



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

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NEW DPAA DIRECTOR SELECTED: At long last, the Department of Defense (DoD) announced the selection of Major General Kelly K. McKeague, USAF (Ret), as the new Director, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). This critical position had been vacant for over a year. Mr. McKeague was the last Commander, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, (JPAC) and the first DPAA Deputy Director immediately before his retirement. During his last year on active duty, he was honored with the League Award and received the Special Operations Association (SOA) President's Award. His selection as DPAA Director had been endorsed by the League, the SOA, the Special Forces Association (SFA), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and others. DoD could not have selected a finer or more qualified person for the job, and the League looks forward to again working closely with him. The League was optimistic that Secretary of Defense Mattis would take specific interest to ensure serious consideration of recommendations provided by the League, SOA, SFA and VVA to select a person with experience, character, commitment and dedication to the mission, someone who had earned the trust and respect of affected families and veterans, as well as foreign officials whose willingness to authorize necessary cooperation is critical to success. We wish Kelly McKeague the very best as he assumes responsibility to truly lead DPAA in accomplishing accounting objectives we share. He brings to DPAA the integrity and respect necessary to regain credibility and overcome three fractious years during which leadership failures destroyed agency morale and confidence of the families and our nation's veterans.

AMERICANS RECENTLY ACCOUNTED FOR: The most recent change in DPAA's Statistics on 8/31/17 cited the accounting for **CMSgt Donald J. Hall, USAF**, listed as MIA 2/6/67 in North Vietnam, recovered 4/3/17, and ID'd 8/18/17. Previously, DPAA's 8/15/17 Statistics cited **Col Martin R. Scott, USAF**, of OK, listed as MIA 3/15/66 in North Vietnam, recovered 12/12/15 and ID'd 6/15/17, and **1st Lt David T. Dinan, III, USAF**, of NJ, listed as KIA/BNR in Laos on 3/17/69, recovered 4/8/14, and ID'd 8/7/17. On July 12, 2017, DPAA listed **Major James B. White, USAF**, of FL, listed MIA in Laos on 11/24/69, remains recovered 4/4/14, and ID'd 6/16/17. On June 28th, DPAA announced the ID of **Capt Robert E. Holton, USAF**, of MT, listed as MIA in Laos on 1/29/69, recovered 2/16/17 and ID'd 6/8/17. The prior week, DPAA released the name of **Col Roosevelt Hestle, USAFR**, of FL, listed as MIA in North Vietnam on 7/16/66, remains recovered 12/12/16, and ID'd 6/8/17. On June 2nd, DPAA announced the ID of **Capt Joseph S. Smith, USAFR**, of IL, listed MIA in Cambodia on 4/4/71, recovered 1/27/93, and ID'd 5/4/17, and **LT Charles B. Goodwin, USN**, of TX, listed as MIA in North Vietnam on 9/8/65, recovered 12/12/16 and ID'd 5/18/17.

The number still missing and otherwise unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War is 1,603. Hopefully, there will yet be many accounted for during the rest of 2017. Of the **1,603 still missing (POW/MIA) and unaccounted-for (KIA/BNR)**, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Cambodia or Laos under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam-1,255 (VN-459, VS-795); Laos-294; Cambodia-48; PRC territorial waters-7. (Country-specific numbers fluctuate when investigations result in changes to loss locations.)

Since formation in 1970, the League has sought the return of all POWs, the fullest possible accounting for the missing, and repatriation of all recoverable remains. The total accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is **980**. Following is a breakdown by country of the 979 Americans accounted for since the April 30, 1975 end of the Vietnam War: Vietnam – 664, Laos – 271, Cambodia – 42, and the PRC – 3. In addition, 63 US personnel were accounted for between 1973 and 1975, for a grand total of 1,043. These 63 Americans were accounted for by unilateral US efforts in areas where access was possible, not due to cooperation with the post-war governments of Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia. Added together, a total of 279 have been recovered and identified from Laos, 719 from Vietnam, 42 from Cambodia and 3 from the PRC.

RUSSIAN DELEGATION PARTICIPATES IN 48TH ANNUAL MEETING: This year's annual meeting was the largest and most productive in a very long time. A full report will be coming out soon and, in the interim, the League wishes to express special appreciation to the Russian Delegation. They participated throughout, observing the full Opening Session, making an official presentation that afternoon, joined by US Co-Chairman General Doc Foglesong, USAF (Ret), and attending the 48th Annual Meeting Dinner that same evening, June 22nd, as League VIP Guests. Very importantly, Russian Delegation Chairman Colonel Andrey Taranov openly and effectively participated in the Q & A Session on Saturday, June 24th, and was very forthcoming and responsive. This was a unique first for the League, as it was for Russian officials on the US-Russia Joint Commission (USRJC) on POW/MIA Affairs. Their visit and the plenary discussions and working group talks, held at the Hilton just prior to our 48th Annual Meeting, were initiated by COL Chris Forbes, DPAA's Europe-Mediterranean Regional Director, with full support from General Foglesong, and made possible by Mr. Maxim Alexeyev, Chief of the Russian Embassy's Commission Support Office.

Further US-Russia discussions were again held in Washington, this time in conjunction with the DPAA-hosted Korea/Cold War Annual Government Briefing, during which it was agreed that the 21st Plenum of the USRJC will be held in Moscow November 7-9, 2017. Very negative news was also received in that the DPAA Detachment in Moscow will be closed and the Army officer in charge will move to DPAA in DC as part of the 755-person reduction in US personnel assigned to US Embassy-Moscow that was ordered by the Russian Government. In addition, the four Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) who have worked some 15 years for the US to support the US side of the USRJC in pursuing archival documents were terminated. Nevertheless, General Foglesong and COL Forbes will travel to Moscow for a September 14th meeting with Russian Chairman General Colonel Valery Vostrotin in preparation for the Plenum. Also, Russian sculptors who will be designing the Russian WWII Memorial in Elizabeth City, NC, are planning to visit the US in October. Reportedly, President Putin will personally approve the design of the bronze statue to be erected. Arriving through New York City, the Russian delegation plans to visit the grave of LT Michael Dessiatoff, Russian Imperial Navy, who died on November 1, 1871, and was buried in Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn.

DPAA BUDGET REQUIREMENTS NOT MET: Due to budget constraints, field operations in Vietnam and Cambodia were dramatically reduced during FY17; however, Lao operations were not as adversely impacted. As is obvious, DPAA did NOT have the funding required to "increase the pace and scope of operations," as Vietnam has repeatedly urged. Despite deep-seated, continuing internal dysfunction, DPAA field teams had been steadily implementing recoveries since becoming fully operational in January, 2016. After assurance from Acting DPAA Director Fern Sumpter Winbush that funding was secured, though at a lower level, but adequate to sustain operations until April 28th of this year, the reduction in field operations was a serious blow to confidence in DPAA's commitment to pursue Vietnam War accounting as a continuing priority. Due to inadequate funding, the damage became increasingly clear. A plus-up of \$20 million to reach the necessary FY17 budget total of \$132 million for planned operational requirements could not be requested until 45 days after Congress approved a budget. When that finally occurred, it was deemed too late to utilize additional funds for the 3rd and 4th quarters of FY17. Of DPAA's initial FY17 budget, funds were already obligated for WWII and Korean War disinterment of remains from US cemeteries for individual identification; thus the ID count for WWII and Korean War continues to rise significantly.

YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED! Contact your elected officials to seek full funding of \$132 million for DPAA's FY2018 budget to handle worldwide accounting and recovery efforts AND an exemption of DPAA funding from any/all reductions. Funding for Veterans' care is rightfully protected by exempting Department of Veterans Affairs budgets from across-the-board reductions and/or sequestration. Our UNRETURNED Veterans, America's POW/MIAs, deserve that same protection and adequate funds to return them by achieving the fullest possible accounting.

DPAA-HOSTED FAMILY UPDATES: The remainder of the 2017 calendar for DPAA-hosted Family Updates (FMUs) is September 9th, Detroit, MI, and November 4th, Boise, ID. The first scheduled FMU of 2018 is January 20th, San Diego, CA, followed by February 24th, Ft. Myers, FL, March 24th, El Paso, TX, April 22nd, Rapid City, SD, and May 19th, Louisville, KY.