



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIRMEN MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of two U.S. servicemen, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

Air Force Lt. Col. Charles M. Walling, 27, of Phoenix, and Maj. Aado Kommendant, 25, of Lakewood, N.J., will be buried as a group at Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington, D.C. , on Aug. 8 – the 46th anniversary of the crash that took their lives. Walling was individually buried on June 15, at Arlington National Cemetery.

On Aug. 8, 1966, Walling and Kommendant were the crew of an F-4C aircraft that crashed while on a close air support mission over Song Be Province, Vietnam. Other Americans in the area reported seeing the aircraft crash and no parachutes were deployed. Search and rescue efforts were not successful in the days following the crash.

In 1992, a joint U.S./Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) team investigated the crash site and interviewed a local Vietnamese citizen who had recovered aircraft pieces from the site. In 1994, a joint U.S./S.R.V. team excavated the site and recovered a metal identification tag, bearing Walling's name, and other military equipment. In 2010, the site was excavated again, and human remains and additional evidence were recovered.

Scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used circumstantial and material evidence, along with forensic identification tools including mitochondrial DNA in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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