

# ALLEN CATES

December 11, 2003

**Mr. James D. Johnston**  
Executive Secretary  
DoD Civilian /Military Service Review Board  
SAF Personnel Council  
1535 Command Dr., EE Wing, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl.  
Andrews AFB, MD 20762-7002

Dear Mr. Johnston:

Doctor Joe Leeker, who compiled the database "The Aircraft of Air America" that I sent to you previously, saw the notice about my application on the Federal Register and sent me some additional information. I have attached that information with this letter and included his emails to me explaining the attachments. Previously I had said that I did not have any record of Air Force contracts in Vietnam with AAM. Apparently they did exist and Dr. Leeker's supplied information shows that AAM did in fact operate in Vietnam under several AF contracts. Apparently a C-45 crashed near Saigon and there is some evidence indicating the crash may have been the result of enemy action. The record shows that C-45 was operating on an Air Force contract and crewed by a civilian pilot employed by Air America. The crash investigation is attached.

Dr. Leeker also supplied a XOXO message that he found in one of the collections at UTD that clearly shows proof of the joint activity between AAM and the US Military. I have also included a letter written by then Base Manager David Hickler that was distributed to ARMA/AIRA, which I understand were US Military advisory groups that worked with USAID and the US State Department regarding AF contracts with Air America.

I have included as well various pages from US Veteran web sites that include Air America. Mr. Johnston, it would be difficult for any person stationed in or around Vietnam to not observe Air America's presence. Most, if not all, veteran organizations have concluded that Air America was as much a part of the military operation as they and many depended on Air America for a variety of services. I have also included another tape made by Discovery Wings in their Birds of a Feather series entitled "The Ravens." This tape is mostly about the Ravens, but in the tape it is acknowledged that Air America furnished SAR assistance, and not on a *happened to be around the area* basis, but in accordance with established and welcomed procedure.

You mentioned to me on the telephone that indigenous, or foreign nationals could be considered for vet status and offered to alter the notice in the Federal Register accordingly. I was looking at the list of employees, and as I mentioned in previous correspondence, I would like for all employees to be considered if the law allowed such inclusion. You and I felt that we should limit those considered to flight crews and ground support personnel since the historians would do so in any event. I would like to include indigenous employees who fall in the category described in the notice. In this regard, I am respectfully asking that the words and indigenous be added to the text between the words U.S. Civilian and Employees in the notice. I am respectfully asking that indigenous employees, who are in the same category, be considered by the historians even if the change in the notice cannot be made at this date and ask that this letter and the attachments be made part of the record.

Sincerely,



Allen Cates