AD-A280 046

ATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, ing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs - Broken But Still Working

5. FUNDING NUMBERS

6. AUTHOR(S)

Wagner, Philip R., COL, QM

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

U.S. Army War College
Root Hall, Bldg 122
Carlisle Barracks
Carlisle, PA 17013-5050

8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER

DTIC
ELECTE
JUN 09 1994
S B D

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE

13. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*

Although the Services' Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs get the job done, they are not without recurring problems, and the Unified CINCs or Joint Task Force Commander have little guidance on how to handle these extremely sensitive programs, whether in peacetime or contingency operations. While there have been some actions taken recently to improve the doctrine and procedures for Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs, much remains to be done. The Department of Defense should pursue the following goals in developing a Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Program - establish a Defense Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Agency; publish a DoD Directive to formally establish policy, clearly delineating the linkages among the casualty assistance, mortuary affairs, and medical systems both in peacetime and during the transition to contingency operations or war; develop an integrated tracking system among the casualty assistance, mortuary affairs, and medical support systems; develop an oversight program to ensure coordinated development and implementation of the "new" DoD Directive for Joint Mortuary Affairs; clarify the Armed Forces Medical Examiner's role in remains identification and provide detailed guidance regarding autopsies; and institutionalize doctrine to use port-of-entry mortuaries as processing sites.

14. SUBJECT TERMS			15. NUMBER OF PAGES
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING SF 298

The Report Documentation Page (RDP) is used in announcing and cataloging reports. It is important that this information be consistent with the rest of the report, particularly the cover and title page. Instructions for filling in each block of the form follow. It is important to ***stay within the lines*** to meet ***optical scanning requirements***.

Block 1. Agency Use Only *(Leave blank)*.

Block 2. Report Date. Full publication date including day, month, and year, if available (e.g. 1 Jan 88). Must cite at least the year.

Block 3. Type of Report and Dates Covered. State whether report is interim, final, etc. If applicable, enter inclusive report dates (e.g. 10 Jun 87 - 30 Jun 88).

Block 4. Title and Subtitle. A title is taken from the part of the report that provides the most meaningful and complete information. When a report is prepared in more than one volume, repeat the primary title, add volume number, and include subtitle for the specific volume. On classified documents enter the title classification in parentheses.

Block 5. Funding Numbers. To include contract and grant numbers; may include program element number(s), project number(s), task number(s), and work unit number(s). Use the following labels:

C	- Contract	**PR**	- Project
G	- Grant	**TA**	- Task
PE	- Program Element	**WU**	- Work Unit Accession No.

Block 6. Author(s). Name(s) of person(s) responsible for writing the report, performing the research, or credited with the content of the report. If editor or compiler, this should follow the name(s).

Block 7. Performing Organization Name(s) and Address(es). Self-explanatory.

Block 8. Performing Organization Report Number. Enter the unique alphanumeric report number(s) assigned by the organization performing the report.

Block 9. Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Name(s) and Address(es). Self-explanatory.

Block 10. Sponsoring/Monitoring Agency Report Number. *(If known)*

Block 11. Supplementary Notes. Enter information not included elsewhere such as: Prepared in cooperation with...; Trans. of...; To be published in.... When a report is revised, include a statement whether the new report supersedes or supplements the older report.

Block 12a. Distribution/Availability Statement. Denotes public availability or limitations. Cite any availability to the public. Enter additional limitations or special markings in all capitals (e.g. NOFORN, REL, ITAR).

- **DOD** - See DoDD 5230.24, "Distribution Statements on Technical Documents."
- **DOE** - See authorities.
- **NASA** - See Handbook NHB 2200.2.
- **NTIS** - Leave blank.

Block 12b. Distribution Code.

- **DOD** - Leave blank.
- **DOE** - Enter DOE distribution categories from the Standard Distribution for Unclassified Scientific and Technical Reports.
- **NASA** - Leave blank.
- **NTIS** - Leave blank.

Block 13. Abstract. Include a brief *(Maximum 200 words)* factual summary of the most significant information contained in the report.

Block 14. Subject Terms. Keywords or phrases identifying major subjects in the report.

Block 15. Number of Pages. Enter the total number of pages.

Block 16. Price Code. Enter appropriate price code *(NTIS only)*.

Blocks 17. - 19. Security Classifications. Self-explanatory. Enter U.S. Security Classification in accordance with U.S. Security Regulations (i.e., UNCLASSIFIED). If form contains classified information, stamp classification on the top and bottom of the page.

Block 20. Limitation of Abstract. This block must be completed to assign a limitation to the abstract. Enter either UL (unlimited) or SAR (same as report). An entry in this block is necessary if the abstract is to be limited. If blank, the abstract is assumed to be unlimited.

STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

JOINT CASUALTY ASSISTANCE AND MORTUARY AFFAIRS PROGRAMS - BROKEN BUT STILL WORKING

BY

COLONEL PHILIP R. WAGNER
United States Army

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release.
Distribution is unlimited.

94-17488

DTIC QUALITY INSPECTED 5

USAWC CLASS OF 1994

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

94 6 8 080

USAWC STRATEGIC RESEARCH PROJECT

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Defense or any of its agencies. This document may not be released for open publication until it has been cleared by the appropriate military service or government agency.

JOINT CASUALTY ASSISTANCE AND MORTUARY AFFAIRS PROGRAMS - BROKEN BUT STILL WORKING

by

Colonel Philip R. Wagner

United States Army

Colonel Robert Malik

Project Advisor

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A:
Approved for public release;
distribution is unlimited.

U.S. Army War College

Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Philip R. Wagner, COL, QM

TITLE: Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs - Broken But Still Working

FORMAT: Individual Essay

DATE: 22 April 1994 PAGES: 25 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Although the Services' Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs get the job done, they are not without recurring problems, and the Unified CINCs or Joint Task Force Commander have little guidance on how to handle these extremely sensitive programs, whether in peacetime or contingency operations. While there have been some actions taken recently to improve the doctrine and procedures for Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs, much remains to be done. The Department of Defense should pursue the following goals in developing a Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Program - establish a Defense Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Agency; publish a DoD Directive to formally establish policy, clearly delineating the linkages among the casualty assistance, mortuary affairs, and medical systems both in peacetime and during the transition to contingency operations or war; develop an integrated tracking system among the casualty assistance, mortuary affairs, and medical support systems; develop an oversight program to ensure coordinated development and implementation of the "new" DoD Directive for Joint Mortuary Affairs; clarify the Armed Forces Medical Examiner's role in remains identification and provide detailed guidance regarding autopsies; and institutionalize doctrine to use port-of-entry mortuaries as processing sites.

Accession For
NTIS GRA&I ☑
DTIC TAB ☐
Unannounced ☐
Justification
By
Distribution/
Availability Codes
Dist | Avail and/or Special
A-1

JOINT CASUALTY ASSISTANCE AND MORTUARY AFFAIRS PROGRAMS - BROKEN BUT STILL WORKING

Introduction

Unified CINCs and Joint Task Force Commanders have little guidance on how to manage Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs in peacetime or contingency operations. Joint Staff Officers rely heavily on individual Services' actions to handle these sensitive programs. A recent Department of Defense Inspector General Report found that "although the individual Services' programs are fairly successful, there are inefficiencies and disconnects in the supporting structures and processes that should be corrected."[1] The current programs work well enough in peacetime but may be less than optimal when casualties become heavy, especially in joint operations. While there have been some actions recently taken to improve doctrine and procedures for Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs, much remains to be done.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the current Department of Defense Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs, examine ongoing efforts to improve the systems, and suggest improvements that would aid the CINC or Joint Task Force Commander in planning for and executing Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs in joint operations. Discussions regarding the management of Missing in Action and Prisoner of War (MIA/POW) programs are not included in this paper, nor are the

management of Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs for Department of Defense and other Federal civilians. Both programs, although relevant to the Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs, merit study as separate topics.

Current Department of Defense Programs

The Department of Defense Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs are used by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Unified Commands, the Joint Staff, and the Military Services to plan, conduct, and oversee casualty notification and assistance along with mortuary affairs in the Department of Defense. A lack of standardized policies among the Services and the inter-relationship between the programs raises many complex issues.

The Department of Defense Casualty Assistance Program provides notification and support to the next of kin of military casualties. A casualty is any person lost to an organization by having been declared dead, missing, ill or injured, or in a category that the Services call "Duty Status-Whereabouts Unknown." Procedures include: notifying the next of kin of a casualty, helping the next of kin with applications for survivor's benefits, advising the next of kin regarding personal affairs and support, and providing other assistance as needed.[2] The casualty process starts with the submission of a casualty report and the subsequent notification of the next of kin.

The unit that first learns of the casualty forwards an initial casualty report through the chain of command. The Military Service headquarters directs one of its subordinate units to personally contact the next of kin to make the notification. Within twenty-four hours after notification, the Services provide a casualty assistance officer to meet with the next of kin and start the assistance process. The casualty assistance officer is the link between the Service and the next of kin until all benefits are received.

The Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs Program includes: providing for the recovery, identification, preparation and disposition of remains of deceased Military Service Members, advising next of kin of burial benefits, assisting with disposition of remains and personal effects, monitoring the preparation of remains and arrangement for transport, and arranging for escorts and military honors burial detail.[3] The mortuary affairs process runs concurrently with the casualty assistance process. Mortuary Affairs personnel contact the next of kin after notification by the casualty assistance officer. Depending on the level of conflict and numbers of casualties involved, the Services use one of three Mortuary Affairs sub-programs to inter remains.

The first sub-program is the Current Death Program. This program is operational worldwide during peacetime and continues outside areas of conflict during contingency operations. The Current Death Program may also continue in areas of conflict

depending on the logistical and tactical situation, based on the Unified commander's decision. Under this program remains are shipped to a place designated by the next of kin for final disposition, and the decedent's personal effects are shipped to the legal recipient.

The second sub-program is the Graves Registration Program. It provides for search, recovery, initial identification, and evacuation or burial of deceased personnel in temporary burial sites in an area of conflict. Temporary burial is performed only when authorized by the responsible commander during major military operations. The disposal of personal effects is also a part of this program. This is the least preferred program, and was last used during the early stages of the Korean War.

The Concurrent Return Program is the third sub-program of the Mortuary Affairs Program. It is a combination of the Current Death and Graves Registration Programs. It may be activated during emergencies or major military operations based on the CINC's judgement. This program begins with the initial phase of the Graves Registration Program that provides for search, recovery, and evacuation of remains to a mortuary, and ends with the Current Death Program, which provides for identification and preparation of remains in a mortuary and shipment to a final destination as directed by the next of kin for burial. Personal effects of the decedent are shipped to the legal recipient. The Concurrent Return Program may be phased into either the Current Death or Graves Registration Programs as the situation dictates.[4]

Responsibilities of Various Agencies

Several organizations have responsibility for managing, executing, or overseeing the Department of Defense/Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs. These programs are inter-related, yet most are not coordinated nor standardized.

The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) develops casualty assistance policy on recording, reporting, and notifying and helping the next of kin. The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) is responsible for providing policy guidance to the Military Services on casualty recording and reporting, and to act as the focal point for coordinating among the Military Services and other activities responsible for casualty reporting.[5] A Department of Defense Casualty Advisory Board meets semi-annually to discuss policy changes and joint problems. However, this Board, which includes members of the individual Services, is only an advisory body. Under guidance in DoDI 1300.18, each Service independently executes its casualty notification and assistance programs.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) participates in the Mortuary Affairs Program through his responsibility for developing policy for the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES). The Armed Forces Medical Examiner System policy affects the way autopsies are performed, which determines how quickly casualty remains are processed. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) is the Department of Defense center for research of and training for diagnosis and

identification of pathological disorders, and for education in the field of pathology. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Scientific Advisory Board monitors and reports on the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System through the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Director to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs).

The Washington Headquarters Services, a Federal Service Agency, maintains the Department of Defense Worldwide Casualty Reporting System, and prepares consolidated casualty information reports for the Department of Defense, Congress, the President, and other Federal agencies. This agency is responsible for providing technical guidance to the Military Services concerning the recording and reporting of individual casualty information, including the data specifications and methods for transmitting the information. The Washington Headquarters Services Directorate of Information Operations and Reports maintains official Department of Defense casualty information in a database called the Department of Defense Worldwide Casualty System. From this database the Washington Headquarters Services provides consolidated casualty information reports to the Department of Defense for use by the President and other agencies.

During periods of crisis, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff is responsible for providing the Washington Headquarters Services Directorate of Information Operations and Reports with a daily personnel status report indicating the number of military casualties. The Secretaries of the Military Departments are

responsible for the day to day execution and management of casualty issues and the release of accurate and timely information to the Washington Headquarters Services Directorate of Information Operations and Reports.

In March 1991, the Deputy Secretary of Defense designated the Secretary of the Army Executive Agent for the Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs Program. This realignment occurred because of concerns about the lack of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the Joint Mortuary Affairs Program during Operation Desert Storm. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs carries out the executive agent responsibilities for the Secretary of the Army.

The Joint Staff's responsibilities for mortuary affairs are outlined in Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Memorandum of Policy 16, SUBJECT: Joint Mortuary Affairs Policy (JCS MOP 16). JCS MOP 16 assigned the Chief of Staff, Army as Executive Agent for the Joint Mortuary Affairs Program, established peacetime and wartime functions of a Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office (CJMAO), outlined Unified Command responsibilities during contingency operations and peacetime mass-fatalities, delineated Air Force responsibilities for managing CONUS port-of-entry mortuary facilities, and defined roles and missions of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner when operating in a Unified Command area of responsibility. There is no corresponding Joint Policy on Casualty Assistance. However, Service responsibilities are more clearly defined for Casualty Assistance Programs than for

Mortuary Affairs Programs, which tend to be more oriented toward joint operations than Casualty Assistance Programs.

Current Joint Structure

The J1 Director for Manpower and Personnel is responsible for personnel and casualty related issues, and gathers operational data on casualty figures from the Military Services and reports those figures to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff and other agencies. The J4 Director for Logistics is responsible for mortuary related issues, and advises the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff on capabilities, resources, and shortfalls that would affect the ability of the Military Services to perform mortuary affairs responsibilities. The J4 also ensures that the Unified Command CINCs have a staff responsible for oversight of the mortuary affairs program in their area of responsibility by way of a Joint Mortuary Affairs Office.

In JCS Memorandum of Policy (MOP) 16 (Joint Mortuary Affairs Policy), the Chief of Staff of the Army was directed to establish a doctrine and training integration center for all Services. There is an organization in Training and Doctrine Command called the Mortuary Affairs Center that could function formally as the Joint Doctrine and Training Integration Center for the Department of Defense. Located at the U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School, Fort Lee, Virginia, mortuary affairs doctrine coordination and development, such as the recent change on handling of contaminated remains to multi-service publication

FM63-1/AFM143-1/FMFM4-8 (Handling of Deceased Personnel in Theaters of Operation) is already accomplished.

Mortuary Affairs Joint Doctrine has been informally coordinated and developed by the Mortuary Affairs Center. Joint Publication 4-06(draft) Doctrine for Joint Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for Mortuary Affairs in Joint Operations was recently published. Other Services' officers are provided Mortuary Affairs training. It would not take too great an effort to forge a coordination connection with the Casualty Assistance Program elements for significant improvement in the area of Joint doctrine and training.

Headquarters Department of the Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics was appointed as the centralized manager of mortuary supplies for all Services.[6] Each Service is required to provide an annual report on inventory status to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics. Current supply policy is left up to each Service to maintain sufficient stocks of forms, human remains pouches and other items needed for contingency operations.

The Unified Commands operate their programs using the JCS MOP 16. The Army Component Commander is usually designated Executive Agent for the Theater Mortuary Affairs Program. The US Commander in Chief, Transportation Command (USCINCTRANS), as the Department of Defense single transportation manager, provides all transportation to evacuate remains from overseas to port-of-entry mortuaries. The JCS MOP 16 is the only policy guidance that

addresses the Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs program as a complete entity. The JCS MOP 16 provides policies, procedures, and taskings for mortuary affairs support of the Unified and Specified Commands, and designates the Chief of Staff of the Army as the CJCS Executive Agent for the Joint Mortuary Affairs Program. Although the Army Deputy General Counsel (Personnel and Health Policy) subsequently concluded that it was inconsistent with the Goldwater-Nichols Act for the Chief of Staff of the Army to serve as the CJCS executive agent and issue guidance for a joint program, the Department of Defense continues to use the JCS MOP 16 because there is no other authoritative guidance for the Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs Program.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense appointed The Secretary of the Army as Department of Defense Executive Agent for Mortuary Affairs 15 March 1991.[7] The Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) chartered a Department of Defense Working Group and a senior-level inter-Service steering committee to develop policy and procedures for the Mortuary Affairs Program on 15 November 1991. The group convened 6 January 1992, adjourned 6 May 1992, and submitted a draft report to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) 1 October 1992. Based on the report recommendations, a draft Department of Defense Directive establishing Mortuary Affairs Policy was developed.

The JCS MOP 16 guidance requires that support to the Unified Commands be uniform among the Military Services, and that

commands structure their programs to smoothly transition from peacetime to contingency operations and war. A Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office (CJMAO) was to be established by the executive agent, and an interface with the Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner. Unified Commanders were to establish a Joint Mortuary Affairs Office (JMAO) to provide oversight of mortuary affairs support. Responsibilities of the JMAO include nearly all the oversight and coordination/integration issues covered in this paper.[8]

The Army established a Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office in September 1990 to promote uniform policies, procedures, plans, and records for the disposition of remains and personal effects for all Military Services. In peacetime, the Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office is supposed to meet twice a year. In time of war the Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office provides operational direction for Joint Mortuary Affairs to all Services. The Director, Casualty and Memorial Affairs Office is Chairman, with six Colonel/Navy Captain level representatives: Armed Forces Medical Examiner, JCS J4(LOG SVC), US Marine Corps(INSTL/LOG), US Air Force(DEHS), US Navy(OP4), and US Army(PERSCOM)[9]. The working group established by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) in November 1991 reviewed the structure and concept of the Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs Program, including the Central Joint Mortuary Affairs Office and Casualty Assistance Program. The draft Department of Defense Directive on Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs

Policy was staffed by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), establishing a Defense Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Agency under the then Assistant Secretary of the Army (Force Management and Personnel).This proposed organization would eliminate interpretation of laws and policies, standardize procedures, training, and automated systems, and establish oversight. The Military Services nonconcurred in the report recommendations. As a result of this delay, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) designated JCS MOP 16 as interim Department of Defense Mortuary Affairs Policy on 29 June 1992.[10] Until the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) completely develops a coordinated Department of Defense Joint Mortuary Affairs Program, the Military services continue to use their Service-specific programs.

Services' Program Execution

The individual Services' casualty and mortuary affairs programs are designed to accomplish the same basic requirements; first, notification and assistance to the next of kin, and second, interment of the remains. All Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs are structured for centralized management at the headquarters level and decentralized execution at the installation/unit level. This is where the similarities end. Various elements in the Services are involved in the programs, making coordination difficult at the Joint level. Personnel and medical staffs are involved in the casualty

notification and assistance program, and the logistics and medical staffs operate the mortuary affairs program. Furthermore, the degree of involvement of each staff activity varies among the Services and changes depending on the numbers of casualties and degree of conflict.

The Army and Marine Corps manage their casualty and mortuary programs from single offices on their Service personnel staffs. The Air Force manages its programs from two separate headquarters offices. The Air Force Military Personnel Center is responsible for the Air Force casualty program, but its Morale, Welfare, Recreation and Services Agency is responsible for its mortuary program. In the Navy program management is split three ways. The casualty program is managed by the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and the mortuary program is managed by the Bureau of Naval Medicine and Surgery in peacetime and by the logistics community in wartime.

All Services except the Air Force execute the casualty and mortuary affairs programs through intermediate offices. The Army uses 45 Casualty Area Commands, the Marine Corps through its eight district headquarters, and the Navy through offices managed by Regional Coordinators for the Casualty Assistance Calls/Funeral Honors Support Program. The Air Force assigns responsibilities to local installations based on zip codes.

The Military Services' programs as structured work, but the system is inefficient in support of joint operations. The lines

of authority and responsibility among the staff elements are not clearly defined, they create confusion, and they hamper a time sensitive process.

Issues and Recommendations

Establish a Defense Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Agency.

The Department of Defense Working Group and the Systems Research and Application Corporation's Report both recommend the development of a common Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Program.[11] There is no common program sponsor, nor is there an active oversight of programs at any level. The Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) has policy responsibility for the Casualty Assistance Program and the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), designated executive agent, has policy responsibility for the Mortuary Affairs Program.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense is not actively overseeing the Department of Defense Casualty Assistance Program and the Mortuary Affairs Program. Although the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) is responsible for policy and oversight of the Department of Defense Casualty Assistance Program, responsibility for oversight for the Mortuary Affairs Program has not yet been determined.

A Department of Defense Directive for Mortuary Affairs has been in development for more than a year. Staffing of a revised

draft has been held in abeyance until the recommendations of the Department of Defense Inspector General Report, the draft Department of Defense Working Group Report, and the Systems Research and Applications Corporation's Report for the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) are considered.

A decision must be made on the possible consolidation of the Services' Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs into a single Defense Agency. Next of kin benefits differ among the Services, causing confusion and hurt feelings. Different quality and type of caskets, flags encased in shadow boxes for some and not others, and varying monetary assistance sets the stage for servicemember's families to question just how caring one Service is over another.

Develop a Department of Defense/Joint Automated information system.

There is no single staff element in the Office of the Secretary of Defense responsible for integrating the three programs (Casualty Assistance, Mortuary Affairs, and the medical support systems)and clarifying the multitude of laws and regulations under which the programs are implemented. A recent reorganization placing the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) under the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) will place responsibility for oversight of two of the three (Casualty and Medical) systems in one office. Creation of a Defense Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Agency under the

Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) could complete the consolidation. The scope of the recent semi-annual meeting of the Defense Casualty Advisory Board was expanded to include mortuary affairs issues. This is also a positive step towards consolidation.

There is a lack of integration among the Department of Defense casualty, mortuary, and medical systems. There is no smooth transition from peacetime procedures to contingency or wartime procedures. Interfaces among the Department of Defense medical, casualty, and mortuary systems are weak and are not conducive to keeping the next of kin abreast of the status and location of the casualty.[12] The Military Services' casualty assistance and mortuary affairs processes are hampered by poor record keeping, lack of standardization and inadequate training of casualty assistance officers. The designation of the Army's Mortuary Affairs Center at Fort Lee, Virginia as the joint doctrine and training integration center would help standardization. The Air Force Automated Mass Fatality Information System does provide vital information at port-of-entry mortuaries, but there is no interface with other Service personnel or mortuary program systems, or the transportation system. The Theater/Area of Responsibility Mass Fatality Field Information System operates from unit through the Theater Army Area Command's Theater Mortuary Evacuation Point back to the port-of-entry mortuary. It does not directly interface with the Air Force Automated Mass Fatality Information System. The

Headquarters Service Components use the Automated Casualty Information Program, which does not directly interface with either the port-of-entry or the theater information management systems.

Ongoing efforts to improve the automated systems are moving forward independently by the Military Services. The Army has a $1.1 million contract to automate its casualty and mortuary affairs operations center. The Air Force also has programs in process.

In response to a Joint Staff request to determine the total Military Service casualty reporting and tracking requirements, the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) is developing a concept for a Corporate Information Management initiative to develop an automated system to track deployed personnel. However, the requirements of the mortuary process are not addressed.

During Operations Desert Shield/Storm, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) chose to get casualty information directly from the Military Service Public Affairs Offices rather than from the Department of Defense Worldwide Casualty System database maintained by the Washington Headquarters Services because the information in the database was not current.[13] The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) was looking for a single Department of Defense source of information, sufficiently automated to meet the peacetime and wartime needs of the Department.

Lessons learned from recent mass fatality incidents and contingency operations repeatedly show the need for an accurate, timely automated interface between the processes and the players. The inability of these players to exchange information delays the timely processing of disposition of remains to the next of kin. The Department of Defense Inspector General Report, the draft Joint Working Group Report, and the Systems Research and Application Corporation's Report all recommend the development of a common casualty and mortuary management information system.

The implementation of this recommendation would provide the most significant improvement in the ability to coordinate, communicate, and standardize casualty and mortuary affairs programs among the Services, the Unified Commands, and the Department of Defense. The development of this system would also provide the most significant help to the CINC or Joint Task Force Commander in their Area of Responsibility.

Two remaining issues, although not as significant as the problems stated so far, affect the CINC/Joint Task Force Commander's ability to effectively oversee casualty assistance and mortuary affairs programs when required. These issues are the continued use of overseas mortuaries and authorization, justification, and conduct of autopsies in the Mortuary Affairs process.

Revise Joint Doctrine and planning for the use of overseas mortuaries.

Thirteen overseas mortuaries support the Unified Commands,

Military Services, Defense Agencies, and other Government agencies, providing mortuary services in peacetime and during all levels of conflict to active and retired service members, dependents, Department of Defense and other Government civilians, and authorized local nationals.* According to the Department of Defense Inspector General Report on Defense Casualty and Mortuary Affairs, Department of Defense mortuaries outside the Continental United States are not located in CINCs' geographic areas where future operational requirements are anticipated.[14]

The overseas mortuaries are located to provide the CINCs with the capability to process remains in theater and then back to CONUS in a timely manner. However, these overseas mortuaries were not used in recent contingency operations, and their locations and continued existence remains questionable given the change in doctrine and most likely future operational requirements.

The terrorist bombing of a U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon in October 1983 was the first mass casualty operation since the Vietnam War. The remains of 241 Marines were airlifted to the Frankfurt Mortuary, where the remains were identified, processed, and shipped to the port-of-entry mortuary at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. This process took 17 days to complete. The After Action Report indicated that the Frankfurt

---

* Current mortuary locations:
ARMY- Hickham AFB,HI;Panama;Frankfurt,GE;Yongsan,KO;Vicenza, IT.
NAVY- Guam; Naples,IT; Guantanamo Bay,Cuba.
Air Force- Lakenheath,England; Incirlik,Turkey; Yokota,JA; Okinawa,JA; CONUS Port of entry- Dover AFB,DE; Travis AFB,CA

Mortuary was too small, could not be expanded rapidly, and was too isolated, so receipt of FBI fingerprint data and medical and dental records from the U.S. was very slow.[15]

The first contingency operation to use a port-of-entry mortuary directly was Operation Urgent Fury, where 18 soldiers died in seizing the island of Grenada in October 1983. Unit personnel recovered the remains and simultaneously evacuated them to Dover Air Force Base for processing. Graves Registration personnel did not get into Grenada until well into the third day of the operation. The Combatant commander allocated priority to more fighters so they did not load onto aircraft even though they were at the "green ramp" at Pope Air Force Base. The After Action Report indicated that identification was hampered by slow receipt of medical and dental records, but the operation was otherwise noteworthy.[16]

An Iraqi airplane attacked the USS Stark, a Naval Frigate on 17 May 1987, resulting in the loss of 37 sailors' lives. The U.S. Army Mortuary at Frankfurt, Germany processed the remains and shipped them to Dover Air Force Base for final processing. The problems encountered during this operation were identical to the lessons learned from the Beirut bombing.[17]

In December 1989, during Operation Just Cause, the remains of soldiers killed in action were evacuated directly to the port-of-entry mortuary at Dover Air Force Base, although there was an Army Mortuary in Panama.[18]

During Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, service members' remains were evacuated directly to the Dover Air Force Base port-of-entry mortuary for processing. After a few start-up problems, the operation went smoothly.[19]

Most recently, Mortuary Affairs support in Somalia was provided by the 54th Quartermaster Company from the 240th Quartermaster Battalion out of Fort Lee, Virginia, through a Theater Mortuary Evacuation Point (TMEP) at Mogadishu airport for shipment to the port-of-entry mortuary facility at Dover Air Force Base.[20]

A quick analysis of recent mass casualty/contingency operations suggests that the current trend in Department of Defense/Joint operations is to use the Concurrent Return Program to evacuate remains directly and expeditiously from the location of death to a port-of-entry mortuary for processing. The procedure of sending casualties directly to CONUS port-of-entry mortuaries has been successful during recent contingency operations, and permanent mortuary facilities overseas have limited capabilities.

Unified Commanders contingency and wartime requirements would be better served by a more flexible mortuary capability that can respond to various levels of conflict in different geographical areas. The capability provided by the unit at Fort Lee, Virginia provides that flexibility, and should be strengthened to fully support a concurrent return of remains policy for future contingency operations.

The Armed Forces Medical Examiner System plays a critical role in support of the mortuary affairs program through the identification of remains and the conduct of autopsies. The Armed Forces Institute of Pathology is soon to develop a Department of Defense DNA database, which will improve the accuracy and timeliness of remains identification.

Strengthen the criteria for determining the authorization for autopsies.

The Department of Defense has conflicting and unclear guidance regarding autopsies. This guidance should also establish a 24-hour time limit as Department of Defense policy. In the Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1986 (Section 654, November 8, 1985) Congress directed the Secretary of Defense to conduct a study of medical casualty investigations with the intent of creating an objective, uniform system for the investigation of military deaths. The study was to include consideration of 1, the need for standards and uniform policies for autopsies; 2, the need for standards for independent review of autopsies; 3, the appropriate role of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP); and 4, the desirability of establishing an independent board of medical examiners in the Department of Defense.[21] Congressional concerns in the 1986 Authorization Act have not yet been addressed.

The Department of Defense created the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System[22] as a result of the 1986 Authorization Act wording, but has not forwarded the results of the requested study

back to Congress. Joint Medical Examiner System Regulation AR40-57/Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Instr.5360.26/AFR 160-99 dated January 1991 implemented The Department of Defense Directive creating the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System, but the authority to conduct autopsies is vague, and according to a recent Department of Defense Inspector General Report, the Military Services' medical regulations do not reflect current Department of Defense policy as it addresses the role of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner.[33] As a result, different autopsy authorization policies can delay the return of remains to the next of kin, because the Military Services provide support to each other in different geographical areas of the world. Furthermore, vague and open to interpretation wording of autopsy criteria can result in unnecessary autopsies being performed with no justification criteria.

All these responsibilities can affect the Joint Force Commander's ability to provide prompt notification to the next of kin and disposition of remains as soon as possible. Although not specifically chartered to do so, over time the Armed Forces Medical Examiner has assumed the role of remains identification, while the Military Services have reverted to a supporting role. Given the continued trend to use port-of-entry mortuaries for operations, the Armed Force Medical Examiner should be designated the primary identification agency.

Port-of-entry mortuaries is where positive identification of remains is currently accomplished, as FBI and medical/dental

records are easiest accessed in CONUS. Only "believed to be" tentative identification is accomplished in the CINC's area of responsibility (AOR). Therefore there is a reluctance by mortuary services to integrate their information with casualty assistance information processing in the AOR. This potential for the embarrassment by erroneous identification of remains and notification of next of kin must be considered in the development of a Joint Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Information Management System.

Summary

Future Vision is required for the Joint Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Programs just as it is for the Armed Forces as a whole. I believe there are three tenets for the future vision of these programs:

1) Proper and caring treatment of Service members and next of kin. The welfare of the next of kin must be a primary consideration for any organizational or doctrinal changes. Care must be taken to ensure this requirement is not sacrificed in the name of efficiency or lack of resources.

2) Capability to effectively plan for and efficiently conduct joint operations. Continued emphasis on joint operations increases the likelihood that future conflicts will produce multi-service casualties. This requires increased coordination and cooperation, which must be adequately planned.

3) Capability to expand rapidly for contingencies, and to handle mass casualty incidents. Casualty Assistance and Mortuary

Affairs Systems and organizations must have the capability to ramp up rapidly in anticipation of rapid deployment of Joint combat forces anywhere in the world.

The issues and recommendations discussed in this paper, if continued to be addressed by Department of Defense and the Joint Staff leadership and concrete progress made toward solutions, support these tenets. We cannot afford to repeat history in the case of Joint Casualty Assistance and Mortuary Affairs Programs: repeated lessons learned, repeated studies, and repeated advisory meetings coupled with a quickly lost interest and visibility of the problems are a waste of time and resources that we can ill afford in today's Defense Organization.

ENDNOTES

1. Assistant Inspector General for Inspections Katherine A. Brittin, U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, "Final Report on the Inspection of Defense Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Programs," (Arlington, Virginia: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 December 1993), i.

2. Department of Defense, Military Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies and Procedures, Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.18 (Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 27 December 1991), 9.

3. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Mortuary Affairs Policy, CJCS Memorandum of Policy Number 16 (JCS MOP 16), (Washington:Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 31 May 1990), 1.

4. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Mortuary Affairs in Joint Operations, Initial Draft of Joint Publication 4-06 (Washington: Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, November 1993), I-2.

5. Department of Defense, Military Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies and Procedures, Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.18 (Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 27 December 1991), 3.

6. JCS MOP 16, I-7.

7. Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Donald J. Atwood, "Executive Agent for Mortuary Affairs," Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Washington, 15 March 1991.

8. Joint Publication 4-06, III-13.

9. JCS MOP 16, 2.

10. Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) William D. Clark, "Interim Policy For Department of Defense for Mortuary Affairs," Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others, Washington: Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, 19 October 1992.

11. Lee Austin, Stuart Davis, and Janet Thompson, Corporate Information Management (CIM) Economic Analysis of Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Organizational Alternatives, Final Report, prepared for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Requirements and Resources Director,

Information Management (Arlington: Systems Research and Applications Corporation, 13 August 1993).

12. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, iii.

13. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, 125.

14. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, i.

15. "After Action Report and Summary of Lessons Learned", Beirut, Lebanon, Mass Casualty Operation, Headquarters, 21st Support Command (30 Dec 1983), 8.

16. Mabelle G. Sunnenschein and Donya B. Rose, Graves Registration and Mortuary Affairs: An Overview and Recommendations (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1985), 14-15.

17. LTC Lawrence Gomez, "Mass Casualty Operations: Graves Registration in Peacetime," Quartermaster Professional Bulletin, (Sep 1988), 16-17.

18. LTC Thomas O. Rexrode, Personal Interview, U.S. Army Mortuary Affairs Center, U.S. Army Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Virginia, 5 April 1994.

19. Ibid.

20. LT David B. Roath and SFC Frank Napoleon, "Mortuary Affairs Support in Somalia", Quartermaster Professional Bulletin, (Autumn 1993), p.20.

21. The Department of Defense Authorization Act of 1986 (November 8, 1985).

22. Department of Defense, Armed Forces Medical Examiner System, U.S. Department of Defense Directive 6010.16 (Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 8 March 1988).

23. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, 44.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"After Action Report and Summary of Lessons Learned", Beirut, Lebanon, Mass Casualty Operation, Headuarters, 21st Support Command, 30 Dec 1983.

Atwood, Donald J., Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. "Executive Agent for Mortuary Affairs." Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments. Washington, 15 March 1991.

Austin, Lee, Stuart Davis and Janet Thompson. Corporate Information Management (CIM) Economic Analysis of Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Organizational Alternatives, Final Report, prepared for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Requirements and Resources Director, Information Management. Arlington: Systems Research and Applications Corporation, 13 August 1993.

Brittin, Katherine A., Assistant Inspector General for Inspections. U.S. Department of Defense Inspector General Report, "Final Report on the Inspection of Defense Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Programs," Arlington, Virginia: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 December 1993.

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Joint Mortuary Affairs Policy, CJCS Memorandum of Policy Number 16 (MOP 16). Washington: Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 31 May 1990.

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Doctrine for Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Mortuary Affairs in Joint Operations. Initial Draft of Joint Publication 4-06. Washington: Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, November 1993.

Chavez, Juan I. "Casualty Reporting and Assistance Programs in the Military Services: Is There a Need for Joint Casualty Operations?" Defense Technical Information Center Report AD-A180-301. U.S. Army War College, 23 March 1987.

Clark, William D., Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). "Interim Policy For Department of Defense for Mortuary Affairs", Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and others. Washington: Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, 19 October 1992.

Eaton, Maureen, Phone Interview, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Requirements and Resources Director, Information Management. "Draft Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Recommendations on Organization." Washington, D.C., 4 April 1994.

Gomez, LTC Lawrence J. "Mass Casualty Operations: Graves Registration in Peacetime," Quartermaster Professional Bulletin (Sep 1988).

Rexrode, LTC Thomas O. Personal Interview, U.S. Army Mortuary Affairs Center, U.S. Army Quartermaster School, Fort Lee, Virginia, 5 April 1994.

Roath, LT David B., and SFC Frank Napoleon. "Mortuary Affairs Support in Somalia." Quartermaster Professional Bulletin, (Autumn 1993).

Sunnenschein, Mabelle G. and Donya B.Rose. Graves Registration and Mortuary Affairs: An Overview and Recommendations. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1985.

U.S. Department of the Air Force. Graves Registration and Mortuary Affairs. Air Force Regulation 143-1. Washington: U.S. Department of the Air Force, 31 March 1988.

U.S. Department of the Army. Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs and Line of Duty Investigations. Army Regulation 600-8-1. Washington: U.S. Department of the Army, 18 September 1986.

U.S. Departments of the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps. Handling of Deceased Personnel in Theaters of Operations. FM 10-63/AFM 143-3/FMFM 4-8. Washington: U.S. Department of the Army, 28 February 1986.

U.S. Department of Defense. Armed Forces Medical Examiner System. U.S. Department of Defense Directive 6010.16. Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 8 March 1988.

U.S. Department of Defense. Military Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies and Procedures. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1300.18. Washington: U.S. Department of Defense, 27 December 1991.

U.S. Department of the Navy. Decedent Affairs Manual. Naval Medical Command Instruction 5360.1. Washington: U.S. Department of the Navy, 17 September 1987.