



# HONOR –RELEASE–RETURN, Inc.

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In the everyday world of business, military, as well as local and federal government, we find a common thread that yields successful leadership.

They '*inspect what they expect*'.

It is time to instill this expectation in the effort to account for America's Missing in Action/Unaccounted For. The goal: create accountability and efficiency amongst those who are responsible for the fullest possible accounting of America's Unaccounted For from all previous conflicts/wars.

Before we list specific expectations, allow us to share historic events and mile markers as we know them;

**1945** (WWII) – Stalin requested Churchill & Eisenhower to release his RED Army Deserters and send them back to him along with the Russian civilians who fled to the safety of the Allied lines. He offered to return 1000's of Allied POWs he had liberated from German POW Camps in eastern Europe. Churchill and Eisenhower refused to send those Russians back to Stalin and those Allied former POWs were sent to the Gulags never to be returned. Allied Commanders feared a major confrontation with Stalin and abandoned the POW's.

**1953** (Korean Conflict) – Operation Big Switch – it is well documented by military intelligence and repatriated POWs that many of the service members captured by North Korea were retained and not allowed to walk across the Bridge to FREEDOM Village when POW's were exchanged during the re-patriotization ceremony. It is estimated that those retained by North Korea numbered in the 1000's. The President (Eisenhower) did not want to commit to further combat operations or anger the communists, The POW's were subsequently abandoned. Over the years' multiple reports have confirmed live POW's in North Korea.

**1973** (Vietnam) – Operation Homecoming – United States goes to the negotiated re-patriotization ceremony with a list of names numbering more than 1000, based on accumulated intelligence. At the end of Operation Homecoming fewer than 600 POWs were returned. President Nixon declares ALL LIVE POWs have been returned and abandons those not returned. None of the American POW's captured by Pathet Lao in Laos were returned.

**Early 1980's** – "Operation Pocket Change" – a documented military, JSOC, 'confirmed live POW' rescue mission into Southeast Asia to liberate Vietnam conflict

POW's was aborted due to 'leaks'. (*Abandoned In Place* - Book Authored by Lynn O'Shea © 2014)

**Late 1980's** – 'Swamp Ranger' – (aka Ted Schweitzer), worked with People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), created a backdoor means to supply the U.S. Government firm information on Unaccounted for MIA's as well as suspected POWs held by North Vietnam. He also documented the infamous RED BOOK (master list of all held in captivity by North Vietnam) as well as the 'Blue Book' (those killed in captivity). (Book – Authored by McConnell with Schweitzer – *Inside Hanoi's Secret Archives* ©1995)

**Senate Select Committee (SSC) 1991- 92** – receives testimony on Last Known Alive (LKA) cases from Korea and Vietnam. Testimony is from multiple sources both foreign and domestic who presented irrefutable information confirming live POW's left behind after the cessation of hostilities. LIVE Sighting reports (1000 plus) noted by SSC Vice Chairman as NOT being investigated to confirm or deny their feasibility. JTF-FA leader notes the possibility of 300 plus LKA is a strong possibility. The Senate Select Committee called for and the President agreed to order the expeditious declassification of POW/MIA records from the Vietnam War. The US Senate unanimously approved a Resolution calling for the declassification of POW/MIA materials.

The Senate Select Committee Concluded that 50 plus Americans MAY still be alive, in captivity, 19 years after the Vietnam Peace Treaty. No special directions or orders were issued by the Senate Select Committee or the President to resolve these 50 plus cases. All 'Unaccounted for Files' have yet to be declassified.

**1998** – X-file case number X26 was exhumed from the Vietnam Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was confirmed that the Unknown is Air Force Lieutenant Michael Blassie. It was also confirmed that Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) leadership knew the identity was LT. Blassie prior to submitting the remains for entombment as the Vietnam Unknown.

**2010** – Congress mandates Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command/Central Identification Laboratory (JPAC/CIL) to account for 200 MIA annually by 2015.

**2012** – An internal JPAC report (later titled 'the Cole Report') finds the agency to be 'acutely dysfunctional'

**2012** – A Government Accounting Office (GAO) report finds Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel (DPMO) and JPAC/CIL 'inefficient and in need of an overhaul.'

**August 2013** – House & Senate Armed Services Committees held separate hearings on the GAO & Cole reports.

**October 2013** - *STARS & STRIPES* reported that JPAC/CIL have held 'phony arrival' ceremonies for seven (7) years. Never once was there a real returning set of remains. The same Leadership was responsible that was involved with the Blassie case.

**2013** – Department of Defense, Inspector General (DoD IG) audits JPAC/CIL/DPMO

**2014** – DoD IG made recommendations to Secretary of Defense Hagel – The eleven (11) specific recommendations printed below. \*

**March 2014** – The Secretary of Defense ordered the stand down of JPAC & DPMO and initiated the creation of a New Agency to replace the former units. Nine (9) specific directed points are printed below. \*\*

**2014** – Interim Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) creates Personnel Accounting Consolidation Task Force (PACT) – to initiate the transition to the new Agency.

**2014** – A new Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) (USD P) is appointed and PACT was dissolved.

**January 2015** – USD P appointed Vice Admiral Franken as Director of the agency to be named Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) – a one-year job.

**May/July 2015** - Franken was transferred to Africa – Major General Michael Linnington retired from active duty and was appointed to Director of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency (DPAA).

**Fall of 2015** – 388 sets of remains (USS Oklahoma) are exhumed from their Unknowns burial site at the Punch Bowl Cemetery. (spring of 2017 – 300+ of the exhumed remains are still unidentified)

**Spring of 2016** – Director Linnington submitted his resignation notice after having previously committed to serve 10 years as Director.

**Summer of 2016** – 3 Senior DPAA leaders gave public testimony that identifications announced in the current FY year 2016, 167, will not occur for another 3-5 years. It was noted that there are 600 plus sets of remains under the control of the Central Identification Laboratory. Now, 2 years after the date (2015) Congress mandated attainment of 200 identifications per year, DPAA leadership indicates it could be another two to three years before the goal of 200 per year is obtained.

### **Additional impacting information:**

- ◆ One Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) was told by CIL leadership not to concern its recovery efforts at a location because there was nothing there worth the investment. That NGO has recovered and turned over to DPAA 100 plus sets of remains in the last 36 plus months, from that location.
- ◆ One NGO provided a list of 1000 cases that were incorrectly categorized with the intention that DoD would inform the associated Families. That information has not been shared with the families.
- ◆ One NGO offered (at little to no cost to DPAA) their corporation to create/implement a new data base to assist in information sharing and accounting in early 2016. September 2016 DPAA obtained \$9 million plus in additional funding to create a data base that might be ready for use by 2018, (DPAA did not accept the NGO database and donated services). A recent story in *STARS & STRIPES* is quoting a DPAA spokesperson as indicating the database cost might rise to \$20 Million and may take until 2020 before it is online for use.
- ◆ DPAA Acting Director notes the 2016-2017 DPAA Budget will allocate 60% plus of their budget to Vietnam although Southeast Asia represents less than 2% of the active cases to be worked by DPAA.

## **Expectations:**

**Declassification** – We **expect** declassification, without it, there is no closure of this Mission.

The Senate Select Committee (1991-92) noted in their ‘Conclusion’ that declassifying the files related to POWs or MIAs could have eliminated much of the controversy and that unnecessary secrecy breeds suspicion. In that same period; the President ordered the expeditious declassification of POW/MIA records from the Vietnam War and the Senate **unanimously** approved a Resolution calling for the declassification of POW/MIA material. Most of the records are still classified today. Senate Bill, S-120, has been introduced for the second time which literally spells it out, step by step, how to declassify without damaging National Security, without bias and providing punishment to those who do not comply. We believe the passage and implementation of the Declassification Bill is the foundation to complete the task of accounting for America’s missing.

**Data Base** – We **expect** the Data Base of all MIA cases, from which the Mission is derived, to be accurate and available to those working the issue as well as the Families. We have heard, many times, that the list of those unaccounted for is deceiving due to the number of deep-water losses included therein. Most of these deep-water cases are Naval and WW II but there are cases from all conflicts. To that point, we are not aware of the US Navy changing its policy in this regard: A sailor who goes down with their ship and is declared a casualty is not Missing or Unaccounted For, he is dead, KIA/BNR. The ship, no matter where it lay, is still US property and is classified as Hallowed Ground so that is their grave. (that is an

International Maritime rule practiced by most Countries.). The List should be reviewed for such cases. Those that qualify should be recategorized to *KIA/BNR – Unrecoverable*. Families should be notified by the Casualty Service Office, the case placed on a separate list noting those who are classified as 'Unrecoverable'. Those remaining on the Active List for accounting should be prioritized by 'Possibility of Recovery'. NGO researchers should be openly allowed to be involved in the recategorizing process, recovery and accounting process. Confirmation that DNA samples for comparison are on file must be made. If not, genealogy work should be completed prior to field work on a specific case file from the Active List. With the Data Base list and the Declassification task completed - access should be available to all vetted and contracted NGOs, investigators, field recovery units and Primary Next of Kin (PNOK).

FYI – those who were buried as UNKNOWNS in US Military Cemeteries around the world, have been cleared to be exhumed. Recent rewritten policy/rules indicate the need for a percentage of up to 60% of assurance of identification before exhuming remains. With advancements in DNA technology, DPAA leadership has publicly stated recently that there will never be an 'UNKNOWN' again. A priority for the researchers as the Databases are evaluated is the **Last Known Alive** Cases. As mentioned in the historic events section, Last Known Alive lists were prepared during the war and prior to the repatriation of POWs during WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. As the databases for each war are examined and evaluated from the date of the incident for those still unaccounted for, researchers must investigate the previous lists of Last Known Alive personnel as well as all the data pertaining to them to develop a comprehensive and accurate list of Last Known Alive military personnel. Once the extensive research has been completed, proposals to repatriate these individuals or retrieve their remains must be developed for presentation to the President of the United States.

**DNA** – America should **Expect** the world's leading identification laboratory to use the most efficient and accurate means of identifying recovered service member remains. This scientific process has been available since the mid- 1950's – six plus decades- but only in the last few decades has it been available/used in the Accounting Mission mostly as a 'Second Opinion' tool. At one point technology could only compare samples to the female side of the family, (mt-DNA?), then it expanded to both male & female (nu-DNA?) and now the capacity to go all the way out to 2<sup>nd</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> cousin/nieces/nephews, male/female exists. This new level of technology has greatly increased the ability to identify accurately. WW II unaccounted for – it is next to impossible to find a Mother/Aunt/Grand Mother still living to compare samples with but Grand or Great Grandchildren can now be used with the latest methods of DNA testing. DPAA should make the DNA test a first task and standard measure in identification. We are not aware of many family members who care about archeological or forensic evidence. They just want to know – 'is that my Grandpa?' DNA is effective as well as efficient and if DPAA starts with DNA

testing, the time to finalize an identification should be reduced dramatically having a significant impact on Operational Budget as well as the number of closed cases achieved per year.

**Budget** – We **expect** DPAA to be exempt from budget cuts and reductions. The DPAA budget should include the complete costs of the accounting effort to include; allowances for the Navy to carry equipment to SE Asia or the Air Force to fly remains of Unknowns from France to the CIL in Hawaii. These are hidden costs that should be part of the DPAA budget. **Military payroll** – while working for the DPAA, the active duty military payroll should be included in the DPAA budget. Public/Private contracts (NGOs) should be better utilized and have a larger percentage of the total operational/payroll budget.

**Personnel** – If those holding positions in DPAA cannot meet or exceed the goals they agreed to at employment, they should step down or **expect** to be relieved of their duties without delay. The last DoD IG report and the last GAO report noted the dysfunctional management that was also noted in the Cole report from 2012. It was recommended that an investigation be opened into the 'boondocking trips' authorized by leadership and executed by middle management. The terms "reimbursement", "charges", "termination", "court" were mentioned but we don't see where anything was ever initiated. During the interim period between DPMO/JPAC & DPAA (2014-2015) it was noted by PACT, that much of the then DPMO & JPAC senior leadership were due to retire or transfer out (which may have been an attempt to satisfy the 'suggested investigation' but the personnel are still there, and in some cases, at equal or higher levels of authority. The overall lack of results of the new agency reflect the retention of those managers who were at the heart of the noted infractions. It is said the definition of insanity is: *doing the same thing over and over again while anticipating different results!* DPAA needs a major change in personnel. Management in DPAA needs new vision, energy and dedication to mission completion. The organization must be goal oriented and pro-active, with an elevated level of integrity.

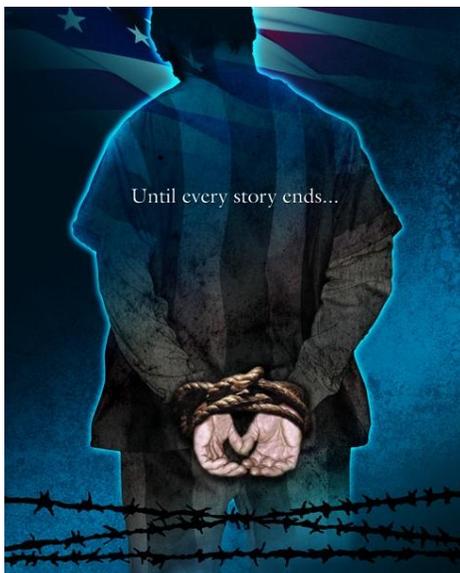
**Goals** – We **expect** an end date to this mission and believe it should be within twenty years or sooner. Any endeavor must have an established date by which completion is expected and achievement of specific goals that are measurable. DPAA and its predecessors were never designed or intended to go on in perpetuity. But, that is exactly what has occurred and continues today. It is being run as though there is no required deadline, and the funding is limitless. The accounting activity is about to enter in to the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of government employees. These folks have closed approximately 12% of the cases noted by DoD, (82,500 divided by 93,500 = 12%). Whatever you believe to be the number of years we have been actively engaged in accounting, 20, 30, 40 years, multiply that number by 8.33 to anticipate the number of years at the current rate of production. The answer ranges from 166.6 years – 333.3 years until they close this mission. (Think about this number for a moment – 166.6 years' times \$112,000,000 per year (budget) =

\$18.6 Billion). With proper goals, funding, leadership, declassification achieved, we should expect to close this mission in twenty (20) years if not sooner. The Goal of 3500 cases closed per year times twenty years, equals 70,000 cases closed. But, remember – our current number – 82,500 - contains between 30 – 50 thousand deep water cases according to DPAA. So, we probably only have between 32,000 -52,000 cases that need to be resolved. That equates to 10-15 years at 3500 closed cases per year.

(recent communications, 1 June Conference call notes released 23 June 2017, from DPAA states 48,431 unaccounted for, are now noted as Unrecoverable, 34,096 are noted as 'possibly' recoverable).

**The six Expectations:** Declassification, Database, DNA, Budget, Personnel, and Goals are tied to the original nine points issued by Secretary of Defense Hagel and the DoD IG's eleven points. (Both reports are copied below.) We do not wish to imply that these six Expectations are the only points for action, but they are the foundation needed to complete the mission of accountability in a timely and fiscally responsible manner. It is time for those with oversight responsibilities: House Armed Services Committee, Senate Armed Services Committee, Secretary of Defense, Under-Secretary of Defense (Policy), to **"inspect what they expect"** and to provide the leadership as well as the tools to make the DPAA and its mission a success.

Respectfully and on behalf of the Board of Directors,  
Jim 'moe' Moyer  
National Co-Chairman  
HONOR-RELEASE-RETURN, Inc.



## **REFERENCES:**

### ***·DOD IG's Recommendations to SecDef***

#### ***Recommendation 1.a***

*We recommend that the Secretary of Defense clearly define a single, comprehensive mission and mission statement for the new Defense agency and the missing in action accounting community to coordinate and integrate the collective efforts of the member organizations*

#### ***Recommendation 1.b***

*In support of the Secretary of Defense's direction for organizational change, detailed on page 3, number 3 of this report, we recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy should task the Director of the new Defense agency to conduct a comprehensive financial review, ensuring that all mission requirements are fully analyzed and incorporated into: future funding requests.*

*DoD OIG will follow up with a request for the new agency's budget.*

#### ***Recommendation 2***

*We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy:*

*Task the Director of the new Defense agency to develop a strategic plan for the missing in action accounting community.*

#### ***Recommendation 3***

*We recommend that the Secretary of Defense designate all combatant commands as supporting commands to the missing in action accounting mission and define each combatant command's supporting role and responsibilities.*

#### ***Recommendation 4***

*The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, task the Director of the new Defense agency to establish standard operating procedures for accounting community organizations where they do not exist, and review and revise as needed all existing standard operating procedures.*

#### ***Recommendation 5***

*The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, establish DoD-wide policy regarding the disinterment of unknowns from past conflicts.*

#### ***Recommendation 6***

*Intentionally left blank – Reference DoD IG report dated 17 October 2014.*

### **Recommendation 7**

*In support of the Secretary of Defense's direction for organizational change, detailed on page 3, numbers 6 and 9, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy should task the Director of the new Defense agency to:*

- a. Develop and implement policy criteria for addressing who among the missing personnel are realistically recoverable and appropriately re-designate a category for personnel determined to be non-recoverable, especially those lost at sea.*
- b. Direct the service casualty offices to inform the families of any change in status for missing persons determined to be non-recoverable.*

### **Recommendation 8.a**

*The Secretary of Defense, request that Congress amend 10 U.S.C §1509 (2013) to authorize the use of material and/or circumstantial evidence, absent any human remains, to account for personnel who are currently designated as missing.*

### **Recommendation 8.b**

*If Congress makes the legislative change recommended in 8.a, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy should task the Director of the new Defense agency to develop guidance governing when and how credible circumstantial evidence can be used to make identifications.*

### **Recommendation 9**

*The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, task the Director of the new Defense agency to:*

- a. Coordinate joint field activities with DoD civilian and military chains of command, including the appropriate combatant command, as well as the U.S. Embassy and host nation government before any operational deployment to a foreign country.*
- b. Consider requesting host nation governments to develop their internal capability to support U.S. recovery operations within their countries.*

### **Recommendation 10.a**

*The Secretary of Defense, in implementing his directed reorganization, detailed on page 2, number 1 of this report, should direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to:*

- 1) Conduct a management study to identify/define functions and personnel positions required for the restructured organization.*
- 2) Ensure that position descriptions for existing and proposed personnel billets required in support of the new agency's operations eliminate duplication and*

*redundancy, and that the grade structures are "right-sized" consistent with similar duties performed across the organization.*

**Recommendation 10.b**

*The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, task the Director of the new Defense agency to review the requirements for military personnel to determine the appropriate number of billets and rank structure, and the required number of joint qualifying billets.*

**Recommendation 11**

*The Commander, Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command:*

- a. Initiate a preliminary review in accordance with DoD Regulation 7000.14-R, volume 14, chapter 3, to determine whether Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command violated the Antideficiency Act, and, if it did, recommend corrective actions, including actions for responsible officials.*
- b. Update Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command Instruction 4650.1 to define the travel process and procedures, delineate the roles and responsibilities of Joint Prisoner of War/ Missing in Action Accounting Command personnel in the process, and establish controls to ensure compliance with applicable travel regulations.*
- c. Identify and appoint, in writing, appropriate personnel to the Defense Travel System roles of authorizing official, certifying official, and travel administrator in accordance with applicable travel regulations.*

*Conduct a review of all FY 2013 temporary duty vouchers and, if non-compliance is identified, ensure that Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command personnel are held responsible and, where appropriate, liable for overpayments*

**\*\*Because this effort is a Military Operation we would think that following orders would be a given.**

**As a reminder, here is a list of the original orders issued 31 March 2014 by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel:**

- 1. DoD will establish a new Defense agency that combines Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), JPAC, and select functions of the U.S. Air Force's Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL). This agency will be led by a presidentially appointed Director with a general officer deputy, and will be overseen by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. All communications with family members of the missing from past conflicts will be managed and organized by this new agency. DoD will provide proposed changes to existing legislation needed to support this decision for consideration in the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.*

2. *To streamline the identification process, an Armed Forces medical examiner working for the new agency will be the single DoD identification authority for past conflict identifications. They will oversee the scientific operations of the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) in Hawaii, the satellite laboratory in Omaha, Nebraska, and LSEL in Dayton, Ohio.*
3. *DoD will work with Congress to realign its appropriations for this mission into a single budget line, allowing for greater execution flexibility in the accounting mission with the ability to align resources to respond more effectively.*
4. *To improve the search, recovery, and identification process the department will implement a centralized database and case management system containing all missing service members' information.*
5. *DoD will develop proposals for expanding public private partnerships in identifying our missing. The goal is to leverage the capabilities and efforts of organizations outside of the Government that responsibly work to account for our missing.*
6. *The new agency will be responsible for managing, organizing, and communicating with the service casualty offices (SCOs) on all communications with family members of missing personnel. A SCO from each Service shall act as a liaison officer embedded in the agency*
7. *The new agency will be responsible for amending, updating, signing, and publishing DoD instructions as required by a change in legislation and DoD directive to support the new agency.*
8. *The new agency should establish metrics for accounting for past conflict missing personnel.*
9. *The new agency should investigate the policy for lost at sea.*