

Air Search Continues for Seven Missing in Colombia

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- The United States hasn't given up hope of finding alive the five Americans and two Colombians aboard a counter-narcotics aircraft that apparently crashed July 23 in Colombia, DoD spokesman Navy Rear Adm. Craig Quigley said.

Aircraft wreckage has been spotted about 7,500 feet up the side of a steep mountain surrounded by dense jungle, but officials haven't confirmed it's the aircraft being sought, Quigley told Pentagon reporters July 27. Heavy haze and fog have severely hampered search and rescue efforts, he said.

Quigley said there are no indications of survivors at the suspected crash site, but "we will keep our hopes up until facts prove otherwise." The admiral said searchers are hoping the weather improves soon so a ground operation can be launched. Meanwhile, U.S. and Colombian aircraft are combing the area for signs of life whenever it's safe to fly. Guerrillas linked to drug trafficking have vowed to stay clear of the crash site during search and rescue operations, Quigley noted.

He also said DoD is keeping family members of the five missing Americans informed of the progress in the search effort.

Related Site of Interest: [DoD News Briefing, July 27, 1999](#)



DoD spokesman Navy Rear Adm. Craig Quigley said DoD still hopes to find survivors of an apparent aircraft crash July 23 in Colombia. Five Americans and two Colombians were aboard the counter-drug plane when it disappeared. Photo by Rudi Williams.