys was U.S. Army 9,216, U.S. Air Force 79, U.S. Navy 42, and the U.S. Marine Corps 127. The rest went to other countries.

Our records show tail numbers for 6,994 Hueys that served in the Vietnam War - Almost all with the U.S. Army. There are certainly some missing from these records.

Total helicopter pilots killed in the Vietnam War was 2,165. Total non-pilot crew members was 2,712. Based on a database received from the Pentagon, we estimate that over 40,000 helicopter pilots served in the Vietnam War. Killed in Hueys - 1,151 pilots and 1,231 non-pilot crew members (we do not have a good count on Vietnamese).

To help in understanding the above numbers, UH-1Ds were upgraded to UH-1Hs. That is why you see a higher percent of losses for UH-1Ds. They were destroyed before they were upgraded to Hs. Both models were used as slicks so they should be counted together when making any conclusions. UH-1Bs were upgraded to UH-1Cs then some to UH-1Ms. Most of the UH-1Bs and nearly all of the UH-1Cs were used as gunships. The UH-1E, F, L, N and P were typically non-Army.

Army UH-1's totaled 10,693,902 flight hours in the Vietnam War between October 1966 and the end of 1975. It is my opinion that the Huey including the Huey Cobra (AH-1G) which had 1,166,344 flight hours in Vietnam, have more combat flight time than any other aircraft in the history of warfare. This combat flight time does not count non-Army use.

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