

The Department of Defense Strategy To Recover and Account for Missing Personnel

This document provides a foundation for our activities by building on past accomplishments of the organizations supporting the personnel recovery and personnel accounting missions. It also establishes the direction for moving forward over the next several years.

The strategy is a key element of our comprehensive effort to improve activities within the Department of Defense to recover and account for our missing personnel. We will measure our performance in achieving this goal against the background of the strategic direction outlined here. At the same time, we will periodically review and update this guidance to reflect changes in the environment.

Department of Defense (DoD) Strategy to Recover and Account for Missing Personnel

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

I. Our Commitment to the Missing

II. The Environment

III. Personnel Recovery

IV. Personnel Accounting

A. POLICY OVERVIEW

B. THE PERSONNEL ACCOUNTING MISSION

- Key Processes

1. INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION & COOPERATION
2. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS
3. INVESTIGATIONS
4. EXCAVATIONS
5. IDENTIFICATION OF REMAINS

- Supporting Functions

6. SERVICE CASUALTY OFFICE & FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS
7. PUBLIC OUTREACH

C. PRIORITIZING AND APPORTIONING THE LEVEL OF EFFORT

1. THE FIRST GULF WAR AND LIBYA
2. VIETNAM WAR
3. KOREAN WAR
4. COLD WAR
5. WORLD WAR II

V. Resourcing

VI. Technology

VII. Conclusion

Department of Defense (DoD) Strategy to Recover and Account for Missing Personnel

Executive Summary

The United States Government (USG) has committed to its military members, DoD civilians, and DoD contractors that if they become missing from their units, are captured, or die while serving our Nation in combat, every effort will be made to see they are recovered and returned with all the dignity and honor they deserve. While patriotic duty remains the primary incentive to serve our Nation, the universal expectation that no one will be left behind is a fundamental article of faith that underpins the motivation and confidence of every U.S. service member deploying to a foreign duty location.

In 1993, the Department of Defense established the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) under the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to provide oversight and act as a field activity for Department-wide efforts aimed at achieving the fullest possible accounting for missing, captive, or killed American military members and designated civilians. In addition to DPMO, the DoD personnel accounting community includes U.S. Pacific Command's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, Defense Intelligence Agency, Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory, Air Force Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, and Service mortuary affairs and casualty offices.

In 1996, DPMO was also given the lead for policy and oversight for personnel recovery, consolidating and streamlining policy development in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. DPMO is part of a larger, personnel recovery community responsible for developing and maintaining the capabilities to prepare and train military personnel before they become isolated, support them if they are evading or captured, and rescue them if they are missing or captured. In addition to DPMO, the DoD personnel recovery community includes the executive agent, Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM); the executive agent action office and office of primary responsibility for personnel recovery, the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency; command staff focal points for personnel recovery in each of the Services, Combatant Commands, and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM); and several other DoD agencies. Additionally, the community also includes dedicated or designated recovery forces in each of the Services and USSOCOM, as well as interagency personnel recovery focal points and programs.

Dramatic challenges to America's security environment since September 11, 2001, and the prosecution of the war on terror demand that we aggressively evaluate how the Department will respond to situations in which not only military members but also DoD civilians and DoD contractor employees become isolated or missing and how the Department will search for and recover them. Promising advances in life sciences and other technologies, such as developments in the analysis of nuclear DNA, may also revolutionize how we proceed.

This DoD strategy focuses on two central mission areas, personnel recovery and personnel accounting.

In the area of personnel recovery, this strategy states that the Department will:

- Prepare military, DoD civilians, and DoD contractors to evade and survive captivity
- Prepare operational commanders, their staffs, and recovery forces to respond and recover isolated or missing personnel
- Lead the Department's efforts to establish an environment that capitalizes on adaptive planning and advance preparation; assist interagency efforts to craft a national personnel recovery system; and prepare for situations in which DoD personnel find themselves evading hostile forces or surviving captivity alongside interagency and/or coalition partners
- Proactively respond to events in which military, DoD civilians, and DoD contractors find themselves evading a hostile force or having to survive captivity, to include in environments involving coalitions and interagency-led management structures

In the area of personnel accounting, this strategy states that the Department will:

- Seek to confirm the fate of those missing and, where possible, recover and identify the remains of the dead
- Prioritize efforts to ensure that the most important priority, regardless of location, will be resolving questions concerning those who might still be held captive and, if found to be so, returning them to U.S. control
- For cases involving all remaining unaccounted-for personnel, prioritize efforts based on first, the most recent conflict; second, availability of relevant information and access to the loss site; third, existing resources; and fourth, optimizing the balance between excavations and identifications. A balanced level of effort is especially important for forensic anthropologists, who should spend at least 50 percent of their time engaged in identifying remains.

This strategy is one element of our comprehensive effort to improve activities within the Department to recover and account for missing personnel. We will review our performance on a periodic basis to ensure that we remain on track with the direction outlined in this plan. This is a living document and as such, it will be periodically updated to reflect changes in our environment or in the focus of our efforts. It is thus critical to identify the assumptions made in this document's preparation.

- U.S. military and DoD civilian and contractor personnel will face risk of isolation from U.S. control across the range of military operations and could be held by state and/or non-state actors.
- Incidents requiring personnel recovery capability, though typically low level tactical events, can have strategic ramifications, affecting National will and National policy. Congressional and public interest will be acute during the event and the immediate

aftermath, but decline as time passes.

- The skills and equipment inherent in the personnel recovery and personnel accounting missions provide critical capabilities for the war on terror and for domestic and international emergency response.
- Congressional and public interest in accounting for personnel missing in past conflicts will remain relatively constant.
- The Department will continue to shift emphasis from DoD solutions to interagency approaches, and from the U.S. military performing tasks to building partnership capacities.

I. Our Commitment to the Missing

The United States Government (USG) is committed to obtaining the fullest possible accounting for Americans held captive or otherwise missing from our Nation's ongoing and past conflicts, preparing and training personnel who may become isolated (evading, captured, detained, etc) and recovering those who become missing in the future.

Never has it been more important for the Department to keep this commitment. The American military is a volunteer force that increasingly relies on the support of DoD civilians and DoD contract personnel to execute its global missions. Our ability to sustain the military force depends on the support of the American people, the men and women we recruit and retain, and their families. The knowledge that the Department will keep its commitment to those who serve our country helps enhance and maintain this critical support. For those serving today and in the future, the confidence that they will not be abandoned should they become isolated or missing is key to morale and readiness.

As part of the USG commitment to account for American personnel, DPMO develops and recommends policy guidance for the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) [USD(P)] and oversees implementation of USG policy on behalf of USD(P) for both personnel recovery and accounting. As a field agency, DPMO also conducts research and analysis, investigations, family advocacy, and public outreach related to accounting for our missing from past conflicts.

II. The Environment

Dramatic challenges to America's security environment since September 11, 2001, and the prosecution of the war on terror demand that we aggressively evaluate how the Department responds to situations in which military members, DoD civilians, and DoD contract employees become isolated or missing. With our ever-expanding requirements for the war on terror, stabilization efforts, counter-narcotics and similar transnational threats, humanitarian assistance, and other national security missions, we can expect that more DoD personnel will face increased risk of isolation in hostile and ungoverned areas around the world. We must build a plan to address these inevitabilities.

An important component of this plan entails working with partner nations, consistent with DoD Security Cooperation Guidance, to increase their capacity to meet these threats, thus reducing the risks to our own personnel and our allies and increasing our options to deal with potential challenges. We will also explore ways to capitalize on the Department's worldwide

efforts to account for those missing in past conflicts, seeking opportunities to sustain existing partnerships with key states and, where possible, build new ones. Additionally, where feasible, we will seek to leverage the capabilities of private organizations. We will also leverage the unique first-responder scientific and forensic capabilities of our personnel and organizations for use during crisis events.

III. Personnel Recovery

DPMO will develop and recommend policies, and work to influence strategic-level guidance, so the Department can proactively respond to events in which military, civilian, and contractor employees find themselves evading or having to survive captivity. This evolving policy will address current and future operational environments, focusing on enabling military commanders to mitigate operational risk and manage the strategic issues that arise when personnel become isolated from friendly control or are taken captive. The goal is to set the conditions that provide military commanders and civilian leaders with the capability to recover USG personnel to friendly control when the preventive measures offered by security and force protection fail.

Working with the Commander, USJFCOM and the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (JPRA)—(the designated office responsible for executing executive agent personnel recovery functions); and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, DPMO will help establish an environment that capitalizes on adaptive planning and advance preparation to achieve a robust and effective personnel recovery capability. Focusing on the need to build this capacity across the USG and leverage coalition partners throughout the international community, the Department, along with interagency partners, can move towards a national personnel recovery system that will provide regional military commanders and other departments and agencies a synchronized national response capability to handle events that require personnel recovery capability around the globe. DPMO will ensure the Department prepares for situations in which DoD personnel find themselves evading hostile forces or surviving captivity alongside other members of the interagency and coalition communities. DPMO will also ensure that the Department can respond rapidly with a personnel recovery capability in environments involving coalitions and interagency-led structures.

Employing senior leader advocacy throughout the Department and the functional expertise resident within JPRA, DPMO will oversee the collective participation by the Joint Staff, Combatant Commands (COCOMs), and the Service Secretaries in the formal planning processes specific to personnel recovery. Planning efforts across Services, interagency and coalition communities will address the need to prepare at-risk personnel for isolation and captivity; identify and equip recovery forces so they can respond across all operational environments; and instill a proactive mentality conducive to an adaptive response throughout COCOM, coalition, and interagency operations.

DPMO will maintain and reinforce positive working relations with all offices within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Joint Staff, and Services that have a stake in developing, procuring, and sustaining warfighting capability and capacity specific to personnel recovery. These working relationships should facilitate collaborative approaches to developing, reviewing, and supporting the Department's goal to have a fully integrated personnel recovery capability that leverages partner-nation, interagency, and Service capacity worldwide.

Given a fiscally constrained environment, and anticipating a long war on terror with heavy reliance on international partnerships, DPMO will help increase personnel recovery capacity by working with DoD regional and functional offices and the Joint Staff to incorporate personnel recovery concepts and requirements into regional strategies and security cooperation plans and activities. These concepts and requirements will address the need for compatibility and interoperability of systems and tactics used by U.S. and partner nations. They will also offer opportunities for security cooperation and engagement activities around the world. Such activities include:

- Assisting interagency partners with developing personnel recovery awareness and proactive planning to meet the expectations of current strategic planning guidance;
- Leveraging the capabilities of host nations and international partners to assist us in preventing, preparing for, and responding to events in which our personnel must evade hostile forces or survive captivity;
- Supporting military-to-military activities driven by theater security cooperation plans under geographical Combatant Commanders; and
- Promoting the international search and rescue community, which administers the littoral nations' legal requirements to provide a civilian search and rescue response throughout their internationally recognized geographical boundaries.

By monitoring changing circumstances, operational requirements, and strategic direction, DPMO will institute a mechanism to adapt existing policy and guidance when new developments require such action. This will provide the operational personnel recovery community with means to incorporate lessons learned into current policy. These activities must link directly to and support potential post-conflict personnel accounting efforts. DPMO will prepare for the possibility that military commanders are unable to recover all missing personnel during the conflict and will ensure that policy and procedures are in place for a smooth transition of responsibility for the missing after the cessation of hostilities.

Currently, DPMO is actively monitoring ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the broader war on terror. We monitor developments involving those missing and ensure that information is being collected that will aid in later, post-conflict accounting efforts, should these prove necessary. We also use this information to respond to family and congressional inquiries and Service concerns through Service casualty and casualty assistance offices. The baseline of information being developed should support a seamless transfer of personnel accounting oversight responsibility to DPMO once forces redeploy from the theater.

IV. Personnel Accounting

A. Policy Overview

After COCOM forces redeploy from the theater, responsibility for accounting for American personnel who remain captive or missing, or who were killed and remains could not be recovered by the conclusion of hostilities, transfers to the DoD personnel accounting community. DPMO works with the U.S. Pacific Command's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), which is an operational agency responsible for worldwide research, investigations, excavations, and remains identifications relating to those unaccounted for from past conflicts. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology's Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL), the Air Force's Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL), and the Service casualty offices support the remains identification process. The intelligence community also supports the accounting process.

The chart below depicts the total number of Americans who did not come home from each conflict, the number we have determined unrecoverable, the number whose remains are believed to be at our forensic laboratory, and the number for which remains recovery may still be possible given relevant information and access to the loss location.

Accounting for the Missing By Conflict

As of September 9, 2006

War and Geographic Area	Current Total Unaccounted For	Unknowns Buried at National Memorial Cemeteries	Burial at Sea/ Missing Buried or Lost at Sea	No Further Pursuit Over Land	Recoveries at JPAC-CIL to be Identified (Includes Co-mingled Remains)	Possibly Recoverable
Vietnam War: Cambodia	54	0	0	4	11	39
Vietnam War: Laos	364	0	0	39	26	297
Vietnam War: Vietnam	1,376	0	394	217	99	674
Vietnam War: China	7	0	3	0	0	4
Cold War	125	0	104	1	0	20
Korean War: North	5,561	414	292	N/A	480-580	4,580
Korean War: South Korea	980	451	0	N/A	0	875
WWII: Pacific	45,120 ¹	8,600 (Not broken out geographically)	6,318 ² (Not broken out geographically)	N/A	576-768 (Not broken out geographically)	11,386 ³
WWII: China, Burma, India	3,585			N/A		949 ³
WWII: Europe	21,047			N/A		4,554 ³
WWII: Americas	3,166			N/A		2,087 ³
WWII Worldwide	73,291 ⁴ (Geographic data not available for 373 individuals)			N/A		18,976 ³

¹ Estimates of WWII unaccounted-for by theater of operations are projections based on the geographic distribution of non-recovered servicemen listed by the American Graves Registration Service Roster of Remains not Recovered or Identified. We are continuing to refine these numbers as we review additional records.

² WWII number includes only those confirmed "buried at sea" not all lost at sea.

³ Estimates are based the geographic distribution of WWII servicemen recovered and identified between 1978 and 2006.

⁴ The total number of current WWII unaccounted-for is calculated by subtracting identifications from 1978-2006 (376) plus the verified number of servicemen buried at sea (6,318) from the total number of men listed as non-recovered on the 1983 Department of the Army Rosters of the Dead for All Services (79,985).

Our strategy to account for those missing and killed from the most recent conflicts to World War II will focus on the following primary areas of emphasis:

- Ensuring that the processes for research, investigation, excavation and identification are optimized for maximum efficiency without sacrificing accuracy, quality, effectiveness or scientific integrity
- Emphasizing both community and host-nation flexibility
- Prioritizing and apportioning the level of effort for research, investigation, excavation and remains identification activities for each conflict.
- Maintaining regular, open and substantive dialogue and information exchanges among the organizations involved, to include the Service and COCOM staffs, as well as partner nations.
- Ensuring that the entire process is transparent and that open lines of communication exist between the accounting community and Congress, veterans' groups, the American public and, most importantly, the families of the unaccounted for through their Service casualty officers.

The emphasis of our efforts and apportionment of our resources will vary with each conflict, depending on a variety of factors unique to that conflict and to the locations involved. Working within fiscal constraints, we will balance the effects of time, geography, the environment, present and past capabilities of the host nation, as well as their willingness to cooperate, and the number, nature, and location of past losses. Additionally, the bilateral arrangements negotiated with host nations will directly affect the pace and scope of efforts in that country.

B. THE PERSONNEL ACCOUNTING MISSION.

The personnel accounting mission encompasses five key processes and two supporting functions that are common for all conflicts.

- **Key Processes**
 - International Negotiation and Cooperation
 - Research and Analysis
 - Investigations
 - Excavations
 - Identification of Remains
- **Supporting Functions**
 - Service Casualty Offices and Family Communication
 - Public Outreach

1. INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION AND COOPERATION: Under DPMO's leadership, various DoD organizations negotiate with foreign governments to gain access for research, investigations and excavations. DPMO also works with other DoD and interagency organizations to ensure that USG senior leaders reinforce in their dealings with foreign officials the importance the American people and government place in their cooperation on POW/MIA issues.

As a general rule, we emphasize the humanitarian nature of the accounting mission and strive to keep it separate from other military-to-military and bilateral issues. This approach has, with rare exception, enabled the USG to pursue the accounting mission in cases where other bilateral relations were non-existent or strained. At the same time, personnel accounting operations conducted in cooperation with and actively supported by host nation governments enable the Department to help foster positive relationships that ultimately support broader U.S. interests. The POW/MIA mission has also helped initiate and sustain bilateral relationships with nations where the USG had few, if any, other avenues of communication.

Recognizing that the Department's resources for security cooperation activities are scarce, DPMO, in conjunction with the State Department, will seek innovative ways to leverage our humanitarian work to encourage other nations to adopt common perspectives and procedures that advance our ability to operate in coalitions and cooperate on common security challenges. Within resource limits, DoD POW/MIA accounting organizations will continue to provide training and engage in professional exchanges with foreign civilian and military personnel engaged in similar scientific, forensic, archival, remains recovery, and other work.

Where possible, we will work to persuade host nations to become more pro-active in encouraging their citizens to come forward with relevant information, locate pertinent wartime documents, support flexible field operations, and where appropriate, work with neighboring countries to address losses in border regions. DPMO will, in consultation with JPAC and within the limitations of some host-nation capabilities, look for opportunities to train personnel in partner nations to conduct joint and/or independent remains recovery operations. We will determine the degree of USG oversight and/or participation required on a case-by-case basis. Such trained individuals could also be used to identify potential sites and implement local heritage legislation to protect them. We will also explore working with responsible private groups and individuals who excavate and salvage crash sites and recover underwater wreckage to ensure they understand the importance to the USG of proper handling and documentation of evidence or remains they might discover.

2. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS: Intelligence specialists, analysts, and researchers will focus efforts on determining precisely what happened to those who went missing, developing leads for and documenting subsequent investigations, and compiling information that will provide answers to families. We will also ensure that the intelligence community is appropriately tasked to support this mission.

Every case, and indeed each war, provides a different informational context and level of detail. Efforts for WWII and the Cold War will require extensive research to determine where and under what circumstances the individual was lost. This is due to the historical and geographic complexity of the conflicts, the effects of the passage of time, and the manner in which loss data

was compiled and stored. Additionally, many WWII and most Cold War losses occurred over water and are not currently recoverable given the limitations of existing technology and the Navy tradition of burial at sea.

For the Korean War, where large numbers died on known battlefields, analysts and investigators must know what happened at the small squad level, so research will focus on determining which individuals were present during each battle, who was captured, who perished, and where they fell. Identifying loss locations, whether an individual was a battlefield death, an air loss or a POW, is critical to the success of future remains recovery operations and of efforts to identify both the remains already recovered and those still to be found.

For the Vietnam War and later conflicts, the effort will be two-fold. First we must confirm whether an MIA survived his loss and was held captive beyond the termination of the conflict. This includes the related issues of potential POW transfer outside the theater, the resolution of live-sighting reports and investigation of cases involving U.S. personnel last known alive in captivity or in proximity to hostile forces. Second we must establish where and under what circumstances individuals died. Most Southeast Asian losses involved single individuals or small groups in loosely defined areas with few or no American eyewitnesses. Efforts will focus on developing leads that provide guidance for field investigations.

Several organizations in the accounting community perform various types of research and analysis, making coordination and communication critical. With DPMO in the lead, these organizations will adopt a community approach that allocates research and analysis resources to transform the guidance in this strategy into action. Regular research and analytic exchanges on Vietnam War, Korean War and Cold War losses will continue, organized appropriately according to the requirements of the conflict.

We will refine and standardize a similar mechanism of analytical exchanges for World War II, so that analysts benefit from a regular cross flow of information and ideas. We will also jointly establish a research and investigative plan that balances limited resources among competing requirements.

We will collaborate to identify the technology and infrastructure requirements necessary to create and share a common database. Working incrementally, the goal will be to develop a system capable of delivering real-time access throughout the community. Within resource constraints, we will ensure analysts and researchers are employing the most up-to-date analytic tools and methodologies available.

3. INVESTIGATIONS: Our worldwide investigations have five primary goals:

- Obtain information to confirm the fate of individuals last known to be alive in captivity or in close proximity to the enemy
- Document and survey incident sites so that teams have the most accurate and up-to-date information about a case prior to their arrival for excavations.
- Generate new leads that may result in future remains recoveries.
- Document detailed information on the situation leading up to and including the fate of the unaccounted-for individual.

- Assist in planning future remains recovery operations

JPAC maintains five investigation teams consisting of four to nine members with specialized skills, including a team leader, assistant team leader, analyst, linguist, and a medic. In some instances an anthropologist, explosive ordnance technician, and /or a life support technician will augment the team. The investigation teams normally deploy for up to 35 days at a time and, acting independently of a normal excavation operation, interview potential witnesses, conduct on-site reconnaissance, and survey terrain for safety and logistical concerns. When feasible, investigation teams will operate for longer, uninterrupted periods to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

DPMO also sends personnel to the field to augment worldwide investigative capacity, particularly in the former Soviet Bloc nations, where DPMO personnel interview eyewitnesses and former Soviet and Warsaw Pact military and government officials who served in war zones or might otherwise have POW/MIA-related information. These investigators also review foreign military records and other foreign periodicals, books, and memoirs detailing Soviet and other foreign involvement in the various conflicts. They also seek to locate and correlate crash and grave sites believed to contain the remains of missing American servicemen. Recently JPAC began training DPMO personnel with the goal of standardizing investigative and reporting procedures to improve integration of each organization's work.

4. EXCAVATIONS. Under ideal circumstances, JPAC first investigates all cases recommended for excavation. Once adequate information is collected and analyzed, JPAC's intelligence, operations, and laboratory sections recommend whether to pursue an excavation. Most often, these cases have firm locations, and in some cases remains have been determined to be present at the site. Other factors such as weather, terrain challenges, site accessibility, and various logistical and operational concerns help to determine the planning and staging of recoveries. If a site is determined to be in jeopardy (due to urbanization, environmental, regulatory, or political issues beyond the control of JPAC), an expedited excavation is recommended.

JPAC's excavation missions range up to 60 days depending on the location, terrain and excavation methods. Recovery teams employ excavation methodologies founded in the principles of archaeology and are directed by an archeologist or anthropologist, who typically has a doctorate in forensic archaeology (excavating human remains) and/or forensic anthropology (identifying human remains). The excavation process is best described as physically painstaking, arduous and meticulous due to the terrain, climate and the need to implement scientific remains recovery procedures. The size of the excavation site depends on multiple factors including, but not limited to, the nature of the loss incident and the ease with which any remains present can be found.

JPAC has three forward deployed detachments for command and control, each commanded by a lieutenant colonel. The detachments assist with logistics and support, and are located in Bangkok, Thailand; Hanoi, Vietnam; and Vientiane, Laos. A fourth detachment schedules and trains team personnel and exercises command and control of all other geographical areas.

Given the limits on JPAC resources and the restrictions some countries place on permitting access to U.S. teams, the Department will explore options for using non-JPAC resources to recover selected sites. This may require offering training to foreign officials and/or private groups and looking at whether and how we might facilitate JPAC oversight of their work. We may also be able to capitalize on the abilities of U.S. military mortuary affairs specialists currently stationed around the world.

Underwater Recoveries:

While our progress in excavating sites on land is extensive and far-reaching, efforts to account for those lost over water offer only marginal opportunities to contribute to personnel accounting, and the resource requirements for such operations are often prohibitive. Underwater losses include tens of thousands of WWII personnel, almost all Cold War losses, about 300 Korean War aviators and sailors, mostly on minesweepers, as well as over 450 Vietnam War losses. While our objective in accounting for these men is not diminished, in all such losses we follow a strict decision protocol that is based on the precision of the known location, the exactness of the correlation of the aircraft or ship, and the difficulty of recovery. In deep seas, it is not usually possible to mount a recovery operation while still ensuring the safety of the recovery personnel.

In practice, underwater recovery efforts have varied by Service, conflict and location. Most of the individuals involved in deep sea losses are naval personnel. The Navy views burial at sea as an honorable and fitting resting place, and thus does not usually perceive losses in which ships sank with crewmen on board (primarily WWII) and aircraft that crashed at sea as requiring recovery. While this philosophy is time honored, the Department will continue to strive to challenge the margins where an individual accounting is possible, particularly in shallow water.

JPAC has conducted extensive historical research and developed a limited number of leads for potential underwater sites. As the technology in this area advances, it may help alleviate some of our challenges, but although we have recovered losses in shallow waters, even these operations have enjoyed uneven success. Under current conditions, our goal is to sustain at least one underwater investigation team and one underwater recovery team per year. We will remain fully cognizant, that we should balance our investment of resources between particularly difficult land sites and those with challenges defined by the sea.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF REMAINS: Upon arrival and transfer of custody to JPAC, all remains and material evidence are assigned an accession number and stored in a secure area during all stages of analysis. JPAC employs a variety of tools to establish the identification of missing Americans, to include analysis of skeletal and dental remains, mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), material evidence, personal effects, and life-support equipment. Identifications fall into two broad categories: those based solely on unique physical characteristics of remains (fingerprints; nuclear DNA, dental) and those based on a combination of other information

(mtDNA, skeletal analysis, circumstantial information).

The assigned anthropologist conducts analysis in a manner that is informed, but does not bias the results. Anthropologists construct biological profiles with the aim of testing them for consistency with the demographic data of missing individuals. JPAC currently uses mtDNA to assist the final identification of about 70 percent of cases. Because we do not now have the capacity to use mtDNA on all cases, the scientific requirements of the individual case dictates whether mtDNA is used. All mtDNA samples taken at the JPAC are analyzed at the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL).

Both the JPAC laboratory and AFDIL are accredited by the American Society of Crime Lab Directors Laboratory Accreditation Board, which requires them to implement extensive quality assurance procedures. Findings of the scientists must pass three separate levels of internal peer review, as well as an external review by Board certified consultant scientists.

Once the identification is established, the case is forwarded to the appropriate service casualty or mortuary affairs office, in preparation to brief the family. After identification packet issues have been addressed, the appropriate Service casualty office or mortuary affairs office will present the identification to the family to get their acceptance and begin the disposition of remains process.

While JPAC strives to identify missing Americans in the most expeditious manner possible, the process for identifications can take considerable time. Although some cases are intrinsically complex, we seek to identify an average of two remains each week, while maintaining the scientific integrity of the process. Typically, the priority will go to newly recovered remains, while maintaining a steady effort on analysis on the older cases. DPMO will act as the hub for communications within the accounting community in order to keep all parties informed of progress on case identification.

DPMO, JPAC, and AFDIL will review the current identification process and recommend measures to increase the number of identifications while maintaining scientific integrity of the overall process. This review will examine requirements for facilities, equipment, personnel, and processes. It will also consider whether increased use of contracted services can affect the rate of remains identifications. Recognizing the importance of mtDNA in the identification process, DPMO will also work with the Service casualty offices, JPAC, and AFDIL to draft and publish DoD guidance on the collection of mtDNA family reference samples, with the objective of capturing best practices, focus collection on the most critical samples and generally increase the database of samples.

6. SERVICE CASUALTY OFFICES AND FAMILY COMMUNICATION. The Military Departments maintain casualty offices for their respective services, and the Department of State does the same for U.S. civilians not affiliated with a military service. The personnel in these offices are the primary liaison between the families and the USG for matters relating to personnel accounting. They help answer the family's questions and explain the methods used in the accounting process. They also are the families' primary point of contact into other USG organizations and the conduit through which most information collected by these organizations is passed to the families. The exception is when families directly contact one of the accounting organizations, either in person or via phone, letter or email. In those circumstances, however, the

organizations will in all cases, keep the Service casualty offices informed, so they can provide the best service for the families.

As we look to the future, the Department will review existing processes as follows:

- Ensure that communications with family members go through the respective Service casualty offices, and the DoD personnel accounting organizations respond to queries in a timely manner.
- Assess the presentation of remains identification packages to the families to ensure that notification takes place as expeditiously as possible, and that information in the packages is clear and comprehensible to lay persons prior to being presented to the families.
- Evaluate how the family can appeal the identification, safeguarding the right to independent review and examining the utility of adding scientists into the review mechanisms.

7. PUBLIC OUTREACH: The USG must ensure the entire process is transparent to the families of the unaccounted for, Congress, concerned citizens, the Department, and the USG as a whole. The mission can only be successful when the families of the missing and the American public understand that the Department, and the USG as a whole, is committed to keeping our promise to those who serve. This requires an active outreach and communication effort to involve the families of our missing; increase public awareness and educate and inform the American public of the efforts of the accounting community.

The public outreach mission also plays an important role in generating new leads on cases. It also supports the identification process by generating public awareness and interest that helps locate sources of potentially useful information and family members to provide DNA family reference samples.

DPMO will continue the regional Family Update Program to reach out to families through a series of briefings and case reviews held annually throughout the country. However, DPMO will review the organizational participation to see if the family updates can be supported more efficiently and cost-effectively. DPMO will refocus its efforts to reach families that have not attended an update. We will concentrate on areas once deemed too sparsely populated to support a successful meeting. Additionally, we will begin to overlap areas of the country with dense populations.

C. PRIORITIZING AND APPORTIONING THE LEVEL OF EFFORT: The policy determination on how to prioritize research, investigation, excavation and remains identification for past conflicts will always involve a careful balance of complex factors, to include resources, country access, available information, family advocacy, and technology. Our most important priority, regardless of location or conflict, is to resolve questions concerning those who might still be held in captivity and, if found to be such, returning them to U.S. control. To address the remaining unaccounted-for cases, we will base our efforts on:

- 1) The most recent conflict first
- 2) Availability of relevant information and accessibility of the loss site

- 3) Availability of resources
- 4) Optimizing the balance between excavations and identifications

Resolution of unaccounted for cases will take precedence over further work on resolved cases where remains have been recovered and identified.

JPAC is authorized 18 remains recovery teams – 10 teams are dedicated to those missing in Southeast Asia, 5 teams to the Korean War missing, and 3 teams to missing Americans from World War II, the Cold War and the Gulf War. A typical excavation team has 10 to 14 personnel. The number of local workers assisting these teams can range anywhere from 10 to over 100. JPAC also has 5 investigation teams consisting of 2 to 9 members, which deploy around the world. These teams are augmented by other assets as required.

In 2003, the JPAC transition plan for merging the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting and the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory-Hawaii directed JPAC to conduct annually 10 joint field activities (JFAs) in Southeast Asia, 5 JFAs in North Korea, and 10 missions elsewhere around the world (referred to further in this strategy as the 10-5-10 planning guidance). The Deputy Secretary of Defense approved this planning guidance on September 26, 2003.

While the 10-5-10 planning guidance enabled the command to tailor its operations to requirements and provided the flexibility to meet unscheduled missions that demand immediate attention during the year, it did not accurately convey the level of effort in terms of teams, operations, and funding allotted to each conflict. Joint field activities vary in the number of personnel and the number and mix of recovery and investigation teams, depending on the circumstances of the losses and conditions in the host country. In actuality, the level of effort as measured in terms of numbers of recovery teams could be described as 50-10-15, with the allocations for Southeast Asia and North Korea based mainly on weather and diplomatic access and the allocation for worldwide operations on resources.

Under these circumstances, the planning guidance for level of effort expended by conflict will be based on the following percentage basis: 65% for Vietnam War, 20% for Korean War (North Korea), and 15% for World War II. During periods when operations in North Korea are suspended, the 20% earmarked for those operations will be reallocated to provide additional operations for Vietnam War and World War II accounting, with the proviso that to the extent leads and country access allow, JPAC will ensure that Korean War accounting operations continue in South Korea and China. This guidance should provide JPAC the required operational flexibility to respond to transient access opportunities and permit the organization to refocus efforts in response to ever-changing situations. Because the operational situation is dynamic, specific percentages may vary from year-to-year. DPMO will, after consultation with JPAC, determine any necessary changes or exceptions to this guidance annually. DPMO will exercise policy oversight over each year's operations plan to validate adherence to this guidance and ensure the plan is consistent with broader DoD policy.

Three aviators from the first Gulf War in 1991, one from the 1986 attack on Libya, 1,801 from the Vietnam War, 125 from the Cold War, 8,098 from the Korean War, and roughly 73,291 from World War II are still unaccounted for. At present, the commander of the forces in Iraq has responsibility for the first Gulf War losses, so these will not be covered in this section. The

primary focus of the personnel accounting community is on the losses that might even now be recoverable. Efforts are prioritized by conflict in the order listed below.

1. OPERATION ELDORADO CANYON - LIBYA

In 1986, the U.S. attacked Libya after representatives of that country bombed a discotheque in Berlin that was frequented by U.S. servicemen, killing one. One aircraft with two aviators onboard crashed just offshore. Reporting indicates that both died and may have been recovered by Libya. Years of negotiations, including intervention by the Vatican, resulted in the release of one of the two bodies. The second aviator is still unaccounted for. DPMO will continue to work toward the recovery of his remains.

2. VIETNAM WAR

Today, the U.S. continues to make tangible progress in obtaining the fullest possible accounting for Americans lost during the Vietnam War. For the last several years, the U.S. has conducted five JFAs per year in Laos, four in Vietnam, and at least one in Cambodia. In FY 2007, we will move from four 30-day JFA's to three 45-day JFAs in Vietnam, which will increase the number of days on the ground and facilitate operations in areas where good weather lasts only a few months. The number of teams per JFA varies by country, based chiefly in Laos and Vietnam on limits those countries impose on the number of U.S. personnel who participate in each JFA, and in Cambodia on the small case load. In addition, the governments of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia unilaterally investigate cases, based largely on U.S.-provided leads, and report the results for follow-up investigation.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, approximately 2,000 firsthand reports claiming live sightings of Americans have been resolved, 199 Americans whose fate was unknown have been confirmed dead, the remains of 845 Americans have been recovered and identified, and 651 Americans are currently considered unrecoverable. The remains of at least 137 missing are at JPAC awaiting completion of the identification process. This leaves approximately 1,000 unaccounted for Americans for whom we continue to pursue the fullest possible accounting. Currently we have identified sites pertaining to 310 cases awaiting excavation, and many other cases are in various stages of the investigative process. The chart below shows the breakdown by country.

As of September 9, 2006

VIETNAM WAR	Cambodia	China	Laos	Vietnam	Total
Remains identified since 1973	29	3	208	605	845
Total Currently Unaccounted-for	54	7	364	1,376	1,801
Recovered -Awaiting ID	11*	0	26*	100*	137*
Possibly Recoverable	39	4	297	674	1,014

*** Note:** Represents number of containers having evidence of human remains, but not necessarily a single individual.

The overarching policy direction has been guided by the following four criteria established by the U.S. Congress in 1994 aimed at measuring Vietnam’s cooperation on resolving open cases from the war in Southeast Asia. Although specific to Vietnam, the criteria are also relevant to operations in Laos and Cambodia.

- 1) Concrete results from Vietnamese efforts to recover and repatriate American remains;
- 2) Continued resolution of last known alive cases, live sightings and field activities;
- 3) Assistance in implementing trilateral investigations with Laos; and
- 4) Accelerated efforts to provide all POW/MIA-related documents leading to case resolution.

Vietnam has made considerable progress in all these areas. American losses in both Laos and Cambodia occurred largely in areas occupied by Vietnamese forces. Therefore Vietnamese assistance plays a large role in accounting for missing Americans in the region. Former Vietnamese soldiers have given us detailed accounts of their encounters with Americans during the war and participated in investigations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to locate incident sites. The Government of Vietnam has turned over official shoot down, death, capture and prison records that have helped resolve a number of cases. We are also seeking to review additional Vietnamese archival materials.

Laos had a much smaller and far less literate force than Vietnam during the war and appear to have made few records of ongoing events. Finding Lao witnesses is difficult as local residents frequently fled the area when fighting took place. The Lao have supported a trilateral witness program that brings former Vietnamese soldiers to Laos to identify incident sites, and they have recently shown increased flexibility concerning the criteria for when and where JPAC remains recovery teams can work.

Cambodia is a success story in terms of cooperation, even in the face of other challenges to the bilateral relationship. Cambodia has allowed virtually unlimited access to its archival repositories, and we continue to look for information that could lead to case resolution. However,

with much of the population killed and documentation destroyed by the Khmer Rouge in the years following the war, finding witnesses or wartime information to assist in locating our unaccounted for has been very difficult.

DPMO has made some headway in accessing former Soviet Bloc archives pertaining to the Vietnam War; however, to date this effort has contributed little to accounting for losses from that war, and there is no confirmation that any serviceman lost during the Vietnam War was transported out of the war zone.

Future Direction of Vietnam War Accounting

As we enter the fourth decade of pursuing the fullest possible accounting for the Vietnam War, we must continue to maintain a robust research and analysis, investigative, excavation and identification capability, and to press our Southeast Asian partners for enhanced unilateral action and greater operational flexibility. As external requirements force a realignment and potential reduction of resources dedicated to the accounting mission, we must continue to look for efficiencies in our processes, as well as fully exploiting every opportunity and potential for accounting for those who remain missing. Our priorities and focus for the Vietnam War are listed below:

- Confirming the fates of the 97 Americans still carried as last known alive Americans
- Excavating the 172 currently identified sites pertaining to 310 Americans, with priority to last known alive cases, sites at which investigation teams have recovered partial remains, sites in danger of disturbance due to urbanization or other land-altering projects, or sites that can be excavated during a single JFA
- Continuing to identify and interview as many witnesses as possible, cognizant that they are aging and will soon no longer be able to assist us
- Obtaining increased archival access in Vietnam, Laos, the former Soviet Bloc and China.
- Obtaining access to all of our loss sites.

In Laos, we will specifically focus on:

- Obtaining agreement to increase the number of U.S. personnel permitted to participate in JFAs when we need additional capacity and allow back-to-back field activities. This initiative to expand operations will depend, however, on our own ability to resource the increase
- Seeking greater Lao flexibility on the order in which we excavate sites.
- Reviewing the current Lao archival research effort and exploring new ways to determine if there are any undiscovered documents or repositories that may contain information relevant to unresolved cases

3. KOREAN WAR: At present, 8,095 Americans are still unaccounted-for from the Korean War. Of these, approximately 5,500 were lost in North Korea; 1,000 in South Korea; and

approximately 300 over water. About 1,262 unidentified remains are located in Hawaii, either buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific or located at JPAC. Additionally, a handful of losses may have occurred over Chinese airspace or on Chinese territory.

KOREAN WAR	North Korea (approx)	South Korea (approx)	DMZ	China	Over Water (approx)	National Memorial Cemetery & CIL	Total
Total currently unaccounted- for	5,456	880	200	5	292	1,262	8,095
Possibly Recoverable	4,500	800	150	5	0	N/A	5,455
Remains identified since 1982	52	5	0	1	1	2	61
Recovered – awaiting ID	480-580	0	0	0	0	0	~480-580

The Department employs three basic approaches to deal with various aspects of the Korean War accounting mission:

- Searching for information that answers lingering questions about what happened to known or suspected POWs/MIAs
- Locating and recovering remains in North Korea, South Korea, and China--the overwhelming majority of field work requiring access to North Korea
- Developing information to support the identification of remains unilaterally recovered and repatriated, principally by North Korea or jointly recovered with North Korea—the priority going first to remains at JPAC and second to those interred as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific

The Department has received approximately 36 reports alleging that Americans were still being held captive in North Korea following the Armistice. Most reports were determined to relate to Americans who deserted to North Korea after the war, and others were determined to be fabrications. DPMO continues to investigate all live-sighting reports and ensures North Korean defectors are asked about their knowledge of American POWs/MIAs. In 2004, DPMO also sat in on the debriefing of one American deserter who had lived in North Korea for 39 years, but knew only about other deserters held with him. Additionally, through the work of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission, we continue to follow up on unsubstantiated reports that American POWs were

moved to third countries. To date, we have not been able to confirm that any Korean War American POWs were left behind in North Korea.

In 1996, the U.S. reached an initial arrangement with North Korea to conduct joint investigations and excavations in that country, and between 1996 and 2005, we recovered an estimated 225 American remains. Of these, 28 Americans have been identified. Since 1982 we have identified five American remains recovered by U.S. excavation teams in South Korea. In 2004, JPAC also recovered the remains of one U.S. Air Force pilot who crashed in China.

In May 2005, the USG temporarily suspended joint field operations in North Korea. The USG interagency community will continue to monitor developments on the Korean Peninsula and look for the earliest opportunity to restart those operations or discuss other issues with North Korea. Over time, we are hopeful the North Koreans will allow operations to include not only battlefields but also POW camps and United Nations cemeteries. We would also like to gain clarifying information about remains unilaterally recovered by North Korea.

During the Korean War, the U.S. and our allies fought on the ground principally against the Chinese, and against the Soviets in the air. Because the Chinese administered the camps holding U.S. POWs, their archives are critical to Korean War accounting. However, China has not yet allowed us access to its post-World War II era archives. In 2005, representatives of the Chinese People's Liberation Army expressed cautious optimism that it might be possible to obtain information from historical records, but as of August 2006, no tangible results had materialized. The Department has had far greater success accessing Korean War-era air combat reports currently held in the Central Archive of the Russian Ministry of Defense in Podolsk. These records provide detailed information about the downing of American combat aircraft, and some of this information may guide future remains recovery operations at air crash sites in North Korea and China.

Aside from efforts directly tied to operations in North Korea or discussions with that country, the accounting community will focus resources on the following efforts:

- Gaining access to and developing information from Chinese archives. DPMO will maintain close contact with USG officials in the interagency community who can assist by reiterating our POW/MIA accounting message when meeting with Chinese officials. To maintain engagement with China, we will continue to conduct annual investigation and remains recovery operations in China.

- Developing leads to support investigation and remains recovery operations on cases in South Korea, and when possible China, focusing on an Oral History Program of veteran and eyewitness interviews, as well as archival research.
- Identifying remains at JPAC, which will entail:
 - DPMO working with the Service Casualty Offices to develop DoD guidance on acquiring family reference samples aimed at expanding the database of Korean War DNA family reference samples.
 - DPMO and JPAC identifying a group of cases for initial focus that will support DNA analysis and identification of remains already recovered
- Continuing to exploit archives of the former Soviet Union and interviewing, as resources permit, Soviet veterans and government and party officials.
- As time, resources and technology permit, researching the records and identifying remains previously declared unidentifiable in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

4. COLD WAR: In the context of the U.S. - Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, we have been investigating the fates of personnel lost on ten flights over or near Soviet territory during 1950-65. Currently, 77 individuals remain unaccounted for. Additionally, 19 Americans are still unaccounted for from three aircraft losses over or near China, and 29 are unaccounted for from one aircraft loss off the North Korean coast. With the exception of two pilots known to have perished when the Chinese shot down their aircraft in Northeast China, the remaining 123 personnel unaccounted-for during the Cold War were lost over water. In 2004, JPAC excavated the crash site in Northeast China, recovering the remains of one of the pilots. Based on JPAC analysis of the results of that excavation, we will assess whether an additional excavation at the crash site is warranted. With this single exception, the Department will concentrate future efforts to account for Cold War losses on conducting archival research, identifying potential witnesses and analyzing material on hand. As part of this effort, DPMO will coordinate an analytic review of Cold War cases to ensure our database is accurate and complete.

5. WORLD WAR II

At the end of World War II, there were approximately 79,000 U.S. personnel whose remains were not recovered and identified. For five years after the war, U.S. graves registration teams searched battlefields, burial sites, and crash sites to recover American remains. After the active remains recovery effort concluded, U.S. Army Mortuary Services became the executive agent for recovering remains from crash sites or burial locations.

As of September 2006

Total Currently Unaccounted -for	Officially Buried at Sea	Buried in ABMC Cemeteries Worldwide	Under Water Losses (<Pacific)	Under Water Losses (Pacific)	Possibly Recoverable (approximate)
73,291	6,318	8,600-10,300	17,800-20,600	22,800-32,700	18,976

The number of World War II losses is very large in absolute terms, and it is currently possible to provide only a very broad estimate of how many remains might still be recoverable. DPMO, in coordination with JPAC, is within months of completing the first comprehensive database for WWII, which should help provide basic information concerning unaccounted for individuals. Records containing the details about loss circumstances and locations, however, have never been systematically organized or exploited, and WWII accounting will require extensive research and investigation, supported by exhaustive analysis.

Our long-term strategy for addressing World War II accounting is very much a work in progress. The goal is to allocate and coordinate limited community resources through an efficient, effective, and accountable process. Given the resource constraints and the vast number of potential sites, however, we will also explore innovative ways to expand our capacity, in part by leveraging foreign, private, and family efforts. In the near term, we will pursue the following approach.

- As funding permits, World War II remains recovery operations will continue to focus on sites identified by the following sources:
 - In 2000, Congress mandated that the Department make a reasonable effort to recover the remains of U.S. servicemen lost in the Pacific theater while engaged in air operations; this legislation specifically named New Guinea.
 - Foreign governments and private organizations regularly discover sites around the world, occasionally requiring a rapid response to collect and preserve evidence.
 - Ongoing research and investigation also locates sites in the former Soviet Union and East Bloc countries.
 - Finally, we must be prepared to conduct operations in other areas around the world in support of National security cooperation initiatives.
- The existing backlog of WWII sites identified for fieldwork will be prioritized based on:
 - The date the case enters the backlog.
 - The perishability of the site.
 - Operational and logistical sufficiency.
 - Resource availability.

- We will also explore working with existing private groups and individuals (including family members), as well as foreign countries, to identify potential witnesses, to identify and protect sites and, where appropriate and feasible, train them to excavate sites in a manner that maximizes the predictability of remains recovery and integrity of the remains recovery and increases the chances that any remains discovered can be identified.
- We will explore options to increase activities in the European region using the current level of resources. Options range from stationing JPAC or other personnel in Europe, to exploring the possibility of European Command taking responsibility for at least some investigations and excavations in the region.
- DPMO and JPAC researchers and analysts will review records, known as the X-files, that contain information on remains currently interred as unknowns in order to refine our understanding of who has already been recovered and who might still be recoverable.

V. RESOURCING: DPMO will fulfill its resource oversight role by ensuring that DoD personnel recovery and personnel accounting communities' resources are planned, programmed, budgeted, and executed in accordance with legislation and USG and DoD implementing and annual guidance. This will ensure the most efficient use of existing resources and the acquisition or re-allocation of additional resources essential to accomplish these missions. Resource allocation in a fiscally constrained environment requires certification that effective management controls exist, verification of productivity against stated goals, and verification of operational necessity for new or enhanced resources. DPMO will:

- Ensure the personnel recovery and personnel accounting communities employ management controls to verify accountability and productivity.
- Advocate for additional resources upon validation of operational need and verification of the performance of requesting activities.
- Review the current resourcing processes within the Department to determine if other approaches would be beneficial, such as establishing a single line account or a central transfer account.

VI. TECHNOLOGY: Limited resources require that DPMO examine current processes for enhancements and efficiencies and explore new technologies that would maximize our support to our mission. We are consolidating our information technology resources to become more efficient and reduce overhead costs. We are working with our DoD counterparts to merge or link databases and investigating new ways to scan and index documents to meet the needs of our personnel. We continue to maintain communication links at all levels of classifications to stay abreast of current information. Throughout this

process, we will ensure the highest standards are adhered to in all areas and that scientific integrity is maintained in the remains identification process.

DPMO will review the benefits of establishing a technology line in its budget submission so that new technology can be explored and operationally evaluated without impacting negatively on other organizations' operations.

VII. CONCLUSION:

This plan is one element of our comprehensive effort to improve activities within the Department to account for and recover missing personnel. We will review our performance on a periodic basis to ensure that we remain on track with the direction outlined in this plan. This is a living document and as such, it will be periodically updated to reflect changes in our environment or in the focus of our efforts.