



# Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

## Chronology of Personnel Accounting Progress in China

### As of May 7, 2012

#### Chronology

- **1996:** People's Republic of China (PRC) President Jiang Zemin initiated discussion of POW/MIA cooperation with President Clinton at the APEC Summit in Manila.
- **1999:** In May, DASD (POW/MPA) Jones met with his MFA counterpart, Chen Mingming, who indicated a willingness to investigate clear and specific information on Korean War cases, but stressed that Korean War archives belong to the PLA and remain classified.
- **2000:**
  - January: DPMO presented over 40 Korean War cases to the Chinese for investigation. The MFA agreed to support an oral history program (OHP), allowing DPMO to interview Chinese Korean War veterans involved in POW camp operations. The OHP began in Beijing with interviews of four Chinese veterans in September 2000.
  - July: During his visit to Beijing, Secretary of Defense Cohen highlighted the importance of increased cooperation on Korean War accounting.
- **2001:** In January, six American Korean War veterans met with Chinese veterans in Beijing. This initiative was put on hold to establish U.S. – PRC academic exchanges focused on the Korean War and to pursue avenues for open-source archival research
- **2002:**
  - March: During President Bush's visit to China, Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly mentioned a Cold War C-47 case in Jilin Province to the Deputy Director of North American Affairs, MFA, who was aware of the case and acknowledged our interest.
  - May: A DPMO and Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii (CILHI) team met with the MFA in Beijing to negotiate support agreements for two WWII-era crash site recoveries in Tibet and to discuss other POW/MIA issues. The MFA agreed to support operations at both sites in Tibet and a survey of the Cold War C-47 crash site.
  - July: A CILHI team and a DPMO analyst surveyed the C-47 crash site in Jilin Province, finding aircraft wreckage. Another team recovered four remains from a WWII C-46 crash site in Tibet. JPAC identified the remains in 2005. CILHI also investigated a second Tibet WWII C-46 crash site.
- **2003:**
  - March: DASD (POW/MPA) Jennings visited China and met with MFA, MND, and Red Cross Society of China representatives to improve personnel accounting cooperation.
  - April – July: The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) pandemic prevented operations in China.

- October: A DPMO and Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) team met with the MFA in Beijing to discuss operations in 2004, which included two recovery operations and a site survey.
- **2004:**
  - February: DPMO and JPAC representatives met with Chinese government officials in Beijing to discuss operational and logistical requirements for operations in 2004.
  - May – June: JPAC excavated a Korean War F-86 crash site near the city of Dandong in Liaoning Province, recovering and identifying the remains of Air Force Captain Troy G. Cope, shot down in aerial combat on September 16, 1952.
  - June: JPAC excavated a Cold War C-47 crash site in Jilin Province and recovering aircraft wreckage and remains identified as R.C. Snoddy, the pilot.
  - August – September: JPAC investigated a WWII C-46 crash site in Tibet and recovered personal effects and aircraft wreckage, but no human remains. Three crewmembers are unaccounted-for from this aircraft loss
  - November: DPMO and JPAC representatives met with Chinese government officials in Beijing to discuss proposals for field operations in China during 2005.
- **2005:**
  - February: DASD (POW/MPA) Jennings traveled to China to press his counterparts for information from military archives relating to the PLA's administration of prisoner of war camps during the Korean War. The Chinese agreed to permit investigation of two WWII cases in Hunan and Shanxi Provinces, and later agreed to the investigation of two more WWII crash sites in Guangxi Province.
  - May – June: JPAC investigated three WWII sites in Shanxi and Guangxi Provinces and excavated a gravesite in Hunan Province. The gravesite contained remains identified as Robert H. Upchurch, a WW II P-40 pilot.
  - October: Accompanied by ASD for International Security Affairs, Peter Rodman, and the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense, Asian and Pacific Affairs, Richard Lawless, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld pressed Ministry of Defense officials for U.S. access to information in military archives. Secretary Rumsfeld also pressed for information on a 1956 loss off the Zhoushan Archipelago. During a December visit the Chinese reported to DUSD Lawless, they had no additional information on this case.
  - December: A DPMO team met with Chinese officials in Beijing to discuss operations in China during 2006, accessing information in China's military archives related to the PLA's administration of prisoner of war camps during the Korean War, and a possible veteran's exchange visit. Chinese officials expressed cautious optimism regarding archive access and received a written request for specific information we would believe exists in the military archives. The Chinese approved only one site for investigation in 2006.

- **2006:**

- July: During a meeting with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, China's highest-ranking military General committed to provide active assistance to our efforts to account for missing Americans and search for documents in China's military archives.
- September: A joint DPMO/JPAC team met with Chinese MND, PLA, and MFA officials. They discussed efforts to access to China's military archives and investigated one of the six sites proposed in December 2005. The MND proposed working with our archivists to develop a program that will result in locating materials related to unaccounted-for Americans. The site survey of a Korean War site (see map below) appears promising to support an investigation and recovery operation, possibly in summer 2007.
- December: DUSD Lawless (APSA) hosted the Director, MND Foreign Affairs Office, North America Directorate, for policy coordination talks. During the meetings, they discussed the POW/MIA mission and our interest in China's military archives. The Chinese representative said China was interested in providing as much assistance as possible for the POW/MIA mission and military archivists ready to meet with DPMO to discuss the archives issue.

- **2007:**

- January 30-31: DPMO and JPAC met with Chinese MND and MFA officials in Beijing to discuss personnel accounting initiatives for 2007. The MND reiterated its commitment to assist the U.S. in the accounting mission and reported it is searching for, locating, and organizing POW/MIA related information in its archives. JPAC presented 15 cases to the Chinese for recovery, investigation, and research.
- March 3: China's MFA approved one case for a recovery operation from August through September 2007. This case involves three aircrew members lost during the Korean War. The MFA stated the other cases presented in January 2007 remain under consideration. The MFA indicated that they would not provide a final answer on the other cases until after mid-May, following analysis of feedback from the provincial foreign affairs offices. Operations and logistics requirement talks were scheduled for July 10, 2007 in Beijing.
- May 9 -15, 2007: A delegation of PLA archivists visited JPAC, DPMO, and the National Archives and Records Administration to study the personnel accounting mission and archives management procedures. The PLA delegation presented a draft arrangement to formalize archival cooperation between the Department of Defense and the PLA. We are reviewing the proposal.
- July 2007: China's MFA informed the Department that they are unable to sponsor JPAC operations during 2007 due to numerous other commitments and delegations from the U.S. The MND also postponed until October a planned visit to Beijing by the DASD (POW/MPA).
- November 2007: JPAC operational logistics talks cancelled due to MFA lack of response to proposed 12-13 November dates.
- Secretary of Defense Gates held talks with the Chinese Defense Minister, Cao Gangchuan. The Defense Minister pledged "closer cooperation on military archives to resolve the fate of U.S. troops missing from the 1950-53 Korean War."
- 15 Nov. China's MFA again approved the Korean War case involving three aircrew members for investigation and recovery in 2008. The MFA requested additional information on the other

Korean War cases submitted by JPAC, and provided feedback on the preliminary research they conducted on the other cases.

- **2008**

- January 30: The Commander JPAC discussed with China’s MFA logistical requirements for the approved recovery operation and potential investigations during summer 2008, requested additional information on several cases, and presented cases for potential operations in 2009. China’s MFA authorized JPAC to conduct operations at two of the requested sites. (Korean War and WWII)
- February 29: DASD(POW/MPA) Ray and Major General Qian of China’s Ministry of National Defense signed a “Memorandum Of Arrangement Between The Department Of Defense, The United States Of America And The Ministry Of National Defense, The People's Republic Of China To Establish And Develop Military Archives Cooperation Activities To Search For Information Relating To U.S. Military Personnel Missing In Action Before, During, And After The Korean War” to formalize archival cooperation between the Department of Defense and the PLA. According to the arrangement, Chinese archivists will review military holdings for information related to American missing before, during, and after the Korean War, and provide relevant information to DPMO. The Chinese also will seek out and interview surviving Korea War veterans who may have knowledge about missing American servicemen.
- April 7: Chin’s MFA provided a response to the cases presented by JPAC in JAN 2008. The MFA requested the USG “close” MACR 10124, MACR 16259, MACR 16263, and REFNO 0800.
- April 7: USDAO presented an invitation to China’s MFA to visit JPAC and DPMO to better understand the complexities of the personnel accounting mission.
- April 18: USDAO presented to China’s MND a draft technical arrangement to implement the archival cooperation arrangement signed in Shanghai in February 2008.
- April 24: DPMO Director for Policy and Senior Colonel Liu Ying of the PLA Archives Department signed a “Memorandum Of Arrangement Between The Department Of Defense Prisoner Of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) And The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Archives Department,” a technical arrangement to implement the umbrella document signed in February 2008.
- May 21, 2008: JPAC postponed the remains recovery operation in Dandong because a financial arrangement could not be successfully negotiated with the Chinese government in time to conduct the operation in June 2008. Talks will resume after the summer Olympics in an effort to complete the arrangement and reschedule the JPAC operation in FY09.

- **2009**

- January 2009: JPAC discussed conditions for a proposed recovery operation in Dandong, but the two sides could not reach a mutually acceptable arrangement, and JPAC postponed the recovery operation.

- April 2009: Former DASD Charles A. Ray and JPAC Commander, RADM Donna Crisp, toured the PLA archives. Discussions included six cases of missing Americans proposed by the U.S. side for investigation and/or recovery and one case raised by Chinese archivists. The delegation also traveled to Liaoning Province to discuss the proposed Dandong recovery operation, but the two sides were again unable to reach a mutually acceptable financial arrangement.
- August 2009: A JPAC investigative team investigated two World War II sites. Both sites were included among the proposed cases for 2010 and 2011.
- September 2009: PLA archivists visiting DPMO reported on their efforts to date, asserting they had screened approximately 200,000 pages of documents representing about 10% of available material.
- October 2009: General Xu Caihou presented documents and an artifact from a Korean War crash site in Guangdong Province to Secretary of Defense Gates.

- **2010**

- April 2010: JPAC-DPMO team investigated the Guangdong crash site but was unable to pinpoint the crash site. Also in April, the U.S. presented Chinese officials with proposals to research, investigate or recover 19 cases in 2010 and 2011.
- July - August 2010: a JPAC investigation team located the crash site in Guangdong Province.
- September 2010: The PLA provided a written report of the results of its past year's archival research and field investigation. The report contained new information on five Korean War air losses that crashed in China and one in North Korea, in two cases identifying the location of potential gravesites.
- November 2010: JPAC held operational talks with Chinese officials to discuss recovering the Korean War crash site in Guangdong Province.

- **2011**

- February-March 2011: JPAC began the first of two planned excavations at the Guangdong Province crash site, discovering wreckage but no human remains. During this operation, JPAC and DPMO leadership visited the excavation site and then traveled to Shenyang to continue discussions on excavation of gravesites in Dandong. Issues related to land compensation continued unresolved, but both sides were hopeful follow-on discussions would end in an agreement.
- April 2011: PLA archivists visited Washington, DC, for discussions on renewing the original technical arrangement that forms the basis for cooperation on military archives. DPMO and PLA staff agreed to meet in fall 2011 to sign the new version, at which time the PLA's annual report of its progress would also be due.
- September 2011: JPAC received approval from the PRC government to conduct a second planned recovery operation at the Guangdong province crash site. In September, the PLA provided a written report of the results of its past year's archival research and field investigation efforts. DPMO and JPAC analysts are now in the process of reviewing the report.
- October-December 2011: The Guangdong recovery operation of a November 1950 Navy PBM-5 aircraft crash site and crew of 12 began in October and continued until December 10, 2011. It

built on work begun during the first operation earlier in the year. Unfortunately, JPAC recovered no human remains during this operation, but did recover aircraft debris.

- **2012**

- March 2012: JPAC conducted technical talks with the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The JPAC Commander lead a small JPAC delegation for discussions with the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs the meeting addressed proposed operations for FY2012 and FY 2013. The MFA approved an investigative mission on two WW II related aircraft crash sites in Shanxi province. Also, JPAC presented a request to send a recovery team to excavate a RB-29 crash site in Dandong if the land compensation issue can be resolved.

Cases Presented to the Government of Chinese

March 2012



RB-29  
Recovery (3)

B-29  
Investigate (10)

C-109  
Investigate (5)

World War II

Korean War

Cold War

Vietnam War

Numbers in parenthesis reflect the number of individuals missing in the incident.