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MIA SEARCH MISSION CANCELED

CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII - A joint U.S./Vietnamese field activity to recover remains of Americans unaccounted-for as a result of the war in Southeast Asia has been canceled. The cancellation is a result of the crash of a Vietnamese Mi-17 helicopter in Quang Binh Province on April 7 that killed seven American servicemen and nine Vietnamese conducting operations in preparation for a joint field activity.

Joint Field Activities are month-long investigation and recovery missions conducted in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to recover and return the remains of Americans unaccounted-for as a result of the war in Southeast Asia. The 65th JFA had been scheduled from May 3 to June 1, 2001. The decision to cancel the JFA was made after consultations with Vietnamese government officials. The decision will allow both sides time to access the cause of the accident, as well as begin the process of rebuilding operational capability in Vietnam to conduct future operations effectively and safely.

Headquartered at Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii, Joint Task Force-Full Accounting is responsible for conducting field operations to locate, recover and account for those Americans who did not return home from the war in Southeast Asia. Currently, there are 1,981 unaccounted-for Americans, military and civilian, from that war. The Task Force normally conducts ten search and recovery missions per year, four in Vietnam, five in Laos and one in Cambodia.

This is the second time in JTF-FA history that a JFA has been canceled. The first occurred in November 1999, when a mission was canceled due to severe flooding in Central Vietnam.