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8 exhumations of Korean War unknowns proposed

On Feb. 27, 2012, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) submitted requests to DPMO, the Under Secretary for Personnel & Readiness, and the U.S. Army to exhume eight unknown burials from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl). All eight graves are believed to hold the remains of unaccounted-for U.S. soldiers from the Korean War. JPAC's analysis of existing records suggests that all eight cases may be identifiable using current forensic science techniques. The accounting community has a deliberate and transparent review process to ensure that remains can likely be identified before they are exhumed. To date, JPAC has exhumed 26 Korean War unknown remains from the Punchbowl and identified 22 men (the identifications of the remaining men are still pending). The Department's program has been an success story for the Korean War families.

U.S.-India Bilateral Meeting

During a bilateral meeting with the Indian Government in February, senior DoD officials raised DPMO's desire to meet and discuss resumption of remains recovery activities in India. There was no objection from the Government of India, and even signs of willingness, however no steps have been taken to get started. DPMO had some optimism that things were moving ahead in India when Indian troops visited a crash site after asking for background information on sites of interest, but we have seen nothing more to give an idea of when officials might meet to discuss starting recovery operations. In this most recent engagement between DoD and the Indian government, DoD officials were informed that the Ministry of National Defense would not be in charge of our operations as we were originally advised, but would only support them. Instead, Indian officials stated that the Ministry of Home Affairs will have oversight responsibility. This ministry deals with internal matters in the Indian states. DPMO is working with the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi to initiate contact with the ministry. DPMO is determined to pursue the WWII accounting mission in India and has the support and assistance of DoD and the Department of State.

Remains Recovery in Burma

On Feb 23, DASD Newberry met with the Burmese Minister of Defense and leadership from other Ministries in Burma to discuss options for accounting for Americans missing in Burma from WWII. He briefed them on the Department's current worldwide personnel accounting mission and the importance of these activities to the U.S. government and families of the missing personnel. The Burmese officials were supportive of the request to resume investigations and remains recovery operations in Burma. They agreed that the next step would be for the Commander of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command to lead a meeting with the Defense Ministry to discuss the way ahead at the technical level.

Record Attendance at Family Update in Dallas, TX

On Feb. 25, government officials from DPMO, the Pacific Command's Joint POW/Missing Personnel Accounting Command, the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, the military Services' Casualty Offices, and the Air Force's Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory went to Dallas, Texas to conduct a Family Update event. Over 275 family members of missing servicemen were in attendance, which made it one of the largest Family Update events ever. There were 143 first-time attendees who participated in this event. Throughout the day, family members were presented information by DoD experts on current U.S. Government policy, DNA identification processes, and life sciences equipment technology. Attending family members were provided an opportunity to meet, 1-on-1, with DoD officials and systems experts to review the specific details of their MIA serviceman's loss case. Upcoming family events include: The Korean and Cold War Annual Briefing, held on April 19-20; and the next Family Update, May 19, in Indianapolis. For more information about these events click [HERE](#).

U.S.-Laos Technical Talks

On Feb. 20, a representative from DPMO participated in semi-annual consultative talks sponsored by U.S. Pacific Command's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) with representatives of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in Vientiane, Laos. The Lao agreed to JPAC's proposal to change the number of joint



field activities (JFAs) executed per fiscal year in Laos from five to four beginning in Fiscal Year 2013, but to extend the number of days allowed for several of the JFAs. JPAC believes this revision will provide greater flexibility and efficiency to its work in the country. However, for alleged security and safety reasons, the Lao did not agree to JPAC's requests to allow teams to drive to excavation sites where possible or to have base camps for recovery teams near sites.

DPMO in Poland to discuss remains recoveries

From 13-17 February, representatives from DPMO, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, and the European Command convened a joint working group in Warsaw and Wroclaw, Poland. They met with members of the U.S. Embassy and both national and local level Polish officials. The group outlined host nation requirements for investigations, excavations, exhumations, and archival research on WWII losses in Poland. The joint working group will continue to collaborate on standard operating procedures designed to ensure that all cultural and legal considerations are addressed prior to any future operations.

DPMO historians acquire 1,000s of French records

From 3-17 February DPMO historians and a JPAC analyst collected and analyzed historical records from the French Ministry of Defense archives in Vincennes, France. Through the director of research for the Air Force records, the team obtained three major collections of dossiers, photos, and maps recording details of American, Allied, and German aircraft crash sites throughout France, with additional material for Belgium, The Netherlands, Northern Africa, and Italy. Working from DPMO's case tracker and databases of WWII losses, the team determined that these thousands of documents directly inform more than 50 active cases for missing American aviators in France. The team returned with over 10,000 images and is analyzing them in order to present cases for investigation, build new data sets and assessment tools, and augment the GIS mapping system.

All X-Files To Be Digitized This Year

Following WWII, the American Graves Registration Service recovered numerous sets of remains of American service members, some of which were not able to be identified. Those not identified were given a title that started with "X" to signify "unknown." After 1952, there were approximately 8,475 of these cases for WWII. The same process was followed for unknown remains following the Korean War, which resulted in 846 X-files. In 2010, DPMO initiated a scanning project to digitize all of the "X-files" so as to preserve the information, make the files more readily available, and to share the information within the accounting community. As of Feb. 2012, 87 out of 124 boxes of files have been scanned. The scanning project is expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

DPMO Visits CENTCOM

On January 30, several DPMO officials traveled to the Central Command Headquarters in Florida to meet with Rear Admiral Donegan. The officials discussed best practices for personnel accounting in Iraq, for which responsibilities were officially handed over to DPMO last December. Both organizations, DPMO and CENTCOM, are committed to bringing all of our service members home, and will continue to work together to pursue all actions possible to do so.

DPMO & JPAC Discuss North East Asia Activities in 2012

During the week of Feb. 6, DPMO analysts met with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) J-2 representatives for a case coordination conference. Part of the event was a comprehensive review of the last 6 months of Personnel Accounting efforts in Northeast Asia. Another session was held to identify information collection requirements and actions to support search and recovery missions for 2012. The excavation targets for North Korean operations for 2012, and the refinement of JPAC's Joint Survey Team investigative coverage for Unsan and Changjin Counties in North Korea were also discussed.

Web-based Case Management System Development

On Feb 1st, DPMO's Federated Case Management System (FCMS) development team held the first in a series of video teleconference meetings with representatives of the Service Casualty & Mortuary Affairs offices (SCO). The purpose was to define requirements related to case file information requests for future FCMS development. FCMS is a web-based information sharing and collaboration tool that will enhance the POW/MIA Accounting Community's ability to work as a team. A second meeting is scheduled for Feb 6th to discuss a Family Contact Log feature in FCMS and a third meeting is set for the week of Feb 13th to talk about DPMO's Family Portal, which would allow families direct access to select files in their cases.

Worldwide Personnel Recovery Conference

The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) recently co-hosted the 2012 Worldwide Personnel Recovery Conference at Quantico, VA. The conference shared information related to Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape (SERE) Training, SERE Psychology, Intelligence Support to Personnel Recovery, and Non-conventional Assisted Recovery. Two full days were devoted to discussions of personnel recovery, and support for the rescue of missing or isolated personnel.

U.S. Briefs China on Future Remains Recoveries in North Korea

On February 2, officials from the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) met with Chinese Officials to provide background information on plans for resuming investigation and remains recovery operations in North Korea. Because U.S. personnel entering the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea (DPRK) will pass through China, the Americans will need Chinese visas. The operations in North Korea are scheduled to begin this spring and will mark the first in North Korea since 2005.

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