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Repatriation Ceremonies

CAMP H.M. SMITH, Hawaii - Remains believed to be those of six unaccounted-for American servicemen from the war in Southeast Asia will begin the journey home to American soil this week from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. An all-service honor guard will commemorate their arrival on Feb. 9 in a ceremony at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

Following the Hickam ceremony, the remains will be taken to the Army's Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI), where the forensic identification process will begin.

A repatriation ceremony was held for one set of remains from Cambodia on Feb. 7 at the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia. A separate ceremony is scheduled for four sets of remains from Vietnam on Feb. 8 at the Noi Bai Airport in Hanoi, Vietnam. From Vietnam, the five sets of remains as well as one set of remains from Laos will be flown to Anderson Air Force Base in Guam. From there, they will be flown to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. The arrival ceremony at Hickam will be held outside the 15th Air Base Wing base operations building on Feb. 9 at 9 a.m.

Military and civilian members who recovered the remains during recent search and recovery missions include personnel from Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), CILHI, the Joint Field Operating Base Hawaii (Stony Beach) and technical representatives from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Cambodia. The missions are part of an on-going effort to provide the fullest possible accounting for American servicemen still unaccounted-for as a result of the Vietnam War.

Since 1973, 595 American service members, formerly listed as missing and unaccounted-for from the war in Southeast Asia, have been identified and returned to their families, with many others currently in the identification phase. There are currently 1,988 Americans still unaccounted-for in Southeast Asia – 1,495 in Vietnam, 420 in Laos, 65 in Cambodia, and eight in China.