



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ARMY SERGEANT 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 Master Sgt. Norman Payne, U.S. Army, of Cleveland, Ohio. He was buried on Dec. 30 in Cleveland.

Representatives from the Army met with Payne's next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process, and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

On Dec. 18, 1968, Payne was a member of a long-range reconnaissance patrol operating in Salavan Province in southern Laos. The unit set up a defensive position for the night when it was attacked by enemy forces. Payne was last seen attempting to move from one element of the patrol to the other. A rescue team searched for Payne the next day, but was forced to withdraw due to enemy activity.

Between 1993 and 2003, joint U.S./Lao/Vietnamese teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted five investigations in the area of the incident.

In 2001, Vietnamese officials turned over documents that U.S. specialists believed to be related to Payne's death. According to the documents, Vietnamese troops killed an American soldier and buried him near a stream by a Vietnamese Army field hospital in Quang Tri Province, which adjoins Salavan Province. During the investigation conducted in 2003, witnesses led the team to the location of a former field hospital where they claimed to have buried an American soldier.

In 2004 a joint U.S./Lao team excavated the reported burial site in Salavan Province but found no remains or evidence of a burial.

In 2004 and 2005, a Laotian source gave U.S. officials remains he found in Savannakhet Province, Laos, which borders Salavan Province.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons 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 [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo) or call (703) 699-1169.