



**DPAA Family/VSO Quarterly Call  
Oct 25, 2023, 3:00-4:00 PM EDT  
'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.

**Family Group/Veterans Service Organization Participants:**

- Coalition of Families
- Korean War POW/MIA Network
- Mission: POW-MIA
- National League of Families
- Jewish War Veterans of the USA
- Special Operations Association/Special Forces Association
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Vietnam Veterans of America

**Director's Update**

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget.** Although the Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) just before the FY began on October 1, it only funds the Federal Government through November 17. Disappointingly, our FY 2024 \$46M increase (from our FY 2023 budget) will be held up until the Defense Appropriations Bill is passed by Congress and signed by the President, which currently appears to be uncertain. As it always is with CRs, our apportioned funding is limited and presents some management challenges.

**POTUS Trip to Vietnam.** During President Biden's trip to Vietnam last month, the POW/MIA mission was highlighted in the Joint Statement issued by the two countries' leaders and a ceremony included the turnover of personal effects to the U.S. (14 artifacts for 3 cases involving 5 Service members) and archival documents to the Vietnamese. All of this served to amplify Vietnam's cooperation (exemplified by the 35 years of sustained joint operations) being foundational to what was announced as a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, the highest bilateral relationship designation Vietnam has.

**Defense Policy Dialogue:** I participated in the annual DPD at which the senior Vietnamese representative referred to the POW/MIA mission as an "important pillar and bright spot" to the bilateral relationship pledging their support to our significantly increased operational tempo there in FY 2024. He also raised "coordinating more closely and assigning tasks to relevant agencies to find more concrete areas of cooperation." We will explore with the U.S. Embassy how to leverage the latter.

**Japanese Legislators.** Last month, I met with 3 members of the Japanese Diet during their trip to DC. We were pleased to learn that the Diet extended the expiring statute that requires Japan to forensically analyze any recovered wartime remains before cremating and also to establish the capabilities to identify the remains. The statute and subsequent policies are critical given the high degree of collocation of American and Japanese remains on battlefields throughout the region.

**Silicon Valley Trip.** I spent last week in Northern California for multiple and diverse engagements with civic leaders, universities, think tanks, and DoD and partner officials to promote our mission and explore new partnerships. At the Naval Postgraduate School, we explored how we can integrate support to DPAA missions within their Foreign Affairs Officer candidates' In-Region Training. At Stanford, former Secretary of State Rice, now head of the Hoover Institution there, joined us where she spoke about traveling with President Bush to Vietnam and bringing home remains. She had high esteem for our mission, and echoed what we heard throughout the week about this being a key tool of engagement and diplomacy.

**Annual Meetings.** In August, I was privileged to speak at the DAV National Convention in Atlantic City where DPAA also had an information booth. Our Principal Deputy Director spoke at the American Legion National Convention in Charlotte and again, the DPAA booth had significant traffic. She and DPAA staff provided remarks to the Special Operations Association Reunion in Las Vegas. We appreciate these opportunities to provide updates on our mission and to connect with these Veterans about accounting for Unreturned Veterans.

### **Acting Deputy Director for Operations (DDO) Update**

**Operations Overview.** In the past 3 months, we deployed 17 DPAA and partner field missions to 17 countries and conducted disinterment missions in France, the Netherlands, and Belgium.

**Maui Support.** Upon receipt of a formal request from FEMA and requisite authorizations from DoD, DPAA rapidly mobilized teams and resources to support the Federal and State response to the devastating fires on Maui. From 17 August to 22 September, 47 civilian and military personnel (anthropologists, odontologists, Army mortuary affairs specialists, and an X-ray technician) contributed to search and recovery operations and mortuary operations at the Forensic Science Center. Our scientists have continued to help the Maui Medical Examiner these identification efforts; 97% of those who perished in the fire have been identified to date.

**Southeast Asia Trip.** In September, a DPAA team and I traveled to Laos and Cambodia for our annual Consultative Talks with the respective POW/MIA officials. In Cambodia, I also had the privilege to provide remarks during the combined Patriot Day and POW/MIA Day Ceremony hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh; the VFW Post in Phnom Penh there hosted a dinner for our team and the U.S. Marine Security Guard Detachment. We then conducted the annual Technical Talks with our Vietnamese counterparts in Washington, DC, which was a first. All three talks set conditions for FY 2024 field operations and enabled us to continue to work through some challenges with our counterparts, all of expressed full support for our plans for increased operations this year.

**Kiribati Access.** After over 3 years of denying access to DPAA teams (mostly due to COVID-19 concerns), the Kiribati Government approved both a Field Forensic Review (FFR) and the resumption of field operations. The former is key to the repatriation of a significant number of remains that were recovered prior to the pandemic and resuming field activities is also critical because they are conducted year around on Tarawa by our partner, History Flight.

**India Progress:** A DPAA delegation's visit in August resulted in the Indian Government turning over American remains recovered in prior year DPAA missions and approving the long-awaited renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DPAA and their Anthropological Agency. This MOU will now enable India's approval of field missions that are scheduled later this year. Our work was mentioned in the Joint Statement issued by President Biden and Prime Minister Modi during the former's September visit to India.

**Key Leader Engagements.** We hosted the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (our boss) for her first visit to DPAA Hawaii, as well as 3 Congressional Delegations (CODEL) with a total of 22 Members and 1 Staff Delegation (STAFDEL) from the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. The Nebraska team hosted the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (head of VA National Cemeteries), one CODEL, and one STAFDEL. These visits provide an opportunity to highlight and build support for our mission.

**Welcome Aboard.** I am privileged to introduce John Figuerres who is will be serving as Senior Operations Officer. John is a retired Navy Captain and had previously served at HQ Pacific Fleet.

## **Regional Teams Overview**

### **Europe-Mediterranean (EM) Regional Update**

**Field Operations.** We closed out FY 2023 with one recovery mission in Germany which focused on the 1944 loss of all 10 crewmen from a B-24H crash. The team had tremendous success in recovering evidence and a new team is now in place to continue that work. We also conducted investigations in Belgium, Germany, France, and Poland.

**Poland Impasse Resolved.** Last month, we received material evidence from 2 recovery missions of a B-17 crash site with 7 missing airmen. While release of possible human remains out of Poland has been straightforward, the release of material evidence was complicated due to Polish laws regarding the transfer of archaeological artifacts to other entities. This release is significant because it has been over 4 years in the making, requiring close collaboration and multiple engagements with various Polish Ministries.

**Planned Field Operations.** Our field activities in Europe are winding down for the season. We are conducting the follow-on recovery mission of the B-24H crash site in Germany and have a team in Italy investigating 3 aircraft loss incidents to locate sites which may be associated with them.

**Disinterment Operations.** In September, we completed the 80<sup>th</sup> of our planned disinterments for FY 2023, our second highest annual total in Europe. The 80 disinterments were accomplished at 8 American Battle Monuments Commission cemeteries in 4 countries. For FY2024, our first

disinterments will occur in November and December at Florence and Sicily-Rome American Cemeteries in Italy.

**US–Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs (USRJC).** In August, General (ret.) Foglesong, U.S. Side Chairman for the USRJC, provided to families attending the Korea/Cold War (K/CW) Annual Government Briefings (AGB) an update on the limited progress of Commission activities. In September, the U.S. and Russian Side Chairmen met virtually to discuss current efforts, which are limited by Russia’s ongoing hostilities in Ukraine, and potential future avenues for joint work.

## **Indo-Pacific (IP) Regional Update**

**Field Operations.** Vietnam War. One Joint Field Activity (JFA) in Laos has just concluded. The mission consisted of 2 Recovery Teams (RT) and one IT-Light (A combined US and Vietnam element with DPAA in the lead) led by Stony Beach. Korean War. An underwater IT, augmented by U.S. Navy divers, conducted a mission off the coast of Busan which was the first DPAA collaboration with the Republic of Korea (ROK) Navy, who provided divers, vessels, and equipment to assist the investigation. World War II (WWII). An IT successfully completed a survey in Indonesia, our first field activity there since the signing of the Memorandum of Arrangement (MOA) which itself took 6 years to finalize. An IT also operated in Malaysia surveying 5 WWII sites, also the first field activity since the signing of that MOA which took 3 years to finalize; the Malaysian Army provided personnel to augment the effort. Also, an IT in Papua New Guinea (PNG) surveyed an endangered site and another proximity loss, recommending both sites for excavation.

**First Drone Use:** We conducted the first-ever survey using aerial drone capabilities in Vietnam. The drones utilized high power photography, videography, and light detection and ranging (LIDAR) sensors at multiple sites, including one high-profile case and two at endangered sites. This historic survey came about after a few years of negotiations and coordination and will increase effectiveness and efficiencies of ITs and RTs. During the next JFA, we will use drones to re-survey 3 incidents on the Master Excavation List (MEL), 2 being endangered sites due to development.

**Planned Field Operations.** Vietnam War. In the first quarter FY24, 3 RTs, 1 IT, and 1 IT-Light will operate in Laos. In Vietnam, a Vietnamese Advance Work team will conduct interviews and canvass villages and units concerning Last Known Alive (LKA) incidents. The first JFA there will consist of 3 RTs, 3 Host Nation RTs, 1 IT Light, 1 Host Nation IT Light-LKA, and 1 Joint Forensic Review (JFR).

**Research and Analysis.** In support of the K/CW, the team delivered research briefings for our Korean War families, supported the Cold War Family Panel; produced 320 case summaries, and numerous additional information-only updates during and after the AGB. We conducted our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual WWII Case Coordination Conference in August, the theme being how research projects drive successful field operations, training on aircraft wreckage analysis at the Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, and training on geospatial field analysis using technologies newly available (Starlink and Geographic Information Systems [GIS] field applications). For the past several months, we have been working with other directorates on getting the Vietnam War statistics updated/corrected on the Agency website. Our GIS Section began managing all the location data in Case Management

System and DPAA's website tab "Map of the Missing," providing the dividing line between the Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea, as well as plotted the 17th parallel out into the ocean. We expect some over-water incidents to have a location change, but the number of unaccounted-for individuals remains at 1,578.

**Disinterment Operations.** We completed all planned FY 2023 disinterments (68 total Unknowns) in March at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial (MACM) and in July at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) (513 total Unknowns). The first 8 disinterments of the Korean War Identification Project (KWIP) Phase 5 were accomplished on October 23.

**Planned Disinterments.** In the first quarter, disinterments of 35 Unknowns are planned at the MACM and 32 at the NMCP.

**Detachment 2 and POTUS Visit.** Det 2 personnel members supported an artifact exchange for the historic POTUS visit in early September 2023, which included receiving 14 artifacts for three cases involving five U.S. service members. Those artifacts were accessioned into our Laboratory for analysis and will be turned over to the SCOs for final handover to families.

## **Partnerships and Innovations (PI) Update**

**Field Activities.** In total, we completed 70 partner field missions in FY 2023. These worldwide missions included efforts in Vietnam, Poland, and in the waters off Kwajalein Atoll. We are already moving out in the new FY with a partner mission in Tarawa, one to kick off this week in the Philippines, and another to start later this month in Germany.

**UK Excavation.** A partner RT at a B-17 crash site (3 missing crewmen) near Bury St. Edmunds finished last month and generated significant British media interest. The effort involved two England-based NGOs augmented by volunteers from Operation Nightingale. This program is administered by the Ministry of Defense to employ British Wounded Warrior Veterans in archaeological excavations and provide them proven physical and mental health benefits.

**Unique Croatia Mission:** One of our partners conducted an underwater recovery of 6 B-24 crewmen off the coast of Croatia. The depth of the site is 301 feet, which is the deepest underwater recovery undertaken, demonstrating again how we are increasing DPAA capacity and capabilities by leveraging resources offered by partners. Also, this type of recovery work and depths are so uncommon that the divers' physiology is being studied by the international organization, Divers Alert Network, to inform safety guidelines.

**Research.** During FY 2023, our Research Team coordinated and conducted extensive work on 81 active research projects. Of these, 72 will continue into the new FY with institutions that include Texas Tech, the World War II Museum, and the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC). The research efforts have resulted in tens of thousands of deliverables that have provided foundational research, GIS data, and other products tailored to meet the needs of the Agency's historians and analysts. It is also worth noting that we are piloting an innovative partnership program with University of Illinois-Chicago whereby their research directly contributes to the field missions they undertake in the Philippines.

**New Arrangements.** Over the course of the past FY, we established more than two dozen new formal partnerships through signed Memoranda of Understanding. We now have a total number of 103, with an additional 87 in our partner development pipeline. Finally, more than 83 partner or prospective partner personnel participated in the DPAA Academy during FY 2023.

### **Scientific Analysis Update**

**FY 2023 Identifications.** We ended the FY making 177 identifications (158 newly accounted-for). By conflict, 115 were from World War II, 39 from the Korean War; and 4 from the Vietnam War. In addition, there were 34 additional portions of remains identified and 19 remains that were previously identified.

**Accessions.** There were 336 batches of evidence accessioned into our laboratory system, consisting of skeletal, dental, and/or material evidence for FY 2023. The evidence originated from disinterments (68%), DPAA excavations and investigations (12%), partner activities (5%), and unilateral turnovers (14%). The accessions were associated with 3 conflicts: WWII (80%), Korean War (12%), and the Vietnam War (7%).

**Milestones.** The Cabanatuan and Huertgen Forest (HF) Projects each achieved its 70<sup>th</sup> identification in September. For the latter, 48 Unknowns associated with the HF Battle were disinterred from ABMC Cemeteries across Europe and accessioned into the lab in this past quarter, representing 34% of all HF Unknowns accessioned since the project started in 2016.

**362<sup>nd</sup> Identification:** In October 2021, we closed out the USS *Oklahoma* Disinterment Project, having individually identified 92% of the ship's Sailors and Marines who had been buried as Unknowns. The reinterment of unidentifiable remains at the NMCP included 55 sets of remains that we had individually segregated. Due to the Navy's collection of a new DNA Family Reference Sample (FRS), Radioman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Frank Hoag was identified in March. His remains were disinterred and repatriated to his family in August for burial in Kent, Washington.

**Vietnam War Identification Project.** The VWIP is engaged in a data audit with members of the other DPAA Teams to validate records. In FY 2023, VWIP produced 4 first-time identifications, one individual identification for a Service member accounted-for historically by a Group ID, and 7 additional portion identifications. The RTs operating in SE Asia repatriated 25 batches of evidence thus far this FY, all of which are currently undergoing forensic testing.

**Enoura Maru Project.** The project commenced in January 2023 and all remains of the 431 Unknowns are in the Nebraska Lab as of October 2. From the 71 caskets out of the NMCP and 24 caskets from the MACM, more than 35,000 bones have been inventoried, 2,000 of which have been sampled and sent for DNA analysis. Inventory and DNA nomination will continue for the next 4-7 months.

**Major FFR.** In September, we performed a FFR with History Flight on Tarawa, assessing the evidence recovered to determine what items should be forwarded to the laboratory for additional analyses. Our scientists hand-carried 3 containers of skeletal remains and DNA samples with them directly to the Hawaii Lab. They also approved 23 small cases of remains which the Royal New Zealand Air Force repatriated to Hawaii, at no expense to us, because we were unable to gain access of U.S. aircraft to Tarawa.

**Facility Update.** We are working with the Offutt AFB engineers and the Nebraska National Guard on an MOA to finalize the real estate transaction for our previously approved build site. The evidence and comparative collection from our former Ohio Lab continue to be integrated into our digital and physical evidence tracking system, together with the reorganized workspaces, will be made fit for use.

### **Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) – Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) Update**

Year to date, we have received 4,219 specimens for DNA testing, representing 821 new cases, to include samples from the *Enoura Maru* Project, Tokyo Prison Fire case, European and Indo-Pacific disinterments, KWIP, and others.

In August, prior to the K/CW, we hosted the first trilateral talks between DPAA, AFDIL, and MAKRI. We will be hosting MAKRI scientists later this fall for a scientific exchange of our Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) methods.

For chemically treated and highly degraded samples to include KWIP, Cabanatuan, and Vietnam samples, we maintained an average of 97 NGS samples per month in FY 2023. We will be able to maintain this throughput this FY due to the \$4M one-year supplemental appropriations received this past February, which enabled the purchase of 2 NextSeq higher throughput NGS instruments and the retrofitting of an existing laboratory space to double the number of workstations.

#### **FY 2023 Statistics:**

DNA Results Reported: 3,604 (goal was 3,600)

mtDNA traditional: 834

NGS: 1,165 samples (97 samples per month)

Autosomal short tandem repeat: 971

Y-short tandem repeat: 636

First-time Named Believed-to-Be Reports = 175 (reports that will support new identifications)

### **Outreach and Communications Update**

**K/CW Statistics.** In Arlington, VA, August 17-18, we (and our AFDIL and Service Casualty Office partners) hosted a successful Annual Government Briefings event for families whose loved ones are unaccounted for from the Korean and Cold Wars. We had 564 family members attend, representing 326 losses; there were 163 (29%) first-time attendees. Senior officials from DoD, State Department, United Nations Command, and the ROK spoke to the gathered families.

**National POW/MIA Recognition Day.** On September 15, National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremonies were held at the Pentagon's River Parade Field (hosted by the Deputy Secretary of Defense with former Vietnam War POW, Air Force Colonel Michael Brazelton as the keynote speaker and an F-16 flyover; at the NMCP in Hawaii where our Principal Deputy Director hosted and Gold Star Father, Mr. Allen Hoe, was the keynote. Both ceremonies were well attended by

families of the missing, veterans, and military members; 8 Ambassadors and 12 Defense Attachés from host nations where DPAA operates attended the Pentagon Ceremony. Also, our Southeast Asia Detachments hosted ceremonies at their respective U.S. Embassies.

**Tuskegee Airman.** We identified the second Tuskegee Airman, 2Lt Fred Brewer, whose P-51 went down in October 1944 over Italy. Recovered by German troops, his remains were unidentifiable and buried as an Unknown in the Florence American Cemetery. After extensive research, disinterment, and forensic analyses, 2Lt Brewer was accounted for. His cousin attended the POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony at the Pentagon and will inter her cousin in North Carolina this fall.

**Media.** Last quarter's major media engagements: Initially covered by the Washington Post, the Tuskegee Airman announcement spawned multiple follow-on articles from other outlets; a media roundtable prior to the K/CW resulted in 21 interviews of families and DoD experts; Defense.gov embedded a writer for nearly a week on a recovery mission in Germany resulting in multiple articles published on National POW/MIA Recognition Day; the day itself had the expected bump in coverage; and there were many interview requests regarding our involvement in the recovery and identifications efforts on Maui.

#### **Stories of Note:**

Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2023/09/03/tuskegee-airman-remains-identified-brewer/>  
(2Lt Fred Brewer, WWII)

Baton Rouge Advocate

[https://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/entertainment\\_life/waiting-for-uncle-frank-73-years-later-hes-still-missing-with-7-490-others-in/article\\_ce295dda-4cf7-11ee-9da4-c7d0e20b12f6.html](https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/entertainment_life/waiting-for-uncle-frank-73-years-later-hes-still-missing-with-7-490-others-in/article_ce295dda-4cf7-11ee-9da4-c7d0e20b12f6.html)  
(CPL Franklin Greer, Korean War)

Smoky Mountain News

<https://smokymountainnews.com/news/item/36416-america-reckons-with-its-legacy-in-vietnam-one-soldier-at-a-time>  
(Capt Frederick Hall, Vietnam War)

#### **Questions & Answers**

**Jewish War Veterans of the USA:** *Thank you for including us on the event at the Pentagon. Look forward to being reengaged and plan on being involved in the future.*

**Special Operations Assn (SOA):** *Thanks to DPAA for supporting the SOAR briefings, in particular Dr. Parr was totally outstanding. Hers was the first time a presenter got a standing ovation. Regarding, drone operations, do you expect that to expand into Laos and Cambodia?*

**ANSWER:** The detachment in Laos, IP analysts, and the SA planner are compiling a list of Lao incidents on the MEL and the Master Investigation List (MIL) where a drone could be a force multiplier. The drone does have magnetometer capability. At this time, we have not yet discussed the use of drones in Cambodia.



*You mentioned upcoming missions, are you sending teams to sites?*

**ANSWER:** We recently deployed 3 RTs and 1 IT to Laos, and we have 4 other JFAs in the remainder of the FY. This is a significant increase in OPTEMPO from last year. Likewise in Vietnam, we recently deployed RTs and an IT that will investigate some LKA cases; 3 other JFAs are planned in FY 2024. In Cambodia, we are conducting partner missions with an IT deploying in 2 weeks to a case in a disputed border area with Laos. There are other partner missions throughout the year and a hopefully, a follow-on recovery mission to the border site.

*Are you looking at any underwater missions in SE Asia and the Korean War, or are you waiting to see how successful they are in Europe?*

**ANSWER:** We have conducted underwater missions in both Vietnam and Cambodia with good success. Vietnam was the first SE Asia country to approve our use of a partner, which was Scripps Institution of Oceanography on an underwater recovery. We recently completed an underwater investigation in South Korea with assistance from their Navy. We continue to progress underwater cases development and partner with outside entities who bring unique capabilities, such as the U.S. Navy Experimental Dive Unit on a deepwater WWII case off the coast of PNG earlier this year.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars:** *Looking forward to working with DPAA in Hawaii to get leadership to SE Asia in March or April. What happens if the budget is not passed on 17 Nov. How does that impact DPAA?*

**ANSWER:** We look at the 17<sup>th</sup> as a fork in the road and remain concerned. It could be a continuing resolution (CR) which means we will be limited to last year's funding level that is roughly \$47M less than this year; if there is a lapse in appropriations, there will be a government shutdown. Teams will have to return to include the 8 teams who are deployed to Vietnam and Laos. Civilians will be furloughed for however long it takes Congress to pass a budget or another CR. There are significant impacts to either. Our AFMES-AFDIL partners are exempt so their work will continue as long as they have reagent/supplies on hand. While we could have played it safe and not deployed teams, we determined that would be irresponsible. We did decide to change our first FMU of the FY, that was scheduled for November 18 in Atlanta, to a virtual one on November 4.

**Vietnam Veterans of America:** *Overwhelmed every meeting with the information that comes out which we try to disseminate to all the chapters. What is an IT-Lite? That is a new term.*

**ANSWER:** It is an IT where the Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons has more of the personnel and takes a more active role. It is lighter with DPAA personnel who are predominantly the research element.

**Coalition of Families:** *Thanks all of you for the great work you do on our behalf. Given the DPRK silence and that you are not allowed in these days I will defer those questions. General Foglesong mentioned how the USRJC and Russia have been discussing potential future projects and today the term "limited progress" was used. What are those projects? Was any discussion of the transfer issue of U.S. POWs in the Korean War into Russia?*

**ANSWER:** In an exchange of papers between both Sides' Chairmen, we proposed potential avenues of analyst-to-analyst discussions within the four working groups, and we passed to them some specific cases from which we are seeking information. We made specific research requests for each conflict and our request for the Korean War included the transfer issue. We have suggested conducting virtual calls, but the Russian Side continues to reject them, but we still push because it is the only open channel of communications between our two countries.

**Coalition:** *Many families are aging and unable to attend meetings. The collation was approached by a family member, 89 years old --- concerned about how they get information. They are elderly, not computer savvy, cannot attend meetings, and don't get case summaries. They have asked if perhaps case summaries could be sent to those families who cannot attend meetings and don't have computers?*

**ANSWER:** We will coordinate with the Service Casualty Offices on a case-by-case basis to provide case summaries in a format that is most suitable to the needs of these families.

**Mission POW-MIA:** *Echo David Gordon's comments on the DPAA presentations at SOAR; they were excellent. What is the difference between a researcher, historian, analyst and how many are devoted to each of the wars?*

Researcher is a catch-all term that encompasses both historians and analysts. New historians and analysts typically arrive to DPAA with different educational/experience backgrounds and strengths. Fully trained analysts and historians can be very difficult to distinguish as they ultimately need the full set of skills/strengths each type of staff member brings to be fully successful in DPAA research roles. Generally, analysts tend to have a military background and specialized training in some form of intelligence gathering as well as familiarity with classified systems, field experience, and training in military analysis. Historians might have military experience, but often come with a traditional academic background (typically with PhDs in Military History or related fields). Historians tend to join DPAA already well versed in professional writing for multiple types of audiences, as well as locating and retrieving archival documents and obscure primary and secondary sources.

From the perspective of civilian civil service hiring, the two types of researchers are hired under different government service (GS) codes and with different skills and experience requirements. Specifically, to hire someone as an historian, the individual must meet an Office of Personnel Management-specified education requirement. At DPAA, we employ both in order to capitalize on the disparate strengths each type of researcher brings.

Conflict *	Regional Directorate							
	Indo-Pacific***				Europe-Mediterranean			
	Supervisory Historians	Supervisory Analysts	Historians	Analysts ****	Supervisor y Historians	Supervisor y Analysts	Historian s	Analyst s
Vietnam War	0	2	8	16	0	0	0	1
Korean War	1	0	10	4	0	0	0	1
Cold War	The Cold War section is included with the Korean War				0	0	0	1
World War II	2	0	17	6	2	0	18**	2
Disinterments	1	0	7	1				

\* The EM Directorate is also responsible for 6 losses from the Gulf Wars and Libya and are handled by researchers who otherwise focus on World War II.

\*\*As of 26 October 2023, 9 positions are filled and 9 are vacant; of the latter, 7 are newly established positions which represent an expansion of EM's research capacity.

\*\*\*Numbers for Indo-Pacific refer to billets, some of which are currently vacant.

\*\*\*\*Numbers for "Analysts" includes Research Analysts, Archeologists, and Geographers.

**Mission:** *How often are the Case Coordination meetings conducted?*

**ANSWER:** Both the IP and EM Directorates conduct them twice per year per conflict, typically for a full week.

**Mission:** *If we discover discrepancies on the website and we don't know the families to reach out to them, who should we reach out to at DPAA? We have located 30 photos of men we would like to share with DPAA.*

**ANSWER:** Please contact Mark Abueg.

**Mission:** *How does a case get to the MEL and what kind of approvals do you go through to put a case on the MEL? Who is in the room for the review process?*

**ANSWER:** It begins with researchers delineating cases/clusters of cases based on things such as boundaries of ground campaigns, bombing missions, unit affiliations, dates of death, etc. They then conduct primary and secondary source research on both individuals still unaccounted-for and those accounted for by past U.S. efforts. Analysis of this collected research yields leads for progressing the case through field investigations, disinterments of Unknowns, or sometimes both. Where a field investigation is warranted, historians, analysts, and archaeologists collaborate to create an investigation proposal, which is to investigate at the incident level. The investigation proposal is peer reviewed by IP/EM and SA staff and either approved or disapproved within the Regional Directorate.

Incidents with approved investigation proposals are placed on the MIL and are then available for future years scheduling/planning of the field investigation. At the conclusion of an investigation mission (which typically investigates several incidents over the course of a single mission), the IT produces a report of the investigation. Incidents with potential for recovery move forward in the process. Incidents for which the investigation yielded inconclusive or negative results can move back to an earlier research phase or stay in place for additional investigations.

If a site for is progressed for future remains recovery, historians, analysts, and archaeologists create an excavation proposal, which are also peer reviewed by IP/EM and SA staff and approved or disapproved by the respective EM/IP Director. Sites approved through this process are placed on the MEL for future years scheduling/planning. The placement of a site on the MEL is not, in itself, a commitment of resources against future execution. Annual determinations about which field activities to execute are made at the Agency level rather than the EM/IP level and are executed through a deliberate operational planning process nested under an approved Agency Strategy.

**National League:** *Appreciation to DPAA for the fantastic job at the SOAR. In the Update notes; under research and analysis on page 4, please explain the reference to cleaning up stats and reference to GIS).*

**Answer:** This is in reference to a DPAA-wide transition to a more accurate method for assigning geographic names to missing individuals. In the past, we were limited to a country name that a DPAA analyst typed in by hand, regardless of where the last known/loss location actually was. Now, we are assigning a geographic placename to individuals based on the coordinate of the last known/loss location, which could be a country name, body of water, or both (if the loss location is in the water but within the 12 nautical mile boundary of a country).