

September 27, 2001

RELEASE NO. #01-24

MIA Search Team Deploys to Vietnam

CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII - A Joint Field Activity consisting of an investigation team, a research investigation team and six recovery teams will deploy from Hickam Air Force Base for Vietnam, on a mission to account for American servicemen still unaccounted for as a result of the Vietnam War. The teams consist of up to 95 personnel of mostly Hawaii-based U.S. military specialists from Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) and the Joint Field Operating Base, Hawaii (Stony Beach).

On Oct. 4, team members will be joined by counterparts from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to begin work on joint investigations and remains recovery operations in 12 Vietnamese provinces. The investigation team is scheduled to investigate up to 16 cases involving unaccounted for servicemen. Remains recovery excavations are scheduled at six primary sites. In addition, the research investigation team will investigate up to six last known alive cases during the 30-day field activity.

Since 1973, the remains of 629 American servicemen, formerly listed as unaccounted for, have been identified and returned to their families. There are currently 1,956 Americans still unaccounted-for from the war in Southeast Asia, 1,473 of them in Vietnam.

The investigation and recovery teams consist of members from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps as well as Department of Defense civilians. The research investigation team consists of representatives from the Defense Intelligence Agency who are based at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, and members of JTF-FA.