



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20370-5000

IN REPLY REFER TO  
1771  
Ser 663P/ 630  
8 Jul 93

Mrs. Mary L. Hall

Dear Mrs. Hall:

This letter is to inform you, as the primary next of kin, of actions taken by the Department of Defense to account for your missing husband, Captain Harley H. Hall, U.S. Navy, a priority case for investigation over many years, but particularly since 1988. During a recent review, the sum of information contained in your husband's case file was sufficient to confirm that death had occurred.

As you may know, General John W. Vessey, Jr. has focused extensively on obtaining answers to questions about Americans believed to be or last known to be in captivity or alive in close proximity to hostile forces.

Significant effort has been made to obtain greater cooperation from the Vietnamese and Lao officials to obtain convincing evidence about the fate of these missing Americans. These cases, referred to as last known alive (LKA) discrepancy cases, numbered 196 prior to March 1992.

Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) and other agencies within the Department of Defense undertook an intensified program of field activities to aggressively pursue resolution of the discrepancy cases with the Vietnamese. Evidence to confirm death on 61 of the discrepancy cases was obtained prior to the March, 1992 Solomon delegation to Vietnam, reducing the number of LKA discrepancies to 135.

With the initial investigations of the 135 cases completed in January of this year, JTF-FA and the Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) Special Office for POW/MIA Affairs convened to assess the evidence obtained during the investigations. As a result of their joint assessment, recommendations were made that there was convincing evidence that death had occurred in 43 of the 135 cases.

A policy-level Defense Department review of the JTF-FA/DIA assessments was then conducted. This second review concurred with the JTF-FA/DIA recommendations on the 43 cases. On April 19, 1993, General Vessey returned to Vietnam at the request of President Clinton and informed senior Vietnamese officials that further investigation was required in the 92 LKA discrepancy cases. He also informed them of the need to repatriate the remains of those Americans for whom death had been confirmed, but

whose remains have not been recovered, or to provide convincing evidence if this is not possible.

As a result of this review, your husband is no longer on the priority LKA discrepancy list. However, I assure you that your husband's case is not closed, and we will continue to aggressively pursue the repatriation of his remains.

In the remaining 92 LKA discrepancy cases, additional efforts are required, as they are on all of the other missing Americans. These 92 cases, however, will be pursued as the focus of a new small team concept, Priority Case Investigation Team (PCIT), agreed to by the Vietnamese as a result of General Vessey's April meeting. The PCIT will be comprised of Americans representing JTF-FA and DIA and Vietnamese representatives from the Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons. This joint team will pursue the remaining 92 cases continuously via archival research, witness interviews, and other investigative methods. If excavation of a grave site is necessary, it will be undertaken during regularly scheduled joint field activities.

The United States Government position on all missing Americans remains that no case will be closed until we have found and returned the missing American alive, received and identified his remains, or obtained convincing evidence as to why neither is possible. This is the official United States Government definition of accountability. It is one we believe should be reassuring to all family members.

Toward that end we will continue our effort as a matter of highest national priority until our shared goal is achieved.



M. S. DEBIEN  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Director, Personal, Family and  
Community Support Division