



**DPAA Family/VSO/MSO Quarterly Call and Update Notes**  
**Thursday, Jan 30, 2020, 1:00 P.M.**  
**‘Fulfilling Our Nation’s Promise’**



**Summary:** Keeping the families of our missing as well as veterans informed is a primary objective of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's (DPAA) mission. This update is intended to provide an overview of efforts during the previous quarter to account for our missing.

**Families-Veteran-Military Service Organization Participants:**

- American Legion
- Disabled American Veterans
- Honor Release Return, Inc.
- Jewish War Veterans of the USA
- Korea-Cold War Families of the Missing
- Korean War POW/MIA Network
- National League of POW/MIA Families
- Special Operations Association

The agenda includes:

- Director’s Update (Mr. Kelly McKeague)
- Deputy Director of Operations Update (RDML Darius Banaji)
- Operational Update (Euro-Med COL Frank Tank/Indo-Pac Col Brian Peterson)
- Partnerships and Innovations (PI) Update (Dr. Tom Holland)
- Scientific Analysis Update (Dr. John Byrd)
- AFMES-AFDIL Update (Dr. Tim McMahan )
- Outreach and Communications Update (Mr. Todd Livick)
- Question & Answer

In addition to those listed above, Mrs. Jennifer Nasarenko from Policy & Plans also participated in the call.

**Director’s Update**

**Congressional Hearing**

On November 19, I testified before the House Oversight and Reform Committee’s National Security Subcommittee. Witnesses on a separate panel were B.J. Lawrence, Executive Director of the Veterans of Foreign Wars’ DC Office; Joanne Shirley, whose brother is unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War; and Mark Noah, President of History Flight, Inc., a DPAA contractor specializing in recoveries. While the Committee Members frequently reiterated fulfilling their oversight responsibilities, they were fair and supportive. Of note, Chairman Lynch (D-MA) stated

that he would like to lead a delegation to Laos next year; they were pleased to learn about our expanding use of private partners to increase our capacity; and they welcomed learning about our active leveraging of this mission as a tool of engagement and diplomacy, both with our host nation and State Department partners.

### **Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Budget**

We were very pleased Congress passed and the President signed into law the FY 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act, such that there were no adverse impacts to our operations. In addition to DPAA's FY 2020 President's Budget request of \$144.9M for Operations & Maintenance (O&M), Congress appropriated three Program Increases bringing DPAA's O&M appropriation to \$168.9M. The increases provide specified funding for: "Korean conflict" (\$10M), "Missing in Action accounting program" (+\$9M), and "Identifying remains from World War II (WWII) in US European Command" (+\$5M). All of these added funds will be put toward our operational enterprise. To DPAA's request of \$1.5M for Procurement, Congress appropriated \$1.1M.

### **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**

With the North Korean Leader's refocus on renewal of weapons development and no progress of denuclearization negotiations, we do not anticipate the resumption of field operations with the Korean People's Army (KPA) in the near term; our last communication with the KPA was in March 2019. While we remain open to discussions with the KPA should the remote opportunity present itself, we will only be able to conduct one Joint Field Activity (JFA) in late summer. As an alternative, we are coordinating with our South Korean counterpart (MAKRI) on potential joint work, as they look to resume their recovery operations in April near Arrowhead Ridge in the DMZ.

### **Misidentification**

In October, our laboratory discovered a problem with an identification (ID) from last July of a Soldier missing from the Korean War; it was made on the remains of an Unknown disinterred in 2018. We based the ID on the chest radiograph (CXR) comparison and biological profile, and supported by historical and circumstantial evidence. After the ID was made, one of the DNA samples did not match the mitochondrial references of the Soldier. We brought in the preeminent CXR expert who confirmed the misidentification, and both further DNA testing and isotope analysis supported his finding and also found no commingling. Army notified the family who requested an in-person briefing, which Army and DPAA will do together. To best determine what happened and where we need to improve to prevent future occurrences like this one, we initiated an internal cause analysis and will adjust our procedures as necessary. We will soon bring in a team of scientific experts to conduct an independent assessment of this case and our overall processes. Lastly, we have decremented our FY 2019 accounted-for total to 217.

### **Meeting with Lao Foreign Minister**

Earlier this week, I had the privilege of meeting with Lao Foreign Minister Saleumxay, who strongly pledged his country's continued commitment to assist in the accounting of Americans missing from the Vietnam War in Laos. The Minister agreed with the need to increase the pace and scope of operations via operational efficiencies that we have proposed but have not been fully adopted. More importantly, he notionally supported our proposal for DPAA and the Lao POW/MIA Team to jointly develop a 10-year Strategic Plan on achieving the fullest possible accounting of missing personnel in Laos.

### **Past Travel**

My November trip to Europe included speaking at the Florence American Cemetery for their Veterans Day commemoration and a visit to the Dutch Army organization tasked to recover remains of any losses from past conflicts. By Dutch law, they are the only ones permitted to conduct remains investigations and recoveries, and had in their lab the remains of a US WWII Army loss they had recovered last year, which they will soon repatriate to us. We are looking to partner more with them. Earlier this month, I spoke at the Phase I Groundbreaking Ceremony of the National POW/MIA Memorial in Jacksonville, FL. Kudos to Moe Moyer, who is on this call, for spearheading a very impressive event. Not only will the memorial rightfully pay tribute to the service and sacrifices of POWs and MIAs, but also serve as an education and advocacy venue for the personnel accounting mission.

### **Upcoming Southeast Asia Visit**

In March, I will visit Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand to meet with officials from both the partner nation and U.S. Embassy to strengthen relationships and press initiatives, all of which advance our Vietnam War accounting mission in those countries. As part of the yearlong commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of US-Vietnam Diplomatic Relations, I will also host a couple of events highlighting the foundational contributions of the POW/MIA mission. We will lay a wreath at the first joint US-Vietnam excavation of a US loss site in the former North Vietnam that commenced 35 years ago in November, and the subsequent 10 years of cooperation that led to the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries

### **VFW Turnover of Artifacts**

On two occasions, I accepted from VFW leadership wartime artifacts that several of their members had turned in. The result of the VFW's national advocacy campaign, these items included an enemy diary, and a narrative and map of an enemy burial site. Secretary of Defense Esper turned over the latter to his counterpart during his November visit to Vietnam; the Vietnamese greatly appreciated the turnover.

### **Accounting Effort with China**

Earlier this month, among the agreements reached during the U.S.-China Defense Policy Coordination Talks was China's approval for two accounting activities this fiscal year (FY). Subject to any travel restrictions due to the public health situation in China, the first activity in the late Spring is a research and investigation visit to Beijing that will also attempt to plan a field investigation, and a senior leader engagement in early to mid-summer to secure approval of a formal agreement to strengthen cooperation on the POW/MIA mission.

### **Deputy Director for Operations Update**

At the end of November, I visited the DPAA detachments in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. While in Southeast Asia, I briefed updates to the US Country Teams and held meetings with our counterpart organizations in both Vietnam and Laos. We continue to enjoy strong relations in these countries, which enables our mission success and helps to support both current and future field operations. Additionally, I had the opportunity to visit JFA sites in Vietnam and Laos and spent

several hours working along our teams at 3 separate recovery sites. I can tell you it gave me a greater appreciation of the efforts it takes across this Agency to plan, prepare, execute, and sustain our teams in the field.

In early December, we hosted a multitude of visits at our Hawaii facility during Pearl Harbor week. Visitors included the President of the American Legion Auxiliary; the President and CEO of the USO; the Philippines Chief of Defense, and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Greg Slavonic. On December 7th, I had the honor of representing the Agency at the 78th Anniversary Remembrance Ceremony of the attack on Pearl Harbor and at a more intimate ceremony at the *USS Oklahoma* Memorial later that afternoon.

The New Year began with several visits from both senior US and Foreign Government officials. His Excellency Katsunobo Kato, the Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare for the government of Japan visited our DPAA facility in Hawaii. Minister Kato's visit represented a major step forward in the collaboration and cooperation between DPAA and the Government of Japan; it was a very positive and informative engagement. DPAA continues to emphasize to our Japanese counterparts, as well as any other nation seeking their missing, the importance of determining country of origin for recovered remains prior to any other action to include repatriation or, in Japan's case, cremation. The visit was very positive and informative, and I am confident this engagement will lead to a greater level of cooperation between Japan and the US as we both continue to search for our unaccounted-for from WWII.

Over the last three weeks, we had the privilege of hosting the US Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, the Honorable Erin McKee; the US Ambassador to Malaysia, the Honorable Kamala Lakhdir; and the newly confirmed US Ambassador to Laos, the Honorable Peter Haymond. Additionally, we had visits from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia, Mr. Heino Klinck; and the spouse of the Acting Secretary of the Navy, Mrs. Robyn Modly. These visits are beneficial to DPAA because they provide an opportunity to communicate first-hand the size, scope, and complexity of our mission and they offer a platform to build meaningful relationships to further advance the accounting mission.

Lastly, in December, I started providing you with monthly macro-level updates on our ongoing missions around the globe. The intent of this new initiative is to provide you a better "real time" sense of our efforts in support of our noble mission. We also have been providing an executive level summary, to include photos, within a few weeks of a mission's return date. These updates are in addition to these quarterly calls and follow-on notes. I hope you have been finding these updates informative and we continue to look forward to your feedback.

## **Operational Update**

### **European-Mediterranean (EM) Region**

#### **November-January Field Operations**

During this time period, we conducted three investigations and no recovery missions. Activities occurred in Poland and Panama. (The mission in Panama is for a loss that is outside DPAA's

designated conflicts, however, DPAA is assisting the Navy on a reimbursable basis.) In mid-January, we will conduct three investigation missions. Activities will occur in Poland, Panama, and the United Kingdom. Investigation and recovery work conducted by partners occurred in Germany and Italy.

### **November-January Disinterment Operations**

None.

### **Planned February Operations**

During this period, United Kingdom and Poland investigation missions begun in January continue. We will conduct one recovery mission in Panama. EM will further conduct one disinterment at American Battle Monuments Commission's Rhone Cemetery on February 19.

### **US–Russia Joint Commission (USRJC) Update**

Representatives from the US and Russian Sides of the USRJC participated in Technical Talks for the Korean War and Cold War Working Groups on December 12 in Moscow. Summarized minutes of both meetings will be posted to the DPAA website. Highlights from the Korean War talks included discussions of four specific individual cases of unaccounted for U.S. aircrew members, expanding declassification of archival records of Soviet military units and commands not previously accessed by U.S. researchers, as well as obtaining additional Soviet topographic maps of North Korea for the purpose of correlating the specific locations of 24 crash sites of downed U.S. aircraft. The Cold War talks included the continued planning of a previously postponed high priority recovery mission at a cemetery near Vladivostok, which possibly correlates to the November 6, 1951, loss of a US Navy P2V Neptune aircraft; identifying potential Russian partner organizations to assist with locating the wreckage of downed US aircraft lost over the Sea of Japan; as well as a request to search for additional gun camera photography taken by Soviet aircraft during Cold War incidents. Key Russian Side requests included assistance with providing an anonymous questionnaire to individuals now residing in the U.S. who potentially have knowledge of the burial locations of Russian soldiers and civilians lost during conflicts in Afghanistan and Chechnya, as well as help with determining the fates of two Russian airmen lost during the 2008 conflict with the Republic of Georgia.

US Side Chairman, General Doc Foglesong, USAF (Retired), is in Moscow this week to meet with his counterpart, new US Ambassador Sullivan, and other officials to continue to advocate for the work of the USRJC and the upcoming Plenum in May in Moscow. The Vietnam War and WWII Working Groups will meet in DC March 3 for their respective Technical Talks.

### **Indo-Pacific (IP) Region**

#### **November-January Operations**

During this period, the Indo-Pacific Regional Directorate conducted missions in Laos, Vietnam, India, the Philippines, and Tarawa. Vietnam War missions consisted of JFAs in Laos (Oct 18 – Dec 4) comprised of three recovery teams (RTs) and one investigative team (IT); and in Vietnam (Oct 18 - Dec 4) consisting of three RTs, one host nation RT, and one IT. We currently have operations on-going in Laos (Jan 10 – Feb 18) with three RTs and one IT, and in Cambodia (Jan 12 – Mar 12) consisting of one RT.

The WWII, Korean War, and Cold War IP missions during this period included the ongoing recovery by our partner, History Flight Group, on Tarawa. They continue to recover remains as they near completion of a portion of Cemetery 33 and prepare to focus efforts on Cemetery 26. Other missions included a return visit to India by our partner, SEARCH, who advanced recovery of a crash site (Nov 1 - Dec 8), with successful recovery of possible remains. A first-ever joint US/Japanese/Solomon Islands Joint Forensic Review (JFR) was conducted in Honiara, Solomon Islands Dec 5 – 10. This JFR examined several hundred sets of stored remains to determine national origin and exercise developing protocols for remains handling that will be applied across the region. A Staff Engagement Visit to South Korea conducted case reviews, joint planning, and resource discussions with Ministry of National Defense Agency for Killed in Action Recovery and Identification (MAKRI) Nov 10-14. This provided our MAKRI partner with Demilitarized Zone loss details for unilateral Korean investigation and joint recovery planning purposes for FY20. Advance work by a DPAA team has prepared for a quick, organic recovery likely associated with the Bataan Death March in the Philippines Jan 21-25. One RT is currently working a crash site loss in Monywa, Burma Jan 12 - Mar 12.

### **Research and Analysis**

Nov 4 - 9, WWII researchers conducted a case coordination conference concentrating on overviews by countries-of-focus. Four DC-based research analysts brought their recommended leads for the Vietnam War to Hawaii Dec 16 – 20 to discuss each loss with the HI-based analysts. Also included in the meeting were two representatives from Detachment Two-Hanoi and three representatives from the DIA's Stony Beach. Of the 500 losses, 283 included field leads that will drive future JFAs. The remaining cases involve US archival, imagery and lab analysis. IP Directorate researchers gathered Jan 6 - 10 to align research priorities and methods, validate cases for FY20 Korea missions, identify cases for development in support of FY21 planning, and advance a five-year, long-term research plan.

### **November-January Disinterment Operations**

48 Unknowns were exhumed from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. These Unknowns were part of Phase Two of the Korean War Disinterment Project. The remaining Phase Two Unknowns will continue through March 2020. We will disinter a series of WWII Unknowns as we assess the Phase 2 disinterments prior to initiating Phase Three. 55 Exhumations occurred over the course of November through January in the Manila American Cemetery and Monument in the Philippines. We anticipate disinterring an additional 32 by the end of March 2020. This brings IP's total disinterments to 103 in the current FY.

### **Planned February Operations**

Vietnam operations will resume in February with two terrestrial RTs, one underwater RT, one IT, and one partner underwater IT (Feb 14 – Apr 1). Laos operations will continue as well into late February with three RTs Feb 28 – Apr 8). Our partner, University of Illinois-Chicago, will conduct missions in the Philippines with two RTs and one IT Feb 15 - Apr 30.

### **Partnerships & Innovation (PI) Update**

PI helped coordinate six field missions that partners commenced in the first quarter of FY20. These missions included terrestrial and underwater sites in countries such as Germany, Italy, India, and Poland. The PI team also actively engaged in planning and coordination efforts for 33 partner

missions currently anticipated during the remainder of FY20 (17 for EM, 16 for IP). We are attempting to expand the partnership footprint by sending partner teams to new countries or by increasing the numbers and types of projects that we conduct with partners. We are also attempting to line up more unilateral field activities whereby external institutions assist our mission without direct cost to DPAA.

In the first quarter, working with other staff sections, PI hosted 12 partner personnel, representing 9 partner institutions, at our DPAA Academy. PI has spent the last quarter further expanding the bench of partners by negotiating 11 new signed partnership arrangements. There are many more of these arrangements in progress including a batch of renewal arrangements for those organizations that have been partners for several years, which indicates the maturation of our program. PI staff also engaged in extensive partnership development activities including exploratory discussions with potential partners, in-person collaboration meetings, and project oversight and assistance visits.

PI, along with other stakeholders, spent much of the first quarter finishing plans and preparations to rejuvenate the Hub & Spoke research program. This program will involve the efforts of 9 US academic institutions in collaborative research efforts. One of the institutions has already begun research work at this time, and we anticipate a rolling startup effort in the first half of FY20 for the rest of the organizations.

### **Scientific Analysis (SA) Update**

#### **Remains from North Korea**

We continue to make excellent progress on our forensic analysis of the 55 boxes of remains we received from North Korea on August 1, 2018. To date, 44 identifications have been made and more are anticipated in the coming months. Surprisingly, from the over 500 commingled bones turned over, AFMES-AFDIL and DPAA Laboratory estimate that at least 250 individuals are represented, with being 80 non-US personnel, and of the 170 Americans, only 20 had been previously identified. We are working closely with MAKRI to ensure any that may be South Korean are returned to their country. JFRs have occurred already and a repatriation is being planned.

#### **Accreditation**

DPAA successfully passed its annual quality assurance review by ANAB, the Agency's forensic testing accrediting body. The review not only validated our current quality assurance program, but also included an extension of scope for the Laboratory System. The DPAA Nebraska Lab added Chest Radiograph Comparison and field recovery to its scope, and the DPAA Hawaii Lab added Geographic Profiling of Human Remains for the Agency's Isotope Program. DPAA is the first organization to have an accredited forensic testing laboratory for isotope analyses of human remains.

#### **FY 20 Identifications**

Total = 27 (identifications of unaccounted-for personnel)

WWII = 23

Korean War = 4

Vietnam War = 0

### **Scientific Summit (Pacific)**

DPAA will host in Hawaii in April a Scientific Summit that includes representatives from Vietnam, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, India, the Netherlands, and Australia. The purpose of the summit is to bring together individuals and organizations directly involved in the resolution of missing persons cases from past conflicts in the Indo-Pacific Region. Topics to be addressed are treatment of discovered human remains and best practices for determining country of origin for skeletal remains. We hope that this will be beginning of a series of meetings that will bring closer together to achieve common goals.

### **AFMES-AFDIL Update**

#### **FY 19 Year in Review**

FY19 Reported 3,777 DNA Analysis; a 25% increase over previous FY18's 3,000 DNA Analysis; however, without a budget increase this will be our baseline.

FY20 goal is 4,400 DNA Analysis; as of December 31, have reported 1,184 analysis to the DPAA

FY19 issued 207 First-time Named DNA reports, these are DNA results that support new identifications. In FY18, AFMES-AFDIL issued 189 First-time Named DNA reports. For FY20, AFMES-AFDIL has issued 41 First-time Named DNA reports.

FY19 reported out 46 Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) samples per month with a 60% success rate in obtaining results. This was a 12% increase in success rates for samples tested compared to FY18.

FY19 reported out 147 Mitochondrial (mt) DNA results per month with a 94% success rate.

FY19 Reported out 1,172 STR results with a 60% success rate

#### **Added NGS Machines**

Currently, we are finishing up the initial testing and validation work for the new NGS sequencing machines. Initial indications are that with these machines, we will be able to run 24 to 48 samples per run. Current instruments allow 6 to 12 samples per run.

### **Outreach and Communications Update**

#### **Family Member Updates (FMU)**

On November 2, the Agency hosted an FMU in San Juan, Puerto Rico for 36 family members of missing Department of Defense (DoD) personnel. All of the attending families were representing Korean War losses. The event was unique to Puerto Rico in that all but two of the briefings were given in Spanish. The two briefings in English were translated. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) provided the refreshments for the families. Prior to the FMU, a DPAA/AFMES outreach team briefed 30 Soldiers from three units, and Soldiers in school at Fort Buchanan who are in training and transitioning to become mortuary affairs specialists. Members of the team also briefed military and civilian leaders from the Puerto Rico National Guard.

On January 25, DPAA hosted an FMU in Las Vegas, Nevada, with 198 family members, representing 95 losses, attending. We also reached nearly 9000 viewers through our Livestream messaging. The VFW provided the refreshments for the families. Earlier in the week, a DPAA/AFMES outreach team briefed 33 personnel from Nellis AFB and met with a staffer from Senator Rosen's office. On Friday, Mr. McKeague briefed 30 members of the Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee. On January 24, DPAA hosted a screening of the film, *Blood Road*, the story of Rebecca Rusch's quest to discover information about her father, USAF Captain Steven Rusch, missing from the Vietnam War and accounted for in 2007. It chronicles her 1,500 mile journey down the Ho Chi Minh Trail from Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia, visiting the site where her father's plane crashed and how she came to terms with his loss. Both of Captain Rusch's daughters, USAF Brig Gen Sharon Bannister and Rebecca briefly spoke to the over 65 attendees which included families of the missing from WWII, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, and DoD officials. The families were able to identify with Rebecca's quest to find answers.

### **Media Articles of Note:**

POW/MIA Flag to Fly at Federal Sites Year-round

Military Times, November 8, 2019

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/11/08/powmia-flag-to-fly-at-federal-sites-year-round/>

Prominent federal buildings and national war memorials will now fly the iconic POW/MIA flag alongside the American flag throughout the year thanks to legislation signed into law.

The proposal, passed without objection in the House last month and the Senate earlier this year, is designed to help highlight the continued sacrifice of military families whose loved ones are still unaccounted for overseas, estimated at about 82,000 individuals. Veterans advocates praised the move as an important message to the entire country.

The flag — created in 1972 by the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War — has been flown at numerous federal properties over the years, but typically only on special occasions and holidays.

WQED, PBS-Pittsburgh Documentary

Homecoming -- Sgt. Hamilton's Long Journey (30 minutes)

<http://www.wqed.org/homecoming>

The film is about DPAA's recovery and identification of US Army Air Forces Sgt Vernon Hamilton, of Monongahela, PA. Hamilton's aircraft was hit by anti-aircraft fire during WWII and went missing during a combat mission from Couvron, France to Dülmen, Germany.

WQED's community/media relations department held an advance screening in Monongahela in November.

This town was very supportive when their hometown son was returned for burial, and that poignant element is featured in the documentary. The documentary focuses on Hamilton's story, but also highlighted are the efforts of DPAA, History Flight, and others who helped identify and recover Sgt

Hamilton. Notably, the documentary includes a segment on the DPAA lab at Offutt AFB and DPAA's overall mission.

Among those interviewed: Kelly McKeague, Carrie LeGarde, Penny Minturn and Sarah Kindschuh. They also filmed at the Omaha Family Update.

## **Questions and Answers**

**Jewish War Veterans of the USA:** Can you tell me the number of missing from the Vietnam War that have been returned. Answer: 1,059 (With thanks to Ms. Ann Mills Griffiths). The latest Vietnam War accounting statistics can be found on our web page at: <https://www.dpaa.mil/Our-Missing/Vietnam-War/Vietnam-War-POW-MIA-List/>

**American Legion:** Thank you for hosting these calls and the work you do.

**Disabled American Veterans:** I did not hear you mention Panama in your list of countries participating in the Scientific Summit—were they invited? **Answer:** The Scientific Summit will bring together individuals and organizations directly involved in the resolution of missing persons cases from past conflicts in the Indo-Pacific. Panama is not among these.

**Korea-Cold War Families of the Missing:** I continue to be humbled by the work you all do and your accomplishments in spite of all the challenges. Thank you is not a strong enough word. Thank you to Admiral Banaji for the operational updates. They greatly add to our knowledge. Please keep them coming!

**National League of Families:** I want to echo Sherra's thanks to Admiral Banaji for the operational updates. I was pleased to hear about your meeting with the Lao Foreign Minister—however, I am curious as to what has been done about the evidence-based analysis that was promised in order to accurately know what remains to be accomplished; will it be completed before the Lao 2030 strategy development? It is urgently needed. **Answer:** Yes, it will be assessed and used in developing the Lao 2030 strategy.

Can you explain what you mean by partnerships at no cost to the government? **Answer:** As an example, there is a Swedish-owned company, Deep Sea Productions, which has research vessels that look for wrecks in the Baltic Sea. They are looking for a Cold War aircraft crash off of Latvia, and the only thing they ask from us is information sharing. Another example is the Scripps Institute performing underwater surveys in Vietnam that are of minimal to no cost to DPAA. We are looking at areas of commonality where our interests overlap.

**Special Operations Association:** I would like to echo Ann in her thanks for the operational updates. Also, some of us on these calls are getting and I would ask the speakers to remember that and try to speak up and speak slowly. I thank you.

**Korean War POW/MIA Network:** Regarding the mis-identification, as you know, my group does research and advises families on the Korean War Unknowns, so I need to have the name of that mis-identification so I can look into this for my families. **Answer:** We will send you information once the family has been briefed; we will ask if they are amenable to releasing the name. I can tell you now that it was a 2018 disinterment of an Operation GLORY Unknown.

**Honor Release Return:** Thank you, Director McKeague for participating in the Jacksonville ceremony and your excellent presentation. We hope to get you back again for subsequent ground breaking ceremonies. **Answer:** Special thanks go to Moe Moyer, who is on this call, for spearheading the ceremony which both paid tribute to POWs, MIAs, and their families, and recognized the national commitment to account for those still missing.

Todd, I read a news article about the Las Vegas Family Update that referenced 39,000 recoverable for WWII—is that now the number we are using.? **Answer:** The reporter failed to describe the more than 81,900 still missing and that we assess that approximately 39,000 are recoverable. We are attempting to get that story corrected.

I know the road has been long to get the USRJC to get access to productive information. Does that number include those personnel who were transferred to Communist countries-- 20,000 from WWII, 5,000 from the Korean War, and over 800 from the Vietnam War? **Answer:** The USRJC and the DPAA's Joint Commission Support Division (JCSD) that provides analytical and research support to the US Side remains active with planned or executed Technical Talks, joint Investigation/Recovery missions, an Annual Plenum, and US/Russian Chairmen discussions for FY20. Regarding the alleged transfer of American POWs to the Soviets, I would recommend reading the article entitled "United States Prisoners of War and the Red Army, 1944-45: Myths and Realities" from *The Journal of Military History* 66 (July 2002) by Timothy Nenninger of the National Archives. He noted that "...several accounts alleged that up to 23,000 American POWs from WWII, had disappeared into the Soviet Gulag, abandoned, forgotten, never to be repatriated. This did not happen." The 20-page scholarly article breaks down individual allegations and broad cases to refute the misrepresentation of facts from immediately after the war to the early 2000s regarding any transfer of American POWs to Communist countries. Also, he writes how the false WWII allegations misrepresent alleged transfers during the Korean War and Vietnam War. JCSD continues its work to pursue all research into Soviet combat records that provide insight into the US missing from WWII, Korean War, Cold War, and the Vietnam War.

**National League of Families:** Regarding the use of the recoverable number, I just want to say that it is in our interests to introduce realism into our discussions and set realistic expectations. Otherwise we will lose the support of Congress. That is my opinion.