



**DPAA Family/VSO Quarterly Call and Update Notes**  
**Friday Oct 29, 2021, 2:00 PM EDT**  
**'Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise'**



**Summary:** Keeping the families of our missing as well as veterans informed is a primary mission 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: Ms. Donna Knox
- Disabled American Veterans: Mr. Justin Hart/Mr. Vince Darcangelo
- Honor Release Return: Mr. Moe Moyer
- Korea-Cold War Families of the Missing: Ms. Sherra Basham
- Korean War POW/MIA Network: Mr. John Zimmerlee
- National League of POW/MIA Families: Mrs. Ann Mills Griffiths/RDML (Ret) Jon Kreitz
- Veterans of Foreign Wars: Mr. B.J. Lawrence
- Vietnam Veterans of America: Mr. Grant Coates

The agenda includes:

- Director's Update (Mr. Kelly McKeague)
- Deputy Director for Operations Update (RDML Darius Banaji)
- Operational Update (Indo-Pac Col Matt Brannen/Euro-Med COL Jon Lust)
- Partnerships and Innovations Update (Dr. Tom Holland)
- Scientific Analysis Update (Dr. Debra Zinni)
- Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES) Update (Dr. Tim McMahon)
- Outreach and Communications Update (Mr. Johnie Webb)
- Question & Answer

**Director's Update**

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Budget.** The Congress passed and the President signed a 64-day continuing resolution (CR), which funded the Federal government beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> through midnight, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Under the CR, we were allocated the proportion of our FY 2022 President's Budget request of \$130.7 million (M). Of the four Defense Committees who have acted on their Defense Bill, only the House Armed Services Committee had a program increase (\$25M) for DPAA.

**COVID-19 Update.** Like the rest of the world, the pandemic has continued to be disruptive. However, we adapted our methods and were able to pursue operational opportunities whenever they arose. Almost all of our personnel have been fully vaccinated, which has become a criterion for

partner nations allowing us entry. Here at home, we operate with a combination of in-office presence (about 25%) and teleworking and virtual meetings. All of this is in accord with Federal government policies and guidance, and adherence to health and safety protocols.

**Support to VSO Conventions.** On August 1, our Principal Deputy Director, Fern Sumpter Winbush, was in Tampa at the Disabled American Veterans and Auxiliary National Convention, where she addressed the POW/MIA Seminar. I spoke to the American Legion's National Security Committee and the American Legion Auxiliary's National Convention, which were in Phoenix, in late August. On September 14, I addressed the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs in Remo, a first-time engagement for DPAA. Then on October 20, I provided remarks to the Special Operations Association Unreturned Heroes Memorial Breakfast, which was part of their National Convention in Las Vegas. And on October 27, I spoke at the Korean War Veterans Association's Annual Meeting in Orlando. We appreciate these opportunities to connect and communicate with stakeholders whose support to our mission is critical.

**First Overseas Trip.** In mid-November, I have my first overseas trip in two years. I will first speak at the American Cemetery in Tunis on Veterans Day and meet with Tunisian and U.S. officials. The stop in France will include a meeting with American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) officials and a visit to a partner recovery team. While in Germany, I will meet with officials at Army and Air Force component commands who support DPAA operations in Europe.

**Key Personnel Announcements.** In every organization, personnel transition is inevitable. George Gagne, who served as our Chief Information Officer for 13 years, including a year as Acting Chief of Staff, retired in September. After 5 years of leading our Outreach and Communications team, Todd Livick will retire from Federal Service next month. Johnie Webb will serve as the Acting Director and Mike Fowler will be the Acting Deputy. And at the end of December, Dr. Tom Holland will also be retiring from Federal service after a distinguished 29-year career. Lastly, in early November, we will welcome Army Sergeant Major Ronald Lee Gardner, an Armor Senior Sergeant, to serve as our Senior Enlisted Leader.

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

**Operations Outlook.** As FY 2021 ended, we completed 51 DPAA and private partner Joint Field Activities (JFAs) in 31 countries. In aggregate, these 51 JFAs resulted in: our teams completing 17 recovery and 17 investigative missions; the Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) completing 11 recoveries and 3 investigations, while we were prevented entry due to COVID; and our private partners completing 14 recovery and 12 investigative missions. This tremendous success was as result of extensive coordination and collaboration with our U.S. Embassies and partner nation counterparts. We remained vigilant in applying our force health protection measures, before, during, and after missions, to ensure the safety of our teams and host nation personnel. We remain just as optimistic for field missions in FY 2022. Three of our Staff Directors will highlight recent and upcoming missions across 16 countries.

**Agency Disinterment Program.** Disinterments of Unknowns represent a large portion of identifications currently made by DPAA. These cases are central to establishing our ability to conduct future recoveries for field losses associated with World War II and the Korean War. Each

Unknown currently interred in a Veterans Affairs (VA) or ABMC cemetery represents a field recovery after the respective war, which unfortunately did not result in an identification. With our expanded access to historical records as well as more advanced forensic identification methods, we dedicate World War II and the Korean War disinterment efforts to resolving the X-file cases as they not only increase our understanding of the historical records, but also provide answers to families and fulfill our Nation's promise for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

**Artifact Exchange.** On July 19, Secretary of Defense Austin participated in an artifact exchange with Vietnamese Defense Minister Giang. The Secretary provided pictures of a mass burial site in central Vietnam and the Vietnamese provided a pilot's checklist, identification card, evasion map, and a "blood chit" with the unique identifier of an US Air Force F-4 pilot. Credit goes to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) who encouraged their members to turn in war artifacts, which are useful and appreciated by the Vietnamese.

**Key Leader Engagements.** In the last three months, among the many senior leaders we hosted were: Republic of Korea's (ROK) Minister of Defense Suh; Senator Sullivan of Alaska; Ambassador McFeeters, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia; both the Commander and Deputy Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral Aquilino and LtGen Sklenka; and GEN Yamazaki, Chief of Staff, Japan at our Hawaii facility. Similarly, in Nebraska, we hosted the Military Liaison Assistant to Senator Fischer of Nebraska. These visits afford us the opportunity to highlight our personnel and mission, and visitors gain a richer understanding of our worldwide efforts.

**Consultations/Technical Talks.** Despite COVID-19, for the second year in a row, we conducted virtual consultative talks with our counterparts in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Our virtual talks with the Cambodian POW/MIA Committee were held in August; in September, with the VNOSMP; and just yesterday, October 28, with the Lao POW/MIA Team. In addition to our partner nation counterpart leaders, present were U.S. Embassy leaders, DPAA Detachment personnel, and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA)-Stony Beach representatives. These discussions primarily focused on summarizing FY 2021 field missions, reviewed COVID-19 mitigation measures, and finalized FY 2022 field missions. All three sessions were extremely productive and built on our already strong partnerships.

**Joint Repatriation Ceremony.** On September 22, DPAA hosted the first-ever, Joint Repatriation Ceremony between the U.S. and the RoK at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam. The purpose of the ceremony was to transfer the remains and commemorate the service of 68 fallen South Koreans and 6 believed-to-be U.S. Service members who fought during the Korean War. The remains were analyzed jointly by the DPAA Laboratory and scientists with the ROK Ministry of National Defense Agency for KIA Recovery and Identification (MAKRI). The keynote speakers were His Excellency, President Moon and Admiral Aquilino. This ceremony was a testament to DPAA's longstanding partnership with MAKRI and the ROK.

**New Indo-Pacific Deputy Director.** Lastly, I want to extend a warm welcome to Christopher Phelps, who has taken the reins as the Indo-Pacific Regional Deputy Director. Chris comes to us with nearly 23 years of dedicated uniform, private sector, and civil service experience. He recently served as the U.S. Africa Command Assistant Deputy J5, where he oversaw all their security

cooperation activities. He brings a wealth of operational and staff experience, to include serving at the Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance at Fort Leavenworth, KS.

## **Operational Update**

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

**Field Operations.** Over the last quarter, we accomplished three JFAs in the ROK, Laos, and Vietnam. An investigation team (IT) returned from the ROK and nominated trench lines near Hill 111 in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) for excavation after further demining was completed. DPAA returns to South Korea in November with an IT whose purpose is to set conditions for future FY 2022 excavation activities. In Laos, two recovery teams (RTs) and an investigation effort with the DIA-Stony Beach completed their purposed efforts. In Vietnam, a VNOSMP-led JFA included excavation of three sites, a Last Known Alive investigation, and a Joint Forensics Review (JFR). The JFR was the 137th of its kind, evaluated ten sets of remains, and approved the repatriation of four sets of remains and additional material evidence to the DPAA Laboratory for further analysis. The four sets of remains came from a unilateral turnover, two Vietnamese RTs, and a Joint RT. Continued lack of access in Oceania led to the deferment of multiple missions in the Solomon Islands, but we remain hopeful about returning in FY 2022. In mid-October, IP deployed two RTs and 2 ITs teams to Vietnam and three RTs to Laos. Additionally, current Vietnam unilateral activities include two RTs and an IT.

**Research and Analysis.** In July, we conducted an in-person Vietnam War Case Coordination Conference and virtual Korean and Cold War Case Coordination Conference. Together, these conferences coordinated the "next steps" for 730 cases. Additionally, we conducted 62 case summary review virtual meetings during the September Vietnam War Government Briefings. Despite limited access, our historians were able to visit document repositories in Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and California, acquiring new documents and sources to aid future World War II (WWII) case development. Finally, the Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) provided substantial spatial data services and map products supporting this research and field activities.

**Disinterment Operations.** We wrapped up Phase Three of the Korean War Identification Project (KWIP) with 22 disinterments from the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) in Honolulu in September 2021. We met the Agency's disinterment goal for FY 2021, with 223 Unknowns disinterred: 121 from the NMCP and 102 from Manila American Cemetery and Memorial (MACM).

**Planned Field Operations.** During the first and second quarters of FY 2022, IP plans to execute three ITs in India, an RT in Thailand, three RTs and an IT in Laos, a small IT in Kirabati, two VNOSMP RTs and one IT in Vietnam, and an underwater RT to Papua New Guinea. We also plan to conduct a staff engagement during the second week of November with our MAKRI counterparts and the United Nations Command.

**Planned Disinterments.** After completing Phase Three of the KWIP, disinterment of WWII Unknowns from the Myitkyina-47 Project began at the end of September and continue throughout the 1st quarter before transitioning to Phase Four of the KWIP at the end of January 2022. Despite

significant COVID-19 restrictions in Manila, we will begin our planned FY 2022 disinterment operations of WWII Unknowns from MACM in November. We are on track to achieve the Agency's goal of disinterring 200 Unknowns in FY 2022: 100 from NMCP and 100 from MACM.

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

**Field Operations.** While organic field operations in our area have most likely concluded as the weather turns unfavorable until late spring, we will launch an RT to Sicily on October 31. Among an extremely productive last quarter, we completed our third recovery mission for the year in Germany, and with the outstanding support of the Lithuanian government, were able to conduct an unscheduled field forensic review associated with missing Americans from the Stalag VI POW Camp. Additionally, a recovery mission in Austria already resulted in the successful identification of Army Air Forces Lt Mitchell and provided answers to his surviving 90-year-old brother. We also completed investigation missions in Germany and Poland, Great Britain, Italy, as well as Luxembourg and Belgium, which have already produced actionable leads to progress cases and allow future field operations. Finally, an IT is now on site in Panama, on behalf of the U.S. Navy, to continue investigating the crash site of an A-6 lost during a training mission in 1985.

**Planned Field Operations.** As we look to the new FY, conditions for entry in our region remain favorable to continue field operations once the weather conditions in Europe allow. We just completed our internal planning synchronization and are on track to execute two field recoveries and multiple investigation missions over the next 12 months.

**Disinterment Operations.** We completed 88 disinterments in FY 2021, exceeding our goal of 85, due to outstanding support from the ABMC and a lot of hard work by the entire DPAA team. While the majority of our disinterments have focused on field losses recovered by the American Graves Registration Command (AGRC) after the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, we have been able to increase efforts into losses from the Battle of the Bulge, the Anzio landings in Italy, the initial phase of Operation OVERLORD, and the Stalag IIA POW Camp as our research has broadened and deepened over the last six years. Additionally, we will coordinate our initial FY 2022 disinterment plan with ABMC in December and look forward to resuming these critical activities in March 2022 as they are truly foundational to enabling future field operations. Finally, with the assistance of the Department of State, we are hopeful the agreement with the Government of Tunisia to conduct disinterments at the North Africa American Cemetery in 2022 is near completion.

**General Research Activities.** While our access to conduct research at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) facility in College Park, MD, continues, COVID-19 conditions have not progressed enough for them to resume shipment of imagery records stored in Kansas. While this does not currently impact our planned missions for FY 2022, we continue to talk with NARA leadership to fully resume the range of research activities critical for us and the families of the missing.

**US–Russia Joint Commission (USRJC).** The Russian Side of the commission was essential to gaining formal recognition by the Russian government that our research contract was not a target of recent Russian Presidential decrees. If we had not obtained that statement, our research activities in the Russian Ministry of Defense Archives would have stopped in September and may not have

resumed for several years. Additionally, the U.S. Chairman conducted a phone call with his Russian counterpart this month to maintain support for executing Technical Talks, the 23rd Plenum, and Hospital 404 recovery as well as a WWII B-24 investigation as soon, as COVID-19 conditions in Russia allow. Finally, while I am sad to announce the departure of Rich Lyda as US Side Executive Secretary for the USRJC, I can assure you the EM Team and DPAA will maintain support to the USRJC until we can hire his replacement.

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

During the last quarter, the PI Directorate oversaw 17 field missions and initiated or completed 47 separate research projects. The field missions included terrestrial recoveries in Germany, Croatia, Italy, France, Austria, and Poland, and underwater recoveries or investigations in Denmark, Palau, Italy, France, the Marshall Islands, and Australia. Potentially identifiable remains were found at a number of these. And at the Palau site, we had what may be a first. The President of Palau and the U.S. Ambassador to Palau put on SCUBA tanks and dove with the team. During this same period, we also executed 15 Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) to initiate or renew an existing partner, and negotiated and drafted 31 others. Currently, we have 120 existing or developing partnerships and an additional 58 that are being negotiated. Some of the notable new partners are Colorado State University, the University of Wyoming, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and the Korean War Legacy Foundation.

Since the start of the new FY, we have launched two field missions and they are ongoing at this time. One is being done in Germany by Cranfield University (England), and the other in France by a group called Geoscope (an archaeological company based in England). We also are prepping five more missions to Papua New Guinea, India, and Australia, using Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Portland State University, the University of Nebraska, and the University of Papua New Guinea. We have initiated, or are continuing, 48 research projects with our military history partners, which include The Ohio State University, the University of Wisconsin, Temple University, and Texas A&M University. And we have finalized 8 additional MOUs (and have 3 more being drafted) and have established a new Cooperative Agreement with Florida State University.

On a personal note, it is with some sadness that I note that this will be my last update. I will retire at the end of December, and in January, I will take over as Director of the Forensic Institute for Research and Education at Middle Tennessee State University. It will be a seismic shift in my life. This mission has defined my professional existence for three decades, and I will miss it, and the people associated with it, dearly.

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

Our Laboratory System continued its balanced lab work/telework plan to maintain progress on identifications while mitigating risks due to COVID-19. We closed out FY 2021 ahead of the FY 2020 mark and are positioned to do as well or better in FY 2022. SA closed out FY 2021 with 142 newly accounted-for service members and 211 Additional Portions Reports. Furthermore, our field recovery missions along with our disinterments resulted in 364 sets of osseous materials accessioned into our labs in FY 2021

The USS *Oklahoma* Identification Project is closing out. The project commenced in the summer of 2015 with the disinterment of 13,000 highly commingled bones. Remarkably, by the end of FY 2021, 354 Sailors and Marines, who had been buried as Unknowns had been accounted for, which is over 90% of all missing from this ship. This total Agency effort was facilitated through coordination with the Navy and their final push for Family Reference Samples (FRS). The group remains will be interred at the NMCP on the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

SA began to receive and action exhumations on the 47 remaining Unknowns from the Battle of Myitkyina, Burma. These remains represent the newest project for the Laboratory. Skeletal inventory and analyses are underway using the custom-built Commingled Remains Analytics (CoRA) database.

The fourth quarter of FY21 included a major software update to our Laboratory Information Management System. The new features have been tested by a small team of staff, and we expect full release into production by the first quarter of FY 2022. This system has fully modernized our approach to analysis and documentation but has required considerable efforts to design and correct the system as we are using it.

SA continues its investment in the forensic applications of isotope analyses. In addition to the impact for DPAA work, there is significant interest from the larger forensics community. The laboratory's collaborative work with Agency partners on this effort was recently highlighted by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences President's Spotlight article that discussed the latest research and improvements within the discipline.

The American Board of Forensic Anthropology announced the most recent forensic anthropologists to earn Diplomate status and three SA staff - Dr. Larkin Kennedy, Dr. Veronica Keyes, and Dr. Katie Rubin were among them. This is the highest level of professional achievement for forensic anthropologists. Today, there are 22 Diplomates working for DPAA, which is 20% of all active Diplomates worldwide.

#### **FY 2021 Identifications**

Total IDs = 142 newly-accounted-for  
WWII = 127 newly-accounted-for  
Korean War = 14  
Vietnam War= 1  
(Additional Portion IDs) = 211

#### **FY 2022 Identifications**

Total IDs = 43 newly-accounted-for  
WWII = 41 newly-accounted-for  
Korean War = 2



## AFMES-AFDIL Update

### FY 2021 Year in Review.

DNA Tests	FY 2021		FY 2020	
	Total	% Success	Total	% Success
mtDNA	1,096	87%	1,814	93%
auSTR	797	68%	1,109	80%
YSTR	492	60%	707	70%
NGS	908	70%	693	68%
DNA Believed-to-be Report	1,241		1,240	
First-time named DNA report	141		145	
Additional Portions	1,100		1,095	

FY 2021 saw a reduction in total number of DNA analyses performed (3,296 vs 4,323). This was due to supply delays associated with COVID-19. The laboratory uses many of the same consumables as the COVID testing laboratories. DNA testing resulted in 141 first-time named DNA Reports, which have or will support new identifications. It is worth noting that DNA Comparison Reports are written through the end of the FY and may be used to support identifications in the next FY and that DNA may not be needed for every new identification. Success rates for all testing remain high and will vary by year based on samples received.

**Budget.** Thanks to the collaborative efforts of Congressman Chris Pappas and others who were instrumental in getting a \$4M program increase for AFMES-AFDIL included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021. The \$4M was single-year money and was used for the purchase of reagents and new instruments supporting the past accounting mission. AFMES-AFDIL executed 99.9% of the Past Accounting Section's \$22M budget (\$18.1M baseline and \$4M program increase).

**Other Notables.** In June, we completed a 5-year DoD-funded project to develop a nuclear Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) test and software to work with DPAA samples. This testing method is similar to what is being used to solve cold cases but developed specifically for highly degraded and chemically-treated samples. The process is currently undergoing the extensive validation process. It will utilize all existing FRSs.

AFMES-AFDIL was awarded a National Institute of Justice Grant to increase forensic whole mtDNA genome database and to study maternal family and non-maternal related individuals with common mtDNA sequence to see about establishing a discrimination calling threshold. Worked with the Max Plank Institute to assess their ancient DNA extraction protocol and modified and optimized it for DPAA samples. Validation is complete and in review. This will allow us to capture more DNA.



## **Outreach and Communications**

**Korean/Cold War Annual Meeting.** We hosted the Annual Korea/Cold War Government Briefings August 5-6 as a virtual event due to COVID-19 conditions which prevented the scheduled in-person briefing. There were 524 families representing 308 cases, of which 16 families represented 10 Cold War losses, who participated. DPAA analysts provided 47 Case Summary Reviews via Zoom to the families. The briefings were viewed over 4,000 times online.

**Vietnam War Annual Meeting.** September 15-16, we hosted the Southeast Asia Government Briefing in conjunction with the 51<sup>st</sup> National League of Families' Annual Meeting as a virtual event due to COVID-19 conditions. There were 178 families representing 116 losses who participated. DPAA analysts provided 44 Case Summary Family Reviews via Zoom to the families. Additionally, 4,000 online views were generated.

**Family Member Updates (FMU) Postponed.** Current DoD health and safety restrictions still limit our ability to conduct large gatherings, including FMUs in Chicago and Norfolk, which were respectively scheduled for October 23 and November 21. Because attendance at both FMUs was expected to be high, we rescheduled them for next FY rather than conducting them virtually. Our next FMU is scheduled for Miami in January 2022, and we hope it will be our first in-person update in almost two years.

**News Releases.** The Public Affairs teams released 88 accounting releases, 8 articles, and more than 350 photos and videos. Among the latter was a virtual tour of our laboratory which was viewed nearly 10,000 times in less than a week and our videos of National POW/MIA Recognition Day. One of the stories written was shared by Secretary of Defense Austin on his Twitter account. In addition, DoD Public Affairs launched an experience page on Defense.gov entitled, "Not Forgotten", which is beautifully compiled: <https://www.defense.gov/Multimedia/Experience/POW-MIA/>

**National POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremonies.** The DPAA Hawaii ceremony drew 5,500 viewers online while the Pentagon ceremony was viewed by 12,000 online. Each of our three detachments in Southeast Asia hosted a ceremony at the respective US Embassy.

**News Articles of Note.** More than 334,000 articles mentioned DPAA over the last quarter. Most dealt with identification announcements and interviews with families, but other highlights include Yahoo and International coverage of the first Joint Repatriation Ceremony; and Army Chaplain Kapaun's Funeral which generated an audience of 70 million, including a series of articles called "Finding Father Kapaun" in the Wichita Eagle that will be part of a documentary debuting in November. Finally, the first weekend in October, DPAA was featured as the "Power Player of the Week" on Fox News Sunday with Chris Wallace, which aired on Fox stations across the country and Fox News.

National Geographic highlighted the work of our partners at AVAR in a fascinating piece in September. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/veterans-dug-up-a-wwii-bomber-in-hopes-of-finding-peace>

Also, the New York Times featured a piece on the first non-governmental partnership mission in Vietnam that led to an identification of a missing Air Force Major.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/01/world/asia/pentagon-robots-vietnam-war-dead.html>

### **Questions & Answers**

**DAV:** *Thank you and appreciate the information today.*

**VFW:** *Great briefing, no questions. Thank you.*

**VVA:** *Very good report, thank you.*

**Coalition of Families:** *Thank you for the work you do and continuous outreach. I have four questions. For the USRJC, I asked about the seven archival repositories and have not received a response? Answer:* Unfortunately, your questions concerning our access to specific Russian archives was submitted to the Rich Lyda just prior to his departure from DPAA. We now have your request and are working on a detailed response to send directly to you.

*When is the next meeting with PLA-Archives? Answer:* There are two planned engagements in FY 2022 currently being discussed with the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Policy) [OUSD(P)], so details of those engagements are pre-decisional at this time. DPAA Policy and Plans along the IP Directorate will finalize the first contact proposal the first week of November and submit it to OUSD(P) for approval. While our planned engagements with PLA-Archives are based upon the Base Arrangement signed in February 2008 and the most recent technical arrangement signed in June 2015, we will be drafting an update to the technical agreement.

*How many IDs from KWIP Phase 1-3 and K-55? Answer:* For KWIP Phases 1 and 2, 14 identifications have been made (Chaplain Kapaun was from Phase 2) and no identifications have been made yet for Phase 3. For the 55 boxes North Korea turned over in July 2018, 78 identifications have been made. We are estimating there are approximately a little over 80 U.S. Service members still represented in the K-55.

*When might we get into DPRK? Answer:* Regrettably, the last communications DPAA had with the North Korean Army on the repatriation and recovery of remains from the Korean War was in March 2019. The Biden Administration has reached out to various levels of the DPRK government to open general dialogue, but none of those overtures have resulted in any response. Like previous Administrations, they recognize the humanitarian nature of the POW/MIA issue can serve as a bridge to build confidence and help normalize relations, as proven with Vietnam, but it requires DPRK to cooperate, which has proven to be elusive.

**Honor Release Return:** *No questions --- gratitude and thank you to Dr. Tom Holland for your dedicated service.*

**Korea/Cold War Families of the Missing:** *Best wishes to Dr. Holland and Mr. Livick. Any update on DoD releasing the names on the memorial wall?* **Answer:** The four Services are finalizing their respective validation of names of the Korean War Memorial Wall of Remembrance. A couple of them are complete with the others expected to finish in the next two weeks. DoD will then provide the final list to the Foundation.

**National League of Families:** *Provide an update on the Vietnam War Project in the meeting notes.* **Answer:** The Vietnam War Identification Project (VWIP) began at the onset of FY 2021 with Dr. Nicolette Parr as the Project Lead. However, cases processed and analyzed through the laboratory date back to the early 1970s. To date, nearly 1,300 identifications associated with the Vietnam War have been made; 1,584 Service members are still unaccounted-for from the war. There are approximately 170 Vietnam War-related accessions in the laboratory believed to contain possible human remains. Many of these accessions are very small fragments of bone which are highly degraded and in previous years did not support DNA testing or produced inconclusive results when tested. However, approximately 35 of these are still being pursued as having potential to be the remains of unaccounted-for Americans. The primary goal of the VWIP is to review these accessions in light of new technological advances with DNA and isotope testing to lead towards case resolution. The VWIP will also review, analyze, and forensically test possible osseous remains from new accessions resulting from current excavations and unilateral turnovers. Approximately, 83% of the missing Service members for the Vietnam Conflict have at least one FRS on file for DNA comparisons and the laboratory is actively working to increase this coverage.