

POW/MIA Report for 3 June 2025

A team from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), with support from the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, conducted an investigation mission in Morotai, Indonesia, to search for Americans still unaccounted for from World War II.

The mission is part of DPAA's global effort to locate and identify the remains of missing U.S. service members and civilians. In Morotai, the team is examining historical evidence, conducting field surveys, and engaging with residents to identify potential recovery sites.

Morotai played a strategic role during the Pacific campaign in World War II, serving as a major base for Allied forces beginning in 1944. Decades later, it remains a significant location in the search for U.S. personnel who never returned home.

As part of the ongoing partnership between the United States and Indonesia, the joint investigation team interviewed 25 individuals, conducted more than 10 archaeological surveys and gathered valuable information that may help locate missing American service members from World War II.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency began initial site operations in France for Airmen lost during D-Day operations on April 7, 2025.

The following day, members of the 928th Contracting Battalion, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, and a French contractor visited a DPAA recovery mission site in France.

The contracting unit's U.S. Army Maj. Gillian Haddox, contracting detachment commander, Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Walker, contracting officer, and Sgt. 1st Class Shalynn Evans, contract specialist, and the local contractor witnessed firsthand DPAA mission operations and the fulfillment of contracting details.

DPAA often collaborates with partner organizations, such as the 928th Contracting Battalion, who are familiar with the area and the local contractors. The 928th Contracting Battalion augments their mission partners and during their partnership with DPAA, have focused on writing contracts for DPAA and providing logistical support while out on mission, such as tools and other materials for site infrastructure.

"Our job is to augment our mission partners and help make their mission work. We're contracting the logistical conditions to help DPAA personnel with their recovery mission," said Walker. "Some examples of what we do are setting up tents for personnel, contracting for excavators, latrines, cleaning stations, and ensuring security

around the site. Once DPAA tells us what they need to be successful, we go out, take that requirement, and compete with the local economy.”

“Before the mission even starts, we help define the requirements with DPAA two or three months out,” said Walker. “Historical data from previous missions helps us understand the needs, and from there, we contract with local vendors to fulfill them.”

The visit coincided with DPAA’s Europe-Mediterranean directorate visit from U.S. Air Force Maj. Carlos Wilkinson, Operations Support Division deputy chief, and U.S. Army Master Sgt. John Meholick, a senior enlisted advisor and mission planner, who are responsible for overseeing mission planning for recovery operations in Europe.

“The initial site visit helps us see why certain pre-planning decisions were made,” said Meholick. “It gives us insight into what’s needed to make the mission successful.”

“When the contracting team came on board, it gave us confidence and reassurance,” said Meholick. “Their involvement helped us stay on track and made sure we had the resources we needed to succeed. The coordination between everyone, from Hawaii to Germany, has been invaluable in ensuring that things went smoothly and that we were ready to tackle any challenges that came our way.”

“It’s not just about getting the job done, but about working across different time zones, different cultures, and diverse team members to ensure a seamless mission,” said Meholick. “Coordinating between Hawaii, Germany, and other locations worldwide is a challenge, but it’s critical to ensuring we meet our mission goals.”

With the combined efforts of DPAA, the 928th Contracting Battalion, and local partners, the recovery mission in France moves forward with precision and purpose. Each step taken brings the U.S. one step closer to fulfilling its sacred duty to bring home those who never returned from war.

This mission in France aligns with DPAA's commitment to accounting for the approximately 81,000 unaccounted for personnel from past conflicts, of which, roughly 71,900 are from WWII, and is another significant chapter in the agency’s ongoing efforts to honor the fallen and ensure they are never forgotten.

Courtesy of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)

George Whitfield, POW/MIA Chairman