



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
BOLLING AFB, D.C. 20332

Lt Col Paul F. Cecil USAF, Retired  
1207 Ashburn  
College Station TX 77840

4 NOV 1981

Dear Lt Col Cecil

The Air Force is conducting a very comprehensive health assessment of certain Air Force members who served our Nation in the Vietnam conflict. The USAF School of Aerospace Medicine has been given the responsibility for conducting this study.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether there may be any causal relationship between health problems and exposure to Herbicide Orange and its contaminant, dioxin. Simply stated, we do not know if such health effects exist in humans following exposure to the herbicide. You are being asked to voluntarily participate in this study because of your unique experience in Vietnam as a member of OPERATION RANCH HAND. Your participation is critical to the success of this study. However, you should not view this invitation to participate as a cause for alarm nor as an implication that you are at risk for any known disease.

To insure the scientific validity of the study, both an in-depth interview and a detailed physical examination will be conducted. The administration of the interview will begin in a few months under the direction of a nationally recognized health survey organization. You will be contacted by phone or letter to arrange a convenient time for an in-home interview which will take from two to three hours.

Shortly after the interview you will again be contacted to schedule a physical examination at a nationally recognized civilian medical facility. The physical examination will take approximately four days. Every effort will be made to minimize disruption of your normal activities and to facilitate your participation in the study. Travel expenses and per diem will be paid by the Air Force. For those not precluded by law, a stipend of \$100 per day will be paid as a partial compensation for your time.

Our intent is to maintain all individual health data in strictest confidence. In case outside parties attempt to gain access to the data, the Air Force and the Department of Justice are committed to protect this individual confidentiality. Only in the event of an adverse final court decision, or in the almost highly unlikely instance where serious medical deficiencies must be shared with appropriate medical authorities to protect public health and safety, will any personal health data be revealed. You are referred to the Fact Sheet for further information regarding this matter.

This is perhaps one of the most important health studies undertaken by the Air Force. Your voluntary participation is critical to its success. Although you may feel healthy, numerous Vietnam veterans believe that they have illnesses which may be attributable to Herbicide Orange. The only way we can get clarification of these difficult questions is through your cooperation and participation.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul W. Myers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "M".

PAUL W. MYERS  
Lieutenant General, USAF, MC  
Surgeon General

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Fact Sheet