



**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

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AMERICANS ACCOUNTED FOR: Since the League Newsletter, November 24, 2014, 10 US personnel have been announced as accounted for; those most recently announced are:

Capt Richard D. Chorlins, USAF, MIA, LA, 1/11/70, RR 2/11/03, ID 12/17/14
LT Richard C. Clark, USNR, MIA, NVN, 10/24/67, RR1/17/91, ID 11/7/14
Col William E. Cooper, USAF, MIA, NVN, 4/24/66, RR 11/16/98, ID 12/4/14
MSG James W. Holt, USA, MIA, SVN, 2/6/68, RR 6/21/89, ID 1/10/15
CMSgt Edwin E. Morgan, USAF, MIA, LA, 3/13/66, RR 11/19/11, ID 1/29/15
SSG Warren E. Newton, USA, MIA, SVN, 1/8/68, RR 9/8/11, ID 5/30/14
CW3 Larry Phipps, USA, MIA, SVN, 1/9/68, RR 9/8/11, ID 5/30/14
SSG Bunyan D. Price, Jr., USA, MIA, CB, 5/2/70, RR 4/3/14, ID 1/27/15
CW3 Ranier S. Ramos, USA, MIA, SVN, 1/9/68, RR 9/8/11, ID 5/30/14
LTJG Neil B. Taylor, USNR, KIA/BNR, 9/14/65, RR 6/24/13, ID 11/25/14

Several of those named serve as examples of how remains repatriated many years ago can now be identified using contemporary science that wasn't available in the early years. The number of Americans now listed by DoD as returned and identified since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is 954. Another 63 US personnel, recovered by the US and identified before the end of the war, bring the total of US personnel accounted for from the Vietnam War to 1,017. Of the 1,629 still unaccounted-for, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Cambodia and Laos under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam-1,269 (VN-467, VS-802); Laos-302; Cambodia-51; PRC territorial waters-7. Over-water losses on DoD's list of No Further Pursuit cases number well over 600.

ONGOING POW/MIA REORGANIZATION: In response to growing concerns over direction, a Veteran Service Organization (VSO) and League letter was sent to former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel on December 11, 2014, laying out very serious concerns over lost momentum and lack of confidence in the ongoing reorganization effort. The former Secretary again responded to our concerns, but it was not until January 9, 2015, that specific decisions were announced. While Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USDP) Christine Wormuth will continue to be the senior DoD official directly responsible, RADM Michael T. Franken, USN, was named Interim Director of the new Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) and former JPAC Commander Maj Gen Kelly K. McKeague, USAF, was named the Interim Deputy Director. In addition, and as promised, LTG Michael Linnington, USA, currently serving as Military Deputy to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, was named as special advisor to USDP Wormuth.

The PACT (Personnel Accounting Consolidation Task Force) was terminated, as were the PACT-directed Working Groups. The Clearing, a private consulting firm retained by the PACT Director, is continuing to provide assistance, though now to newly organized and directed functional task forces. Despite former Secretary Hagel's admonition to be fully transparent, Working Group recommendations were not released publicly; therefore the League is unable to provide insights on the usefulness of their efforts. The League, Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and other groups received pledges from senior DoD officials that secrecy was over, there would be full transparency and a real working partnership would be established with the families, in particular.

Chairman's Assessment: Secretary Hagel's personal involvement and commitment gave reason for cautious optimism that the reorganization he directed would prove to be beneficial. The outcome is now less certain; however, senior military officers were selected to restructure the various elements into one efficient, effective agency with higher priority and support. Clearly, former Secretary Hagel was determined to "get this right" and was not tolerant of excuses; however, initial implementation by the PACT, The Clearing and other inexperienced staff showed reluctance to build on strengths and look for ways to improve the existing process. While that may seem simple enough, educated insights from experienced, dedicated professionals were neither sought nor welcomed by the earlier transition team. We urged Under Secretary Wormuth to proceed thoughtfully, and she did, supported by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC) Michael Lumpkin and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Community Outreach René Bardorf. Now, the reorganization is in the hands of RADM Michael T. Franken, USN, for the initial six months. A permanent Director is due to be in place before the League's 46th Annual Meeting in June so, again, we wait and see.