



**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 September 5th the selection of Major General Kelly K. McKeague, USAF (Ret), as 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, a brief assignment immediately before his military 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.

Comment: DoD could not have selected a finer, more qualified man for the job. The League looks forward to again working closely with him, optimistic that Secretary of Defense Mattis would ensure serious consideration of the need to select a person with experience, character, commitment and dedication to the mission and 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 all 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 9/11/17 cited the accounting for **CAPT James. R. Bauder, USN**, of CA, listed as MIA 9/21/66 in North Vietnam, recovered 6/11/17, and ID'd 8-28-17. DPAA previously announced 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 1,602. Hopefully, there will yet be many accounted for during the rest of 2017. Of the **1,602 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-1,253 (VN-458, 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 **981**. Following is a breakdown by country of the 981 Americans accounted for since the April 30, 1975 end of the Vietnam War: Vietnam – 665, 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 1,044. 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, 720 from Vietnam, 42 from Cambodia and 3 from the PRC.

VIETNAMESE DELEGATION MEETS DPAA OFFICIALS IN HAWAII: As has long been the case, Vietnamese and US specialists met recently to discuss operational issues and exchange views. In earlier years, before joint field operations were the norm or unilateral Vietnamese field operations were even considered, such technical talks were quarterly, then semi-annually, now annually. A primary objective is to find ways to enhance the processes that have expanded dramatically over the years, thanks to improved cooperation by Vietnam. Though long in coming, and fraught with US budget constraints and unpredictability, field operations in Vietnam have improved. Further improvements can and should be made to meet Vietnam's 2009 proposal to the League to "increase the pace and scope of operations." Funding for FY17 saw reductions in Vietnam War accounting efforts in both Vietnam and Cambodia, though operations in Laos were sustained. Now that Kelly McKeague is DPAA Director, the deep-seated, continuing internal dysfunction within DPAA should soon end, but some changes take time. Due to death of firsthand witnesses, destruction of remains due to acidic soil, and incident sites endangered by development projects, Vietnam War accounting efforts are on borrowed time. For FY18, the amount requested (\$132 million) is in the DoD budget and reportedly is sufficient to meet DPAA's operational plans; however, the League cannot state with confidence that Vietnam War accounting continues to be the agency priority. Real transparency is required to rebuild trust and confidence. Now that DPAA's new Director is in place, there is reason for confidence in that regard.

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 has rightfully increased and is protected by exempting Department of Veterans Affairs budgets from across-the-board cuts and/or sequestration. Our UNRETURNED Veterans, America's POW/MIAs, deserve the same.

DPAA-HOSTED FAMILY UPDATES: The final 2017 DPAA-hosted Family Member Update (FMU) is November 4th, Boise, ID. FMUs scheduled for 2018: January 20th, San Diego, CA; February 24th, Ft. Myers, FL, March 24th, El Paso, TX, April 22nd, Rapid City, SD, and May 19th, Louisville, KY.

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, observed Opening Session, made an official presentation that afternoon, joined by USRJC Co-Chairman General Doc Foglesong, USAF (Ret), and attended 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 forthcoming and responsive. This was a unique first for the League and for Russian officials on the US-Russia Joint Commission (USRJC) on POW/MIA Affairs. Their visit, plenary and working group talks 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.

Bilateral talks were again held in Washington in conjunction with the DPAA-hosted Korean/Cold War Annual Briefing in mid-August, during which it was agreed that the 21st Plenum of the USRJC will be held in Moscow November 7-9, 2017. Unfortunately, on the negative side, DPAA's Moscow Detachment was closed and the officer in charge was moved to DPAA in DC as part of the 755-person reduction in US personnel assigned to US Embassy-Moscow, ordered by the Russian Government in response to controversial US actions. In addition, four Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) with roughly 15 years of archival document experience supporting the US side of the USRJC, were terminated. Nevertheless, General Foglesong and COL Forbes traveled to Moscow for a September 14th meeting with Russian Chairman General Colonel Valery Vostrotin in preparation for the Plenum. Col Taronov will return to Washington in mid-October to finalize the specifics of the schedule for the 21st Plenum, working with Gen Foglesong, COL Forbes and Mr. Alexeyev. There are also tentative plans to meet with League Chairman of the Board Ann Mills-Griffiths to discuss a separate, potential League Delegation to Moscow that would coincide with the 21st Plenum and include Vice Chairman Mark Stephensen and Treasurer Eldon Robinson.