

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
SAN ANTONIO DIVISION

_____ JOHN EAKIN,	)	
	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Civil Case No. 5:16-972
	)	
UNITED STATES	)	
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	
_____	)	

**DECLARATION OF CHRISTOPHER M. MCDERMOTT**

I, Christopher M. McDermott, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declare as follows:

1. I am currently the Chief Data Officer for the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). I have served in my current position since November 2016. As the Chief Data Officer for DPAA, I am responsible for data governance, leading data consolidation, establishing authoritative data, implementing the agency case management system, and supporting the agency's mission to provide data to families, mission partners, and the general public.

2. The statements contained in this declaration are based on my personal knowledge and Department of Defense (DoD) records and information made available to me in my official capacity.

**Contracts to Digitize Individual Deceased Personnel Files**

3. U.S. Army Contracting Command entered into a contract on behalf of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), a predecessor organization of DPAA, with

Lockheed Martin Integrated Systems, Inc. (Lockheed) on August 27, 2012, to scan approximately 400,000 Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs). The contract required Lockheed to produce digital files in in “two formats, a high resolution non-compressed archival version and a single Adobe Portable Format (.pdf).” The period of performance included a base year (August 24, 2012, to August 23, 2013), with two option years (Option 1: August 24, 2013, to August 23, 2014; Option 2: August 24, 2014, to August 23, 2015), and an option to extend the contract for an additional six months. DPMO exercised both option years and the six month extension. Issues largely to do with consistent staffing, quality control, and meeting productivity targets, led to underperformance of this contract. Lockheed Martin digitized approximately 290,000 IDPFs, including the IDPFs for deceased U.S. military personnel whose last names begin with the letter A through L. ECF 36-1.

4. On September 27, 2017, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) entered into a contract on behalf of DPAA with Na Ali’i Consulting & Sales, LLC (Na Ali’i). The contract required Na Ali’i to scan to “perform document management, data conversion, and indexing services for records known as Individual Deceased Personnel Files (IDPFs).” The contract further required Na Ali’i to enable and use optical character recognition (OCR) software tools to locate and index and ensure the “digital copy constitutes a fair, accurate, and machine-readable version of each digitized content, to the extent possible.” The period of performance included a base year (September 30, 2017, to September 29, 2018), with three option years (Option 1: September 30, 2018, to September 29, 2019; Option 2: September 30, 2019, to September 29, 2020; Option 3: September 30, 2020, to September 29, 2021). DPAA has exercised the first option year. The intent of the current contract is to complete the scanning of the IDPFs focusing the files for deceased U.S. military personnel whose last names begin the letter M through Z, that remained

to be digitized (approximately 165,000 files). Exhibit A, Na Ali'I Contract.

**Optical Character Recognition Technology**


5. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is the conversion of images into machine-encoded text that allows the document to be edited and searched. Although OCR provides some advantages in researching historical documents like IDPFs, it is not without limitations. A number of factors contribute to decreased accuracy during the OCR conversion process, including image quality, font type and size, and whether the image is handwritten or typed. (See <https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/faqs/imaged.html>). IDPFs are routinely comprised of older documents that are in poor quality, on problematic source media/paper types, blurred copied fonts, handwritten, or contain images that are unrecognizable during the OCR process. (See Exhibit B, Images of OCRd documents). For these reasons, IDPFs that have been processed with OCR software only provide minor benefits to DPAA researchers and analysts.

6. The time required to convert images into text through the OCR process is determined by a number of different variables, including OCR software utilized, image complexity and quality, and the number of dedicated resources. On average, a low complexity, good quality document takes approximately 4-8 seconds per page to process. The average IDPF is 50 pages, so a complete run of the process for character recognition can require multiple workdays.

\* \* \* \* \*

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this XX day of July, 2019.

  
CHRISTOPHER M. MCDERMOTT

Chief Data Officer  
Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency