



Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

Progress in Laos as of August 1, 2012

Current Status of Unaccounted-for Americans Lost in the Vietnam War

	<u>Vietnam</u>	<u>Laos</u>	<u>Cambodia</u>	<u>China</u>	<u>Total</u>
Original Missing	1,971	575	90	10	2,646
Repatriated and Identified	<u>689</u>	<u>258</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>985¹</u>
Remaining Missing	1,282	317	55	7	1,661

Of the remaining 317 Americans still unaccounted for in Laos, 26 are in a “no further pursuit” category. This means that as a result of rigorous investigation, we have conclusive evidence the individual perished, but do not believe it possible to recover his remains. On rare occasions, new leads can arise that bring a case back to a more active status.

Repatriating and Identifying Remains

- The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) has in the past conducted five Joint Field Activities (JFAs) per fiscal year in Laos. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2013, JPAC will conduct four JFAs per fiscal year to make better use of resources and capitalize on periods of favorable weather. Each JFA involves up to 53 U.S. personnel plus their Lao counterparts. Together, they will work on investigations and excavations throughout the country for a period of approximately 40 days.
- American remains are transferred to JPAC’s Central Identification Lab in Hawaii for identification by forensic anthropologists.
- The 125th JFA began June 28 and continued through July 31, 2012. Recovery teams excavated sites in Xekong Province.
- The 126th JFA is scheduled to begin October 17 and continue through November 30, 2012. Recovery teams are scheduled to excavate sites in Xekong Province.

Resolving “Last Known Alive” Cases

- Of the original 81 individuals “Last Known Alive” in Laos (those who survived or may have survived their loss incident and were either alive on the ground, in captivity, or in immediate proximity to capture, but did not return), DoD has confirmed the death of 62, with 19 still unresolved.
- Of the 62 whose deaths have been confirmed, the remains of 20 have been located and identified.
- U.S. and Vietnam technical experts met again in Hanoi in January to discuss Last Known Alive cases in areas of Laos controlled by Vietnamese forces during the war.

Research and Investigations

- The U.S. completed an archival research arrangement with the Lao in 2007. The initiative, begun in June 2004, involved a jointly planned comprehensive effort to locate documents in Lao archives that could contain information regarding Americans missing in Laos during the war. The program did not uncover any information.
- The Lao have allowed approximately 80 Vietnamese witnesses to participate in investigating 50 cases in trilateral operations during JFAs in Laos. These witnesses have provided significant information on cases that has led to the excavation of several sites and recoveries associated with as many as 20 individuals.
- The Lao allowed a Joint Archival Research Team (ART) access to the Lao National Film Archives and Video Center from 1994 - 1999. The ART reviewed over 18,000 photographs, with eight depicting U.S. POWs and nine depicting U.S. aircraft wreckage.

¹This number now includes the 63 Americans who were returned and/or identified from 1973 – 1975.