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MIA Search Team Deploys to Laos

CAMP H.M. SMITH, HAWAII - A Joint Field Activity consisting of five recovery teams will deploy from Hickam Air Force Base to Laos this weekend, with hopes of recovering remains leading to the identification of Americans still unaccounted for from the war in Southeast Asia. The teams consist of 50 mostly Hawaii-based U.S. military specialists from Joint Task Force-Full Accounting and the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii. This mission is unique because it will be the first time we will conduct five recovery operations. All five missions involve aircraft incidents from both the United States Army and Air Force.

On arrival team members will be joined by technical representatives from the Lao People's Democratic Republic to begin remains recovery operations in three Lao provinces to include sites involving aircraft and ground losses.

Since 1973, the remains of 637 American service members, formerly listed as unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, have been identified and returned to their families. There are currently 1,949 Americans still unaccounted-for from the war in Southeast Asia, 411 in Laos.

The recovery teams consist of members from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps as well as Department of Defense civilians.