

NEWS RELEASE
JOINT TASK FORCE-FULL ACCOUNTING PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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MIA SEARCH TEAMS DEPLOY TO LAOS, CAMBODIA

CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII -- Two teams totaling 73 mostly Hawaii-based U.S. military specialists leave for Laos and Cambodia Friday night with hopes of recovering remains that may lead to the identification of American service members listed as missing in action since the war in Southeast Asia.

On Tuesday, members from Joint Task Force-Full Accounting at Camp Smith and the U.S. Army's Central Identification Lab at Hickam Air Force Base will join technical representatives from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Cambodia to begin joint investigations and remains recovery operations. In Laos, three primary sites will be excavated and 30 cases involving potential aircraft and ground losses are scheduled for investigation. In Cambodia, two primary sites will be excavated and seven cases are scheduled for investigation.

Since 1973, the remains of 514 American service members, formerly listed as unaccounted for, have been identified and returned to their families. The latest identification was made Feb. 19 of three servicemen. Of the 2,069 Americans still unaccounted-for from the war in Southeast Asia, 445 are in Laos and 76 are in Cambodia.

This will be the 42nd and 17th Joint Field Activities conducted in Laos and Cambodia, respectively, since Joint Task Force-Full Accounting was formed in January 1992 at Camp Smith. The 73 team members are comprised of 38 U.S. Army, 13 Air Force, 11 Navy, five Marines, and six Department of Defense civilians.

(Note: Hawaii-based news media interested in covering the departure should RSVP to Maj. Joe Davis at JTF-FA at 477-5401, or MSgt. Gene LaDoucer at Hickam Public Affairs at 449-2490, before noon, Friday. The teams are scheduled to depart Hickam AFB late Friday evening.)