



News Release

**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIRMAN MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, were identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Air Force 1st Lt. Robert E. Bennett III, 25, of Springfield, N.J., will be buried on July 7, in Montrose, Colo. On Dec. 13, 1967, Bennett and another officer were flying an F-4C Phantom II aircraft that crashed during a close-air support mission in Tra Vinh Binh Province, South Vietnam. Both men ejected and were seen landing in the Co Chien River. The other officer was rescued immediately by a nearby U.S. Navy patrol boat. Before he could be reached, Bennett sank into the water and presumably drowned.

In 2010, a Vietnamese citizen reported to authorities that he discovered human remains and military equipment while dredging sand from the Tien River. The remains, found approximately 2,000 meters from Bennett's last-known location, were turned over to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC).

Scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including mitochondrial DNA – which matched a hair sample found in Bennett's military medical record – in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, call (703) 699-1420 or visit the DPMO website at www.dtic.mil/dpmo.

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