



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

5673 Columbia Pike, Suite 100, Falls Church, VA 22041

PH ---703/465-7432

www.pow-miafamilies.org

FAX ---703/465-7433

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AMERICANS ACCOUNTED FOR: The number of US personnel missing and unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War is still **1,618**, unchanged since June 9th. The total accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is **965**. 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 **1,028**. Of the 1,618 still missing (POW/MIA) and unaccounted-for (KIA/BNR), 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Cambodia and Laos under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam-1,261 (VN-463, VS-798); Laos-301; Cambodia-49; PRC territorial waters-7. These country-specific numbers can and do 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 those still missing, and repatriation of all recoverable remains.

DPAA DIRECTOR SELECTION PROCESS: A qualified individual to serve in this crucial position has yet to be announced by DoD leaders. The selecting official, Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Brian McKeon, apparently doesn't share our sense of urgency to replace retired Army LTG Mike Linnington who abruptly resigned nearly five months ago. Hopefully this means that Undersecretary McKeon is carefully considering recommendations provided by the League, Special Operations Association (SOA), Special Forces Association (SFA) and others asked to provide input. There is as yet no indication that serious qualifications, such as experience, character, commitment and dedication to the mission, are given high priority consideration, nor crucial factors such as having earned the trust and respect of affected families, veterans and foreign officials whose willingness to authorize necessary cooperation is critical to success.

JOINT FIELD OPERATIONS: Joint Field Activities (JFAs) are now ongoing at a significant level in Vietnam and Laos, despite concerns over operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR), without a Congressionally authorized budget, and roughly \$20 million below the amount required for full implementation of DPAA's Operational Plan for this fiscal year. Worse yet, DPAA cannot commit second-quarter funds needed for support contracts unless approved separately by the DoD Comptroller's office. Despite these negative realities, DPAA recently concluded an end-of-fiscal-year JFA in Vietnam, wrapping up 45 days during which approximately 100 US personnel, comprised of 5-Recovery Teams (RTs), 2 Vietnamese RTs, and 1 Research Investigation Team (RIT), worked simultaneously. There were also about 100 deployed on WWII accounting operations in Papua New Guinea, France, Germany, Kwajalein (just concluded) and Hawaii, mostly recovery teams for roughly 6-7 weeks each. In addition, through public-private partnerships with DPAA – both paid and volunteer – History Flight is continuing recoveries of USMC personnel lost during WWII in Tarawa, and university-based archeologists are engaged in the Philippines and France. In January, JFAs will resume in Cambodia.

DPAA OPERATIONAL BUDGET REQUIREMENTS UNCERTAIN: It is increasingly unclear whether DPAA will have the funds required to "increase the pace and scope of operations," as has repeatedly been requested by Vietnam and has been proceeding fairly well since DPAA became fully operational in January of this year. Now, with the lack of a Congressionally-approved DoD budget for FY17, all in DoD, including DPAA, are proceeding on a Continuing Resolution. In brief, that means the first quarter funds are approved, though at the less than required budget of approximately \$112 million for the full year. A plus-up of \$20 million is urgently needed.

YOUR HELP IS URGENTLY NEEDED! WRITE TO YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS TO REQUEST APPROVAL OF INCREASED FY17 DPAA FUNDING FROM \$112 TO \$132 MILLION.

ALSO, REQUEST EXEMPTION OF DPAA FUNDING FROM ANY REDUCTIONS. JUST AS VETERANS CARE FUNDING IS RIGHTFULLY PROTECTED BY EXEMPTING DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (DVA) BUDGETS FROM ACROSS-THE-BOARD AND/OR SEQUESTRATION REDUCTIONS, FUNDING TO SUPPORT THE FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING FOR AMERICA'S UNRETURNED VETERANS, OUR MISSING MEN, AND THEIR FAMILIES DESERVE EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR JUNE 21-25, 2017: The League's 48th Annual Meeting will again be held at the Hilton Crystal City Hotel, as it has been the last several years. Anyone with suggestions for inclusion in the three-day program should email League Administrator Leslie Swindells, Leslie.Swindells@pow-miafamilies.org, or call the League office, 703-465-7432.