Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs

DPAA / Coalition Meeting
December 14, 2018

In December, the *Coalition* met with *DPAA's* leadership for a discussion on the state of the Korean War accounting mission. Director McKeague and *DPAA* staff in Hawaii participated via video conference with *Coalition* President Rick Downes and supporting *DPAA* staff in DC. *DPAA* was generous with its time and attention; the exchange was open and straightforward. Here are notes from the meeting:

* The *United Nations Command* in South Korea has asked North Korea about the unilateral return of more collected remains. Their request has been declined.

* The current demining operation in the Demilitarized Zone is between North and South Korea and is focused in a narrow area.

* Joint Recovery Operations between the U.S. and North Korea) – *DPAA* has exchanged proposals with the DPRK's *Korean People's Army* to resume remains recovery efforts inside North Korea. *DPAA* needs a late January/February response from the *KPA* in order to reach an agreement by March. This timeframe will allow for U.S. teams to survey recovery sites in North Korea, set up a base camp, and undergo one mission prior to the summer monsoon season. One more mission will follow the monsoons.

* The State Dept and National Security Council have been working on a second summit with North Korea.
>   *(Note: A summit has since been announced; scheduled for February.)*

* *DPAA* has been assured by the *KPA* that there is no tie-in between the remains issue and U.S. sanctions that hold back work done by U.S. nongovernmental organizations inside the DPRK.
>   *(Note: Discussions on easing those sanctions are underway between the State Department and NGOs)*

 * Punch Bowl/National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific disinterments of Korean War Unknowns – Phase 1 will be completed by March. DPAA will take stock of lab capacities, etc., then decide when to begin Phase 2.
>   *(As of mid-December, 32 Unknowns had been disinterred. DPAA planned to disinter 32 more during Phase 1.)*