



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIR FORCE AVIATOR MIA FROM VIETNAM WAR IS IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Maj. Charles L. Bifulchi, U.S. Air Force, of Quincy, Mass. He will be buried on Oct. 27 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On Jan. 8, 1968, Bifulchi and a fellow crewmember were flying an armed reconnaissance mission against enemy targets in Kon Tum Province, South Vietnam, when their RF-4C aircraft disappeared. A U.S. Army helicopter crew found their aircraft wreckage soon after first light the next day. Search efforts continued for four days; however, enemy activity in the area, combined with the steep terrain and high winds at the crash site, precluded the recovery of the crewmen.

Between 1993 and 2000, U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted two surveys of an area that was believed to be Bifulchi's crash site. One team interviewed two Vietnamese citizens who turned over human remains they claimed to have recovered at the site. Another team found wreckage consistent with Bifulchi's aircraft.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA from a known maternal relative in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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