

6-6-2016

Case Summary

San Dewayne Francisco

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As part of the 1995 comprehensive review of each case of an unaccounted for American in Southeast Asia, Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office analysts created an electronic database of relevant facts. This ever-changing working tool reflects a snapshot in time summarizing data collected to date, as well as analytical opinions and recommendations. It permits analysts to review pertinent case information quickly, update each record as new information is collected, and develop investigative leads. Following is a narrative of the information contained in the electronic database on this loss.

Family Conference

Case Releasable?

REDACT

Case Summary Information:

Refno: 1329	BIO: 01	Lat: 172059N	Ctry: VN
Name: FRANCISCO, SAN DEWAYNE		Long: 1061150E	Province: QUANG BINH
Loss Rank: O2		UTM: 48QXE2720018500	District: BO TRACH
Service: USAF	Status: XX	OffscopeCase: N	Township: THUONG TRACH
Incident Date: 1968/11/25		PriorityCase: Y	
Vehicle Type: F4D		Fate Determined: Y	

Case Summary

(b)(3)

On 25 November 1968, [REDACTED], aircraft commander, and First Lieutenant (1stLt) San Francisco, pilot/navigator, of 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, were the crew of an F-4D Phantom (serial # 66-7523; call sign Grommet 02) escorting an RF-4C (call sign Grommet 01) on a photo reconnaissance mission, when downed in a heavily fortified area of the Ban Karai Pass, near the Lao border. At approximately 1245 hours, as Grommet 01 started its mission in the target area, it heard Grommet 02 report that "we've taken a hit." Grommet 01 immediately aborted its mission, but did not see Grommet 02 crash. A steady beeper was heard, whereupon search and rescue forces (SAR) were scrambled, and wreckage was located on the side of a hill at grid coordinates 48Q XE 270 185. When the SAR forces arrived, voice contact was established with both crewmen and a pick-up was attempted at 48Q XE 272 186, but the rescue choppers were driven off by small arms fire. Due to adverse weather conditions, the SAR effort was suspended for the first day. The next morning, a forward air controller (FAC) was on station, but fog in the area hindered its search efforts. As the fog dissipated, [REDACTED] location was confirmed again, however, continuing adverse weather had precluded SAR forces from staging nearby, delaying their response time. When the SAR forces did arrive, radio contact was lost and could not be re-established. The parachute that had been visible the day before had disappeared. All efforts to re-establish contact with the crew failed. SAR forces believed 1stLt Francisco landed very close to enemy personnel and was detained shortly after the initial and inconclusive attempt to contact him. On 26 November, Radio Hanoi and the Nhan Dan newspaper both announced the shoot down and said the two pilots had been captured alive.

Subsequent to the incident, and while carried in the status of missing-in-action, the U.S. Air Force promoted [REDACTED] to the rank of Colonel and San Francisco to the rank of Major.

(b)(3)

US Government Information

SPECIAL REPORTING: Reported that one pilot had been "picked up in Quang Binh this date." Discussed

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Refno # 1329

QC'd by LMR
05 JUN 16

Reviewed by DPAA
140750 USC 435 Data & 000 5400.7-R
Date: 6 Jun 16 Initials: RW

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whether to transport him and another pilot captured the same day to Hanoi, raising the possibility of using an aircraft to move the pilot. ((Note: the reference to the Quang Binh pilot relates to Case 1327 (Ruhling), who was transported by air.))

WARTIME MEDIA: On 26 November 1968, the People's Army Newspaper (Nhan Dan) carried an article congratulating the people of Quang Binh for shooting down an F-4 on 25 November 1968. The article said the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. Hanoi broadcast also noted the downing, stating the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. [Analyst note: the article addressed the shoot-down of the case 1328 aircraft as well, and the "capture of both crews", hence, the total number of captured crewmen is unclear]

APRIL 2005, NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (NGA) RESEARCH: No usable pre-incident imagery was discovered. Post-incident aircraft imagery from 18 December 1968 proved best for analysis. The imagery revealed the possible crash site for Case 1329 in the vicinity of XE 2705 1842. The primary impact site and probable debris field appeared cone or triangular-shaped. The debris field fanned-out from the likely impact site in a west-southwesterly direction, suggesting this was the direction the plane was flying when impact occurred. There were no indications of aircraft wreckage or debris. A possible extension of the debris field, or possibly a second impact site, is located approximately 140 meters further west-southwest.

The area (XE 27873 15511) near Kilometer Marker 51 (52) on Route 20 (wartime Route 137) was analyzed for signs of a burial site. Full analysis was inhibited by the lack of pre-incident imagery. Imagery revealed numerous craters in the area; joint teams discovered two large craters believed to have been caused by rocket strikes from SAR forces.

IIR ~~REDACTED~~ A hand-drawn map depicting the burial location of two American aviators (first turned over to U.S. officials in 1995) resurfaced in a letter sent to the U.S. Embassy, Hanoi on 2 August 2010. Mr. Nguyen Huu Ngoi personally drew two diagrams related to two U.S. pilots as he photographed the 3,000th aircraft shot down and its pilots. Photographs of 30 American pilots were turned over to the Vietnam News Agency. The diagram of the graves of two American soldiers who flew an RF-4C (sic) shot down on 25 November 1968 at KM 54 along Route 20 in Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province were described. Lieutenant's grave is about 15 to 20 meters off the right hand side of Route 20 at kilometer marker 54. ~~REDACTED~~ grave is about 20 to 25 meters from the crash site. Area still has a lot of unexploded cluster bombs. It is in the jungle and uninhabited. (REF: MSG DTG 101727Z AUG 10)

20 January 2014 - E-mail Contact: The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) detachment in Hanoi was contacted by a U.S. citizen who was contacted by a Vietnamese national and forwarded a recounting of the wartime burial of a U.S. aviator. The reported first-hand witness detailed his account in an email forwarded to the detachment. The content of the email was as follows: "The incident occurred in August 1968, during the Vietnam War, in the crucial area of the Ca Rong ford [Ngam Ca Rong, vicinity 48Q XE 27123 17132 (WGS-84 datum)] on "resolved to Win" Route 20, Quang Binh Province, Vietnam. U.S. planes were bombing this area when one of them was shot down. A U.S. pilot parachuted and was captured by Vietnam's armed forces (combat engineers and ground troops). Mr. Le Huy Chinh removed some communications equipment from the pilot. Later, many U.S. aircraft attempted to rescue the pilot, but because they could not contact him, they returned and resumed bombing, intensely damaging this area and killing many people, including the U.S. pilot. When all the U.S. aircraft had gone, the Vietnamese forces began evacuating the wounded and burying the dead. The U.S. pilot was buried directly by Le Huy Chinh on a mountain 45 kilometers west of Phong Nha [vicinity 48Q XE 37534 46066 (WGS-84 datum)], in Quang

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Binh Province. (Ref: Additional Information Report from JPAC, 220648Z Jan 14; Det-2 Info Email, 14 Feb 2014) [Analyst note: see follow-up with Mr. Le Huy Chinh under JFAs 14-2VM & 14-4VM below]

Joint Investigations

SUMMARY: This case has been jointly investigated eighteen times. The crash site has been positively identified. Photos have been identified of the wreckage, one of the crewmen, and related ID media for the other crewman. Multiple eyewitnesses and informants have reported on locations of burial sites for both crewmen. One site is being recommended for excavation, while a second site awaits the corroborative testimony of another alleged eyewitness before it too is recommended for excavation.

August 1989, 7th Joint Field Activity (JFA): Team found the crash site at XE 272185, just 200 meters west [analyst note: should read "east" vice "west"] of the coordinates listed in U.S. records. ID numbers on wreckage allowed team to confirm the crash site. There were no witnesses because local people had been evacuated during the war, and only North Vietnamese Army (PAVN) troops, long since gone, were present. Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) member Ngo Hoang said someone in Bo Trach had told him in 1988 that remains for one or two Americans were buried vicinity KM 55 marker, Route 20 (war-time Route 137), but team could not confirm this. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329; 230946Z Aug 89)

January 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity: Team was told VNOSMP had found information on this case indicating that an F-4C was shot down by unit stationed near "Cau Lang". The crew was a Major and a First Lieutenant with no information on the fate of either crew member. "Cau Lang" could be a Vietnamization of Ko Roong, which is a ford at the 52 KM marker and describes the general area. Investigated KM 54 marker (XE 279 156) of Route 20, looking for alleged burial site; found nothing. (Ref: AIR of Case 1329, 270354Z Feb 91)

February 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity: The Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) liaison office in Bangkok provided further observations on case 1329 and the source of information in the previous January 1991 investigation. There was conflicting reporting on whether the suspect burial was at KM 54 or KM 55 markers. Mr. Tho from the VNOSMP team provided hearsay that the location was most likely the KM 54 marker. (Ref: 260729Z Feb 91)

April-May 1992, 17th Joint Field Activity: Visited Thuong Trach Village; no witnesses, no information. (Ref: None)

January 1994, Priority Case Investigation Team (PCIT) Investigation: Vietnamese said no more documentation was available. Said no individuals present at downing were in the province or available for interview. Interviews of authors of books about actions in this general area produced no information on this case. (Ref: PCIT Report Case 1329, 081802Z Apr 94)

May 1995, Oral History Interview: Former Vietnam News Agency (VNA) combat photographer Nguyen Huu Ngoi said he photographed the bodies of two American pilots whose aircraft had been downed by a unit of the 280th AAA Regiment. Ngoi said he learned right away when the 280th had downed an aircraft in the area of Kilometer 54, Route 20. He reached the incident site the next morning which was 20 kilometers from the unit headquarters (14th Battalion?). At the scene, troops and members of an assault youth group told him about the incident. Two pilots had ejected and landed two kilometers apart.

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The first pilot, a First Lieutenant, was captured almost immediately and had been wounded in the leg. He was being treated for his injury when a rocket from one of the SAR aircraft hit and killed him and a number of others. The pilot was buried about 15 meters to west of Route 20. Ngoi asked the soldiers to exhume the body so he could photograph it; only the face uncovered, and he took a picture. The body was no longer intact.

The second pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). The body was approximately two kilometers northwest of the first body, in jungle so thick that it had to be cut away to provide enough light for photography. Troops had found and surrounded him, but he had shot at them, and they had returned fire, killing him. Ngoi saw the body lying on its back and took a couple of photographs. He did not observe the burial but assumed that one took place. Ngoi speculated burial would have been on the spot, since it would have been very difficult to move the body, given the difficult terrain.

He next went to the aircraft crash site where he took photos of wreckage. The crash site was 2-3 kilometers southeast of the second body (Lieutenant Colonel). He returned to unit headquarters and took photos of identification media that soldiers had taken from the two bodies. He also took pictures of a large roll of film. He never saw the finished photos after turning them in and never returned to the Route 20 area. Nonetheless, Ngoi believed he could point out the burial site and offered to help the team find graves. He also identified the photos of the wreckage and remains as photos that he had taken.

Ngoi identified additional possible witnesses: Mai Thanh Hai, former director of Vietnam News Agency in Military Region 4; Lai Van Thanh, aka Lam Thanh, former chief of Group 559 and vanguard cells of Military Region 4; Nguyen Van Soan, member of Group 559 and vanguard cells; Bui Hoang Chung, former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell (interviewed 8 APR 95); Duong Duc Quang, former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell. (Ref: OHP Report, 270922Z Jun 95)

(b)(4)

October-November 1995, Letters from photographer Nguyen Huu Ngoi: in two letters, Ngoi provided details of the burial locations. He explained that [REDACTED] prevented him from accompanying the team to the site at present. He repeated that the lieutenant was buried 15-20 meters west of Kilometer Marker 54. He said the lieutenant colonel (sic) died and was buried 20-25 meters from the aircraft on the left hand side; the crash was two kilometers from the Route 20 Kilometer 54 marker to the right from Xuan Son. He provided a sketch of the graves. His second letter placed [REDACTED] grave on right side of the aircraft. (Analyst note: these letters conflict with his original oral history report) (Ref: JTF-FA Report VN95-043 (Letter): Mr. Nguyen Huu Ngoi, 110922Z Jan 96; 170902Z Oct 96; IIR [REDACTED])

(b)(3)

(b)(4)

January 1996, Letter from Nguyen Huu Ngoi: Ngoi [REDACTED] asked for a status update of this investigation. He said he would still like to help. He also said there was a marker stone at the crash site and with patience, it could be found. Finally, he said that members of the 7th Youth Assault Group were the ones who buried the crew members in this incident. (Ref: 110922Z Jan 96)

January 1997, Oral History Interview: Tran Su said Mr. Lien might have information on wartime volunteer youth members who knew of U.S. burial sites. (Ref: None)

(b)(6)

May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity: Thanh Hoa Province task team leader reported that Mr. Ngoi's [REDACTED] and he could not accompany the team to Quang Binh. If he recovered, the U.S. would be notified. The VNSOMP provided a written report to this effect. (Ref: DRI on SRT Case 1329, 280732Z Jul 97)

May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity Research and Investigations Team (RIT): The VNOSMP reported

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that the Vietnamese had interviewed Doan Duc Liem, but he had indicated he did not directly observe any crash sites. (REF: MSG DRI of SRT 1329 280732 JUL 97)

May 1997, Oral History Interview: Nguyen Cong Huan, current chief of staff of the Quang Binh Province youth association. Huan was too young to be a wartime participant in the volunteer youth. He said they did not keep regular records since they were not a regular unit. Huan suggested the following witnesses:

Vo Trong Bao (Vox Trongj Baof), [REDACTED] e Thuy District;
 Luong Thi Kim Tien (Lwong Thij Kim Tieens), [REDACTED] Tuyen Quang District;
 Tran Van Xang (Traanf Vawn Xangj), [REDACTED] Bo Trach District;
 Nguyen Thi Kim Cung (Kim Cungx), [REDACTED] Dong Hoi Town;
 Nguyen Thi Nay (Naayj), [REDACTED] Quang Trach District;
 Ngo Van Truyen (Ngoo Vawn Truyeen), [REDACTED] Minh Hoa District;
 Dao Viet Thau (Daof Vieets Thaur), [REDACTED] Dong Hoi Town.

(Ref: None)

May 1997, Oral History Interview: Dao Viet Thau was a former political officer of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company. He described the organization of the volunteer youth and said that 19 companies comprised the Route 20 "construction site." Before November 1965, what became Route 20 was called the Route 16 site, encompassing Kim Thuy, Ngan Thuy, and Phu Thuy villages. [Analyst note: wartime topographical maps identified this road at Route 137, which became Route 912 upon crossing into Laos]. In November 1965, he and the 7th Company began work on the Route 20 site and stayed there until July 1967. They worked between Km 17 and 54. The area was virtually unpopulated due to its remoteness and U.S. bombing. He described three downings during his tenure, two of which preceded the Case 1329 incident and one that occurred in 1972.

He named the following individuals as possible witnesses: Vo Trong Bao (Vox Trongj Baof) who served as the deputy chief of the Quang Binh Youth Association during July 1967 to September 1972; and Le Cong Thu (Lee Coong Thus) who assumed command of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company after Thau left and is a current resident of Dong My Ward, Dong Hoi Town; and Mr. Tho (Tho) former commander of the 4th Quang Binh 12.7mm AAA company. (Ref: 190912Z Dec 97)

December 1997, 48th Joint Field Activity: Team interviewed four witnesses who had no information on this case.

(1)
(3) Le Ba Cuong (Border Defense Group Deputy Commander at Km 54) knew about five crash sites, but he witnessed only one incident, a 1972 crash at Kilometer 16. Later he visited crash sites at Km 43 (Case [REDACTED], Km 46 (1 died; 1 ejected, Case ?); a reconnaissance prop plane near Km 52 (no information on fate of crewmen, Case ?); and one jet crash at Km 61 (Heard one Lieutenant Colonel ejected and forces searched for him, but Cuong did not know what happened to him, Case 1698?).

Nguyen Dai Nghia (12.7mm Battery Commander, 7th Youth) knew of three incidents: 1) A fighter aircraft was shot down in March 1966 near Km 14 marker, 2) Late afternoon in late 1968, shot an aircraft that he heard crashed near Km 68 in Laos, 3) At about 1700 hours on an unspecified day in 1966, a 37mm AAA gun from Binh Tram 14 (BT14) shot down what Nghia thought was an A1 (propeller) aircraft. It crashed in a mountainous jungle area near the Ca Roong Stream and Km 54. Nghia had no information on the fate of any of the crews.

Le Cong Thu (7th Youth Company Commander) stated that at approximately 1100-1200 hours, in October-November 1968, his unit shot down an F-105 near Km 54. Also, during the dry season of 1969 [which standardly runs from November to April], an unknown unit shot down an A-6 flying low, and it crashed

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near Km 68, on the border, in the general area of Nui Dai Ngang. Lots of SAR activity ensued, and he assumed the pilot was rescued.

Nguyen Phu Tho (12.7mm Battery commander) described the capture of one American in 1966 (Case 0240). He described five incidents that probably involved rescued aviators and one downing of a C-130 (Case 1807). (Ref: DRI Special Remains Case 1329, 060712Z Jan 98)

May 1998, 50th Joint Field Activity: While investigating another case (1816), team interviewed three former members of the volunteer youth:

Nguyen Thi Nay served in the Route 12/15 area, not Route 20, with Team 732, (a.k.a. C2, D73).

Tran Van Xang also served in the Route 12/15 area, as commander of Team 75. He asserted that Luong Thi Kim Tien had served with Team 73 and only worked a short stretch of road, and would not know anything about U.S. losses.

Nguyen Thi Kim Cung operated on Route 12A up until February 1967, at which time he moved to Ba Trai area, south of Gianh Ferry. From 1968-72, he served in Quang Tri. (Ref: DRI of Case 1816, 240702Z Jun 98)

September 2000, 62nd Joint Field Activity: Joint team returned to survey the crash site and search for the two graves. A Vietnamese team first swept the site with metal detectors and marked possible unexploded ordnance. Dinh Nhot, previously interviewed in August 1989, said he observed a burning aircraft crash into the hills near where he was stationed. He did not visit the site until about one month later, and he had been there numerous times since. He never saw any remains.

The team searched the surface of the crash site area, finding small pieces of unidentifiable wreckage. The area of old Route 20, which was used during wartime, was also searched. Local Vietnamese officials pointed out where they believed Kilometer Marker 54 had been located; it was now Kilometer Marker 51. Team found no signs of a burial, but did locate two large craters (vicinity of XE 2780 1555). The team thought these might have been the rocket strikes that reportedly killed one crewman. No signs of a burial site could be found nearby. The team recommended searching again, spending one whole day near the road and a second near the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 262016Z Oct 00)

(b) (6)

January 2002, 68th Joint Field Activity: VNOSMP reported that Mr. Ngoi [REDACTED] would be unable to attend an interview or lead a team to the burial site. Team could not fly to the site itself due to inclement weather. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 200812Z Feb 02)

May 2003, 73rd Joint Field Activity: Nguyen Huu Ngoi again reported information on this case and how he came to photograph the two aviators. He could not recall the names of the guides that took him to the areas where he took the photos. One pilot was buried in proximity of the crash site in the direction of Route 20 (NFI). Mr. Ngoi guided the team to the alleged burial site of a First Lieutenant using terrain association, but he was only able to identify a general area. Mr. Ngoi could only walk with great difficulty, had to be carried most of the time, and required frequent breaks.

The joint team thoroughly searched the area he pointed out, paying special attention to craters. A local official said that several recently dug holes in the area were made by a man who was killed by unexploded ordnance. The area searched included the area around the Kilometer 54 marker, which was at XE 27873 15511. The VNOSMP reported that there were no persons living in the area at the time. Team surveyed the crash site at XE 27364 18189 (XE 27850 17550 on the map), finding a piece of unexploded ordnance, and also searched several craters along the road. The team assessed there was a high probability of more unexploded ordnance in the area. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 020902Z Jun 03)

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October 2005, 83rd Joint Field Activity: While investigating another case, the Research and Investigation Team (RIT) obtained additional information that may correlate to Case 0761 (resolved), Case 1105 (unresolved), or Case 1329 (unresolved). Mr. Mai Ingoc Dong, former communications specialist with Volunteer Youth Team 25 from July 1965 to early 1970, provided secondhand information on the crash of a U.S. aircraft. While on duty in the headquarters of Volunteer Youth Team 25 during the 1967-1968 timeframe, Mr. Mai Ingoc Dong heard a report from members of the 458th Company that an aircraft had crashed at kilometer marker 54, of Route 20, near Ca Roong Hamlet, Thuong Trach Village, Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province. The aircraft was described as an AD-6 (A-1) and the remains of an aviator were in the plane. Mr. Dong never visited the site and did not know about any associated grave; however, he identified Mr. Pham Viet Hung, a former 458th Company member, as a person who had visited the crash site and viewed the aviator's remains. Mr. Hung resides in [REDACTED] Thanh Liem District, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam. (Analyst Note: Both the Case 1105 and Case 1329 loss incidents involved F-4 aircraft. The aircraft involved in the Case 0761 incident was a T-28, an aircraft very similar in appearance to an A-1 aircraft). (Ref: RIT AIR for 83rd JFA, 122154Z Dec 05) (b)(6)

August 2010, Joint Field Activity 10-4VM (100th JFA): An investigation team interviewed Mr. Pham Viet Hung, a 458th Company veteran, who provided information concerning the November 1967 crash of an aircraft and his subsequent observation of the body of an American pilot near Route 20, in Quang Binh Province. The hope was that his information might correlate with case 1329. It clearly did not. Mr. Hung served in the Co Roong Ford area (48Q XE 279 171) until March 1968. He was not present in that area at the time of the case 1329 loss incident, his information possibly correlates with another case [REDACTED] (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 132339Z Oct 2010) (b)(3)

May 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 280th Air Defense Regiment, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau and Mr. Le Duc Qua. Both individuals provided information that correlates to Case 1329.

- Mr. Dau, who commanded the 105th AAA Battalion, witnessed an F-4 shot down on 25 November 1968 and saw both pilots eject. One parachute landed near the 1st Company's 37mm AAA battery. Personnel from this battery left their position to capture the pilot. Mr. Dau was in a vehicle approaching the position when a bomb strike killed the captured pilot, and Mr. Dau was wounded. The pilot, a 1st Lieutenant, was buried several hours later at the location where he died, near the eastern edge of Route 20. Three days after the incident, a PAVN photographer requested the remains be exhumed so he could take pictures. The body was then reburied in its original location. Mr. Dau knows the burial site and is willing to point it out to a future joint team. Mr. Dau sent three soldiers from the Battalion HQ to capture the second pilot, reportedly a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). This pilot was killed the next morning when he resisted capture and his body was not buried. Mr. Dau has never been to the crash site or the location where the second pilot was killed, although he was given a map taken from the slain pilot, which he turned over to the joint team. The map is a 1:250,000 scale U.S. DoD Escape & Evasion Chart (EVC) inscribed "souvenir" at 1400 on 26 November 1968 (Mau Than) at kilometer 54, Ka Rong, Route 20, shot down one F-4H and captured two bandit pilots. This is the map of the Lieutenant Colonel staff officer (sic) who was shot and killed on the spot by the capturing group (600 meters west of the road as the bird flies). C1-D105-E280 (signature illegible) [Note; C1-D105-E280 translates as 1st Company, 105th Battalion, 280th Regiment]
- Mr. Qua was a communications soldier attached to the 280th AAA Regimental HQ and observed the shoot down of the aircraft by the Regimental observation station. he saw both parachutes and estimated that one landed near kilometer marker 51 on Route 20 and the second landed near kilometer 54.5 (sic), on Route 20.

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He heard (primarily from Mr. Dau) that the first parachute was that of a Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed resisting capture and the second was a First Lieutenant who died in a bomb strike and was buried where he fell. Mr. Qua knows the second burial site (of the First Lieutenant), located 20-30 meters east of Route 20 and was willing to point it out to a joint team. He does not know the location where the Lieutenant Colonel was killed, and he never went to the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA), 250350Z Jun 13)

August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 103rd Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment concerning Case 1329.

- Mr. Dau Van Viet, a former gunner in the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, described his discovery of an intact human skeleton in September 1969. The remains were in close proximity to an F-4 crash site, approximately 300-400 meters northwest of Route 20, near the Co Roong ford in Quang Binh Province. He left the remains where they lay.

- Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chi related his first-hand observation of the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft in November 1968 near kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Quang Binh Province. He observed one parachute clearly and a second parachute that opened at a lower altitude and may not have fully deployed. Mr. Chi heard that the body of one crewman was buried near Route 20. He heard that the second crewman was shot and killed while resisting capture and may not have been buried. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during 13-4VM (112th JFA), 210800Z Oct 13)

March 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-2VM (114th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) met with Mr. Le Huy Chinh, and former squad leader of the 5th Squad, 5th Platoon, 5th Volunteer Youth Company, serving under the command of the 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14). Mr. Chinh related that on a day in probably August of 1968, his squad was located a few hundred meters west of Route 20, in the vicinity of the Ca Roong ford (48Q XE 279 171 (India Thai datum)) when they heard gunfire to the south and witnessed a stricken aircraft heading in their direction. They saw one pilot eject and ran to the area to capture him. They found him on a ridge (XE 270 173) with his helmet off, parachute still clipped on, and talking on a hand-held radio. They captured him, took his gear and were intending to turn him over to a formal military unit when they were forced to take cover as U.S. aircraft began bombing the area. When the bombing ceased after a few minutes, they emerged from cover to discover the pilot had been killed by the bombing. They buried him in a fresh bomb crater 6-7 meters away. They supposedly did not report the capture or death of the pilot to higher headquarters. Mr. Chinh said they visited the actual aircraft crash site two or three days later (indicated as near the southeast corner of grid square XE 27 20), and although they saw no other body, they noticed a "terrible stench" of decomposition suggesting that another body was nearby. Mr. Chinh named two other individuals from his youth group who were with him during the incident; Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay and a Mr. Binh. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 070723Z May 14)

June 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-3VM (115th JFA): An investigation team re-interviewed Messrs. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, age 81, former Commander of the 105th AAA Battalion, Group 559, and Le Duc Qua, age 65, former communications soldier of 47th Company, 280th Air Defense Regiment. Three other potential witnesses, Messrs. Le Huy Chinh, Nguyen Huu Vay, and Do Van Viet, were unavailable for interview. Both PAVN veterans provided accounts consistent with their interviews during JFA 13-3VM; new insights from Mr. Dau being that he recalled the time of incident as 1400 hours, that he saw red and green parachutes leave the stricken aircraft, and that the lieutenant had his right leg broken when captured. He recalled this pilot as being very young, large build, with yellow hair, light skin, and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit. Mr. Dau's subordinates surrendered this pilot's ID media, papers, and radio he had been carrying, which Mr. Dau

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subsequently sent back to 260th Regimental headquarters. This pilot was buried in his uniform and boots, in a 60 centimeters deep grave, at the only flat area east of Route 20, with a dirt mound resulting over the grave. Mr. Dau stated that the exhumation conducted in order for a photographer to take pictures of the body, occurred five days later, rather than the three days that he cited during JFA 13-3VM, and he asserted that the body was reburied in the same grave. The only new insights he offered into the disposition of the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed, was that he recalled him as being of large build, white skin and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit, and that Mr. Dau's subordinates did not attempt to bury or cover that crewman after killing him.

New insights provided by Mr. Qua were that the aircraft had been shot down by AAA fire, and burst into flames. He recalled hearsay accounts of the captured lieutenant having two broken legs. Mr. Qua further specified that the bomb that killed the American lieutenant and injured Mr. Dau was a cluster bomb.

The team conducted a pedestrian/subsurface search of a 40 by 20 meter area of the alleged burial site (48Q XE 27679 17075, site # VM03267) using metal detectors, but was unable to find any evidence of remains, personal effects, or a burial. Shrubs and elephant grass cover the area, but it had at one time been cultivated for corn, and in 2012, the adjacent Provincial Highway 20 (wartime Route 137) had been widened and paved. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During JFA 14-3VM, 022119Z Sep 14)

August 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-4VM (116th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team re-interviewed Mr. Le Huy Chinh and interviewed Mr. Do Van Viet. A third desired witness, Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay was unavailable for interview.

Mr. Do Van Viet, a former 37mm AAA gunner of 9th Company, 103rd AAA Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment, provided hearsay information about an F-4 shoot down which correlated to resolved Case 1253. He provided additional information on one other F-4 crash site near the Ca Roong River (Thuong Trach district, Quang Binh province). None of Mr. Viet's information correlated to Case 1329.

Mr. Le Huy Chinh recalled that on an unknown date during the 1968 dry season [standardly runs from November - April], while stationed at the A Ky ford, he heard a AAA battery open fire and witnessed an F-4 trailing fire and smoke, heading in his direction, from the north. He witnessed one parachute emerge from the aircraft and with his squad, ran to the area to capture the pilot. They found the pilot sitting and talking on his hand-held radio. He was described as Caucasian, dark hair, neatly trimmed sideburns, with his left thigh soaked in blood, and his name tag ended with ~~REDACTED~~. The pilot reportedly surrendered, once threatened with weapons. They began to take the pilot down the ridge to their position when other aircraft began to bomb the area. They pushed the pilot down and took cover. After the bombing, they emerged from cover to find that the pilot had been killed - suffered a large wound to the chest. They then dragged the pilot's body 20 meters upslope and buried him with his equipment in a bomb crater less than one meter deep. He was placed head up slope (west) in the grave and a small dirt mound piled over him, yet the grave was not marked. They reportedly did not formally report the death and burial. Approximately 10 days later, on patrol near the area, Mr. Chinh and his squad encountered a terrible stench in the area. Mr. Chinh cannot remember the names of any other members of his squad. He later heard that someone from the Quang Binh provincial militia headquarters exhumed a body for photographs but did not know if it was the body he had buried a few weeks prior. Mr. Chinch identified a 20 by 20 meter area encompassing a dirt mound which he said was similar to the one where he had buried the pilot (48Q XE 27630 16411). (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 282041Z Oct 14)

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March 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-2VM (118th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed five witnesses of the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14.

- Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the capture and subsequent burial of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. The American was a field grade officer who was accidentally killed by a U.S. airstrike. Mr. Son helped bury the American on a hillside near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. Mr. Son identified a photograph of the remains of [REDACTED] as the individual he helped bury. - On 25 November 1968, at approximately 1200-1300 hours, while stationed in the Ca Roong area (vicinity 48Q XE 271 171) of western Quang Binh Province, Mr. Son (b)(3) witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. The burning aircraft crashed near the waterfall at Ca Roong and two crewmembers parachuted from the plane. One of the two crewmembers, a Lieutenant Colonel, landed near Mr. Son's position. He and Mrs Vu Thi Minh, who was a member of a volunteer youth unit, quickly went to capture the American. When they found him, they saw he was severely injured, with both thighs broken just below the groin. The pilot was caucasian, weighed approximately 90 kilograms, and was 1.8-1.9 meters tall. He surrendered immediately and said in Vietnamese that he should be taken to Hanoi. Mrs Minh took the pilot's pistol and radio so he could not signal search and rescue forces. By this time, several members of the anti-aircraft unit that shot down the aircraft arrived at the pilot's location. The group confiscated items including survival gear from the pilot's seat kit and a parachute. Mr. Son did not know what became of these items. In anticipation that SAR forces would attempt to rescue the two downed pilots, Mr. Son's unit arranged itself in hastily dug fortifications encircling the downed pilot in order to ambush U.S. aircraft when they arrived. Approximately two hours later, a helicopter flew into the area and hovered over the pilot. The pilot and the helicopter crew established visual contact with each other and the helicopter lowered a line to the pilot. Someone from Mr. Son's unit opened fire on the helicopter, which then flew away. Mr. Son's unit remained in concealment anticipating U.S. aircraft to return. Shortly thereafter, AD-6 [A-1 Skyraider] aircraft strafed the area with rockets. After the rocket attack, Mr. Son and members of his unit came out of hiding and discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket attack, with a fatal wound to the back of his head. BT-14 authorities ordered the burial of the pilot, and a PAVN photo-journalist photographed the body (still in his flight suit) prior to the burial. Members of Mr. Son's combat engineer unit along with some of the AAA unit members buried the pilot in a meter-deep hole, some three meters from where the pilot was killed. The pilot was buried clad only in a white t-shirt and boxer shorts. Approximately 10 days later, the body was briefly exhumed for another photograph and then reburied. The grave was located on the side of a hill, south of Ca Roong, approximately 100 meters above Route 20, between kilometer markers 52 and 53. Mr. Son believes he could still find the grave and is willing to assist a Joint Team in this effort.

- Mr. Son had only hearsay information concerning the other U.S. crewmember. The unit involved with this pilot was the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, (as opposed to Mr. Son's 2nd Battalion). The two battalions were only 20-30 meters apart, but separated by a small stream. His unit heard over the radio from the 1st Battalion that the other pilot was a Second Lieutenant who landed north of Ca Roong, near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. His parachute had become entangled in a tree and he was already dead when the 1st Battalion members found him. Mr. Son had no further details concerning this pilot or his burial.

- Mr. Le Van Lam provided credible hearsay information about the American field grade officer killed and buried near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. Though he did not view the body or participate in the burial, he was stationed in the area for six years and knew the grave location. - He confirmed this incident as the same one described by Mr. Son, although he described the downed aircraft as an F-105. He heard that one of the pilots, a Second Lieutenant, landed near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. The other pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel who landed on a hill between km markers 52 and 53 of Route 20. The 5th

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Company received orders to capture this pilot, but because Mr. Lam was the platoon leader, he stayed in place and detailed Mr. Bui Cong Quyet to capture the American. The pilot was wounded in the legs and subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. The pilot was later buried 100 meters above Route 20. A week or so later, the dead pilot was exhumed for photographs and then reburied. Although Mr. Lam did not participate in the burial or reburial, he knew the grave's location, having seen it many times while stationed in the area. He is willing to assist a joint team in relocating the grave.

- Mr. Bui Cong Quyet was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. Mr. Quyet's information corroborated that of Mr. Lam and Mr. Son concerning the Lieutenant Colonel pilot on the hillside, subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. He was a participant in the exhumation and reburial of one of the U.S. field grade pilot. He believes he can still find the grave and is willing to assist a joint team in a search to locate the remains.

- Mrs. Vu Thi Minh was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the capture of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. She did not participate in the burial and did not believe she could assist in finding the grave location.

- Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and he viewed one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. He did not participate in the burial and did not believe he could assist in finding the grave location. He did, however, positively identify a photograph of [REDACTED] as the U.S. crewmember he saw.

(Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-2VM, 100741z Apr 15)

(b)(3)

May 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-3VM (119th JFA): A joint team re-interviewed Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son, Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay, and Mr. Nguyen Duc Lam. All three witnesses reiterated their testimonies from JFA 15-2VM and then accompanied the Joint Team to the incident location. Mr. Son was able to identify a 24 by 14 meter area as the probable burial site (48Q XE 267 164). A survey of the area revealed no discernable evidence of a burial. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-3VM, 071755Z Oct 15)

SEA Government Unilateral information/Investigations

PHOTOS: Numerous photos have been received for this case, the most important depicting [REDACTED] intact remains. Another showed identification media for both men. Vietnamese information identified several photos showing the aircraft wreckage from this incident.

MUSEUM: 280th Air Defense Museum had data plate with a receipt, both alleged to come from this incident. Pistol at this museum correlated to [REDACTED] by serial number. Also a possible flight checklist. (b)(3)

MUSEUM: The Central Army Museum in Hanoi had a museum item receipt and data plate said to belong to aircraft shot down 23 November 1968 in western Quang Binh. Data plate is for F-4 -- probably relates to Case 1327. Air Defense Museum had signal flare receipt for which identifies it with this aircraft.

RECORDS: 1. The Military Region 4 shoot down record cited Case 1329 aircraft as being downed by Battalion 73, 280th Air Defense Regiment, at Co Roong Ford, on Route 20. No indication on fate of crew.

2. Quang Binh list of U.S. casualties notes both men and that their bodies were buried at Kilometer 54, Route 20.

3. Military Region 4 'Killed and Torn Apart' roster says both remains obliterated, implying failure to recover the remains; should not be taken as a literal description.

4. 1978 central government list of remains not recovered says both men's graves were lost.

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RECORDS: V95C3B8. Vietnamese reports on the 84 Special Remains Team Cases, provided to the U.S. on 13 May 1995. Report recommends determining unit and troops stationed in this area in 1968 and finding and interviewing retired militia members who have experience with Quang Binh and Bo Trach teams.

REPORT OF UNILATERAL INVESTIGATION, PROVIDED 24 JUNE 1996: VNOSMP noted that Mr. Ngoi [REDACTED]. If they can organize and ensure safe passage for him, will try to get him to the site and help search for the graves. Said only military and youth assault teams were stationed in this area during the war. These units moved frequently, were replaced, or were subsequently dispersed. Many have died, and the youth assault groups have disbanded. (Ref: JTF-FA, 100712Z Sep 96)

OCTOBER 1996, MEETING WITH VNOSMP ON UNILATERAL REQUESTS: VNOSMP reported that in cases where they had been asked to search for veterans from the 280th Air Defense Regiment, including Case 1329, that the Vietnamese and the U.S. have attempted to locate records from this unit. VNOSMP had returned to the unit to search for more records but found nothing. VNOSMP recommended against returning to this unit but instead concentrate continued investigation in other areas.

JUNE 1997, REPORT OF UNILATERAL VIETNAMESE INVESTIGATION: The VNOSMP followed up on information from a former military officer in Quang Binh Province, Tran Su, who had identified a potential source who might be able to identify former members of Youth Assault Groups that had served in the province. These units were made up of young men and women who supported the military, often by building, maintaining, and repairing strategic roads. The VNOSMP reported that the witness Mr. Su identified (Doan Duc Lien) could not help, but Lien recommended talking to Nguyen Cong Huan, the chief of staff of the province youth association. (Huan had been interviewed unsuccessfully in May 1997, as per joint investigation section narrative above.) (REF: MSG DTG 100712Z SEP 96)

VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY ARCHIVES: In 1999-2000, U.S. researchers re-inventoried the photos of the Vietnam News Agency. They found seven photos related to this case, copies of the photos described above.

VIETNAMESE HISTORY: 1999 history of Route 20 (Duong 20 Quyet Thang), p. 140 identifies youth assault (thanh nien xung phong--TNXP) groups operating in the area. Company 23 TNXP Ha Tinh was at Ca Roong. Company 25 TNXP Nam Ha was at Kilometer 68. See p. 160, which identifies Dr. Hoof Hoong Hatj as commander of Phaaux Thuaatj 2 at Kilometer 68.

Joint Field Activity 13-1VM (109th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work (AW) Team interviewed 48 veterans of Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14) who did not provide any information relating to Case 1329. The team also interviewed two veterans of the 280th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Regiment who provided specific, detailed information that correlates to Case 1329. Mr. Le Duc Qua and Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau provided detailed information on the aircraft shoot down, and the ejection of both pilots. They reported the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) resisted capture and was shot and killed during the capture attempt. The First Lieutenant crewman was successfully captured, but was killed by U.S. aircraft bombing the area to suppress the anti-aircraft fire in order to facilitate a rescue attempt. At least one of the two individuals indicated he could be of assistance in locating the burial site of the U.S. Lieutenant. (more detailed information included in Joint Information section 05/13, 13-3VM / 111th JFA) (Ref; Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Concerning Case 1329, dtg 300708z Jan 13)

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June 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work Team interviewed four individuals who provided information relating to Case 1329;

- Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chi, while serving as the Watch Officer of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 on 25 or 26 November 1968. He identified the 1st Company, 105th Battalion as the unit responsible for the shoot down, and after hearing that one of the crew had been captured, was en route to the area when he heard that the captured pilot had been killed. This information was passed to him by two members of a volunteer youth unit, Ms. Vinh and Ms. Xuan.
- Mr. Do Van Viet, a former member of the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, related that while his unit was stationed at kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Thuong Trach village (Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province) in approx. February 1969, he and other soldiers from his unit discovered the wreckage of an F-4 aircraft 300 meters northwest of Route 20. About 20 meters from the tail of the aircraft, they found intact skeletal remains, with a pair of "American-style" boots. The skull contained intact teeth, three of which were gold. The did not discover any clothing or personal effects, although they did find a green parachute hung up atop a clump of bamboo. The remains were left unburied and Mr. Viet did not hear of anyone else ever burying them. He then related information of another incident that occurred during November-December 1968 near the Xuan Son Ferry (48Q XE 387 479) in which an F-4 was shot down and two pilots were captured and one later died. He directly witnessed the shoot down of the F-4, with both pilots ejecting. He later heard that both of the pilots were captured (one reportedly being an Australian and one an American). The American was said to have been shot and wounded while violently resisting capture. Three days later, while the two prisoners were being escorted to the Regiment, the American pilot died of his wounds and was buried near a lime kiln in the vicinity of Chot hamlet, Son Trach village (south of the Trooc River and southwest of the Xuan Son Ferry).
- Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, the former Commander of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, (interviewed by the RIT Team during the 109th JFA - see the Joint Investigations entry) reconfirmed that he was a participant to the capture and burial of the 1st Lieutenant who was shot down in an F-4 on 25 November 1968.
- Mr. Le Duc Qua, former member of the 47th Communications Company, 280th AAA Regiment, had only second-hand hearsay information about the F-4 shoot down, capture, death and burial of one pilot, as related to him by Mr. Dau.

- Site Surveys:

- Mr. Do Van Viet could not accurately determine the location where he found aircraft wreckage and remains in February 1969.

- Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, after much deliberation, was able to determine the burial location for the deceased 1st Lt, approx. 250 meters from the stream ford, "next to" Rt. 20, near the position of the 1st Co., 105th Bn identifying the site as located at 48Q XE 27688 17061.

- Note: Joint teams have identified and correlated the 1329 crash site at 48Q XE 277 179, approximately 300 meters northwest of the nearest section of Route 20. Mr. Viet's account of discovery of aircraft wreckage and remains appears to correlate with the Case 1329 pilot ~~Francisco~~ while Mr. Dau's account appears to correlate with the Case 1329 backseater (1Lt Francisco). (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report - Case 1329, 090241Z Oct 13)

(b)(3)

August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work Team located and interviewed 14 veterans of the Thanh Hoa Volunteer Youth Group and an additional 12 veterans of the 280th AAA Regiment, none of whom were able to provide any information on the Case 1329 loss incident. (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 070722Z Jan 14)

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Refno # 1329

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December 2014, Joint Field Activity 15-1VM (117th JFA): The VNOSMP team interviewed three veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group attached to the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, PAVN Binh Tram 14 (BT14). (A Binh Tram was a North Vietnamese military way station on the Ho Chi Minh Trail.)

- Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay provided hearsay information concerning the death of both U.S. pilots associated with the case. He claimed to know the area of the burial of one of the pilots. Mr. Vay recalled that around midday in 1968-1969, 12.7mm and 37mm AAA units subordinate to BT14, shot down an F-4. Two pilots ejected near the Ca Roong ford along Route 20. One caucasian pilot, possibly a captain, landed on a hill, one kilometer from the Ca Roong ford in the direction of Pha Long Dai. Mr. Vay heard that the pilot was killed on the spot and buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. He did not personally know the burial location of this pilot. The other pilot, a major, suffered a broken leg and landed near his unit's position. Mr. Vay's unit was ordered to capture the pilot, but was unable to do so, as he was killed by U.S. aircraft rocket strikes. Volunteer youth and AAA soldiers buried the pilot. Mr. Vay did not participate in the burial, but knew of the area of the pilot's grave.

- Mrs. Vu Thi Minh and Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son, both veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group, provided first-hand information concerning their participation in the capture, death, and burial of one of the U.S. pilots, and also provided hearsay information on another. They recalled the midday shoot down of an F-105 (sic) by the 27mm/12.7mm AAA unit attached to BT14. The aircraft crashed at the Ca Roong ford and the two pilots ejected, died, and were buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. One pilot ejected and died while suspended in the top of a tree in the area of Km 49, north of the ford. The pilot was a Second Lieutenant and caucasian. Personnel of Volunteer Youth unit 115, Team 263, along with soldiers from BT14's 12.7mm AAA unit buried the pilot. Mr. Son did not participate in this burial, but knows the location of the grave. The other pilot was caucasian and a Lieutenant Colonel landed next to Mr. Son's unit's positions. The pilot was seriously injured with two broken legs, but was able to use his survival radio to contact rescue forces. Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh approached the pilot, pulled down his parachute, and confiscated his handgun, knife, and other personal equipment. Seven soldiers from the light AAA unit assisted Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh in the capture. They claimed that a U.S. rescue helicopter approached the injured pilot and lowered a rope ladder, but because of his broken legs, the pilot was unable to climb up. The PAVN forces fired on the helicopter and forced it to depart. The Vietnamese retreated to a combat trench some 50-100 meters away as AD-6 [A-1 Skyraiders] attacked the Vietnamese held positions. When the airstrikes were over, the Vietnamese discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket strikes. Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh participated in the burial of the pilot's body. About 10 days later, the pilot's body was exhumed for photographs and then reburied in the same spot. (Ref: Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 110712Z Mar 15)

August 2015, Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report, JFA 15-3VM (119th JFA): The following is a translation of the Advance Work Report for Case 1329.

---Begin Translation---

RIT - 119th JFA

Results of the Advance Work Investigation of Case 1329 / QUANG BINH Province

Investigation Results this JFA: During Advance Work on the 119th JFA, VNOSMP specialists located and interviewed veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group (from THANH HOA) and the 280th Regiment for information concerning Case 1329.

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Refno # 1329

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(b)(4)

Witness One, Mr. NGUYEN TRONG BICH, resides in [REDACTED] QUANG XUONG District, THANH HOA Province. Mr. BICH was born in 1954 and entered service in 1971, assigned to the 25th Volunteer Youth Unit. From March 1971 to September 1972, he was assigned to the 25th Volunteer Youth of BINH TRAM 14 (BT14), and from October 1972 to October 1974, the 25th Engineer Battalion, BT14 in QUANG BINH Province.

Mr. BICH provided the following MIA-related information: In the morning on an unrecalled day in April 1972, at kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 of BT14, a wounded Caucasian pilot was taken to BT14 by unidentified PAVN soldiers. At the time, Mr. BICH was a communications soldier of the 25th Engineer Bn of BT14, and was tasked with receiving the pilot and escorting him to the 25th Bn Medical Station of BT14. Mr. BICH, along with four other unrecalled soldiers, carried the pilot to the 25th BN Medical Station. The pilot was only at the medical station a short time before he died.

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could
this
be?

Mr. BICH heard the pilot was captured at kilometer marker 61 at the A KI Ford; grid coordinate 48Q XE 261 127.

Mr. BICH, along with a number of other soldiers, buried the pilot. The pilot was buried at kilometer marker 54, Route 20. The pilot's grave is located at the bottom of the slope about 300 meters from our soldier's graves at the top of the slope.

Mr. BICH did not recall the names of the soldiers who carried the wounded pilot to the 25th Bn Medical Station, nor did he recall the names of the soldiers who participated in the burial. Mr. BICH and his unit were stationed in the area of the pilot's grave until 1975.

Mr. BICH recalled the names of a few 25th Bn officers who knew of this incident including:

1. Mr. TA XUAN MAI, Battalion Commander, from THAI BINH Province (deceased),
2. Mr. LE TRONG LUOC, Deputy Commander, from [REDACTED] TINH GIA District, THANH HOA Province, and
3. Mr. HIEN, from THO XUAN District, THANH HOA Province.

(b)(4)

Witness Two, Mr. CAO VIET HUNG, born in 1948, residing in [REDACTED] DIEN CHAU District, NGHE AN Province. Mr. HUNG entered service in 1968. From 1968 to 1972 he was assigned to the 16th Reconnaissance Company (C16), BT14. Mr. HUNG provided the following MIA-related information:

At the end of 1968, Mr. HUNG witnessed the shootdown of a U.S. aircraft and the pilot was killed and buried about 300 meters from the TA LE Ford, in LAOS. The body was buried in a bomb crater near the downed aircraft. An engineering unit buried the pilot, but Mr. HUNG did not recall the unit designator.

Witnesses who had no MIA-related information: Messrs. NGUYEN HONG TICH, CAO DANG CONG, and PHAN NGOC CHUYEN.

VNOSMP Observations and Recommendations: VNOSMP specialists interviewed five BT14 veterans for information regarding Case 1329. Messrs. NGUYEN TRONG BICH and CAO VIET HUNG provided MIA related information and we have already [previously] interviewed Mr. BICH. The joint team will

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interview Mr. CAO VIET HUNG on a future JFA.

---End Translation---

DPAA-W Analyst Comments: Agree with VNOSMP recommendations.
[MSG DTG: 210505Z APR 16, SUB: Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329 and Laos Case 1698 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-3VM (119th JFA) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam]

Knowledgeability Assessment

Vietnam has demonstrated extensive knowledge of this loss, but we have no evidence that officials recovered these men's remains.

Case Coordination Chronology:

<u>Re-Coordination</u>	<u>Date</u>
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)(REAFFIRM); AW VM RIT A 16-3VM (WITNESSES)	5/16/2016
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)	9/3/2015
A--US RESEARCH HI (JFA 15-3VM IT1 AND JFA 15-3VM AW VM RIT REPORTS)	6/4/2015
A--US RESEARCH JPAC EDB (SITE 1); JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (15-2VM)(SITE 2)	1/20/2015
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (MR. LE HUY CHINH)	2/25/2014
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (13-3VM); AW VM RIT (13-2VM REPORT PENDING)	5/22/2013
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT	12/12/2012
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (REAFFIRM)	2/29/2012
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (SKETCH AND IIR 0238 10)	3/2/2011
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (REAFFIRM-2006)	2/25/2009
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM (458TH CO-- MR. HUNG)	6/9/2006
A--USA RESEARCH (JPAC W/IMAGERY)	5/20/2005
A--USA RESEARCH (DPMO - IMAGERY)	2/27/2004
A--JOINT SURVEY (W/HRDT) (XE 27873 15511)	6/13/2003
A--JOINT SURVEY (XE278155 & XE277173) (REAFFIRM)	1/24/2001
A--JOINT SURVEY (REAFFIRM)	3/1/2000
A--JOINT SURVEY CRASHSITE; RESCIND UW AND UA	8/6/1999
PP--JTF ASSESSMENT	3/12/1999
PP--PENDING REPORT ANALYSIS	12/17/1998
PP--50TH JFA	4/17/1998
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS; UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRM BOTH)	10/30/1997
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRMED; NGOI ASSIST WHEN RECOVERED)	11/22/1996
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (OB LEADS)	2/29/1996
A--JOINT ARCHIVES, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES, WITNESSES, REMAINS; VNA PHOTO	4/27/1995

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Further Pursuit Information

JOINT EXCAVATE VM: This case passed an Excavation Decision Board (EDB) on 3 September 2015. There are two isolated burial sites that will be excavated: Site 1 VM 03267, and Site 2 VM 03299 (48Q XE 27699 16434). Both sites will be excavated by the Vietnam Recovery Team (VRT).

AW VM RIT A: Interview Mr. Cao Viet Hung, located during Advance Work 15-3VM (119th JFA).

Further Pursuit Deferred Information

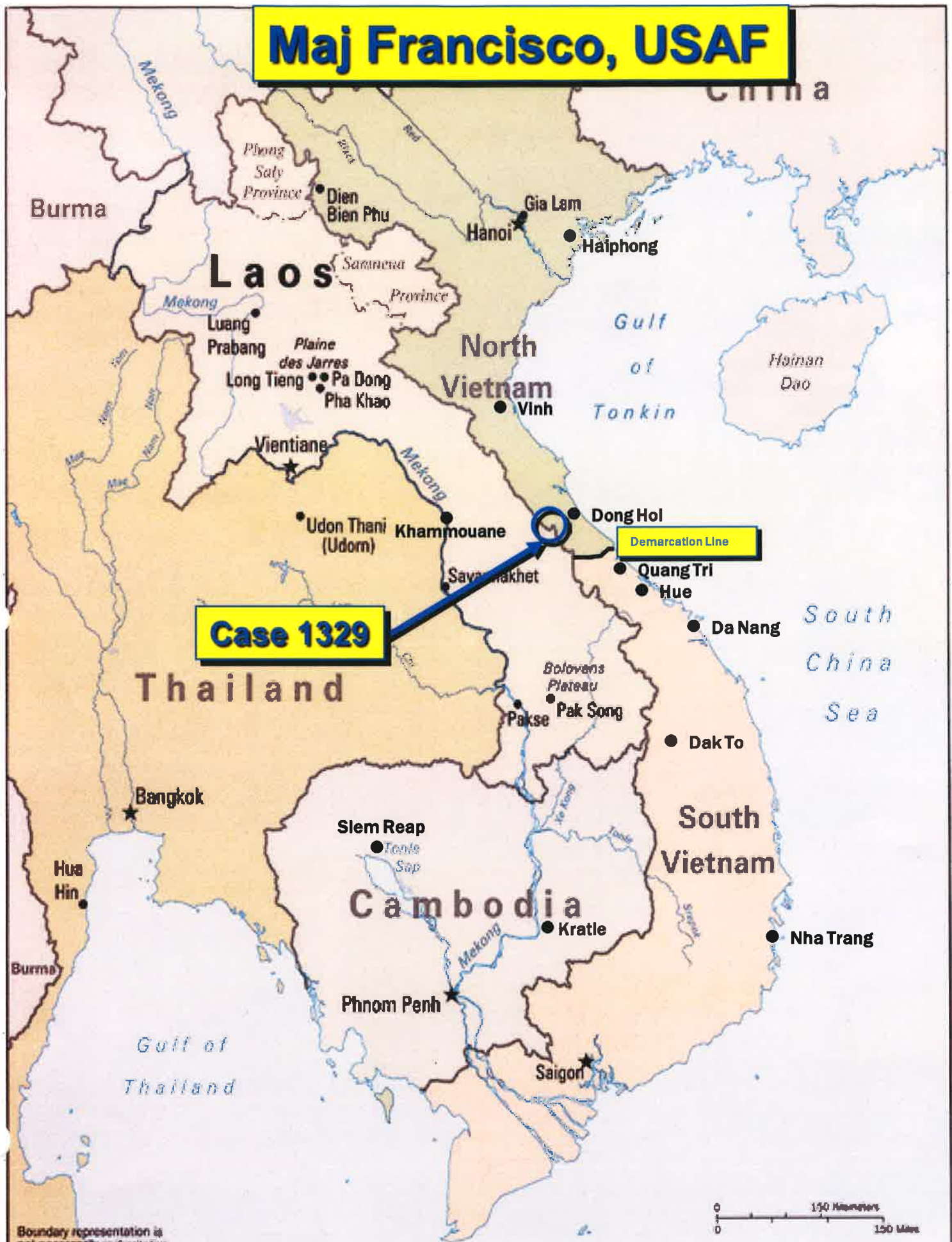
NA

No Further Pursuit Information

NA

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As part of the 1995 comprehensive review of each case of an unaccounted for American in Southeast Asia, Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office analysts created an electronic database of relevant facts. This ever-changing working tool reflects a snapshot in time summarizing data collected to date, as well as analytical opinions and recommendations. It permits analysts to review pertinent case information quickly, update each record as new information is collected, and develop investigative leads. Following is a narrative of the information contained in the electronic database on this loss.

Family Conference

Case Releasable?

REDACT

Case Summary Information:

Refno: 1329	BIO: 01	Lat: 172059N	Ctry: VN
Name: FRANCISCO, SAN DEWAYNE		Long: 1061150E	Province: QUANG BINH
Loss Rank: O2		UTM: 48QXE2720018500	District: BO TRACH
Service: USAF	Status: XX	OffscopeCase: N	Township: THUONG TRACH
Incident Date: 1968/11/25		PriorityCase: Y	
Vehicle Type: F4D		Fate Determined: Y	

Case Summary

(b)(3)

On 25 November 1968, [REDACTED] aircraft commander, and First Lieutenant (1stLt) San Francisco, pilot/navigator, of 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 432rd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, were the crew of an F-4D Phantom (serial # 66-7523; call sign Grommet 02) escorting an RF-4C (call sign Grommet 01) on a photo reconnaissance mission, when downed in a heavily fortified area of the Ban Karai Pass, near the Lao border. At approximately 1245 hours, as Grommet 01 started its mission in the target area, it heard Grommet 02 report that "we've taken a hit." Grommet 01 immediately aborted its mission, but did not see Grommet 02 crash. A steady beeper was heard, whereupon search and rescue forces (SAR) were scrambled, and wreckage was located on the side of a hill at grid coordinates 48Q XE 270 185. When the SAR forces arrived, voice contact was established with both crewmen and a pick-up was attempted at 48Q XE 272 186, but the rescue choppers were driven off by small arms fire. Due to adverse weather conditions, the SAR effort was suspended for the first day. The next morning, a forward air controller (FAC) was on station, but fog in the area hindered its search efforts. As the fog dissipated, [REDACTED] location was confirmed again, however, continuing adverse weather had precluded SAR forces from staging nearby, delaying their response time. When the SAR forces did arrive, radio contact was lost and could not be re-established. The parachute that had been visible the day before had disappeared. All efforts to re-establish contact with the crew failed. SAR forces believed 1stLt Francisco landed very close to enemy personnel and was detained shortly after the initial and inconclusive attempt to contact him. On 26 November, Radio Hanoi and the Nhan Dan newspaper both announced the shoot down and said the two pilots had been captured alive.

Subsequent to the incident, and while carried in the status of missing-in-action, the U.S. Air Force promoted [REDACTED] to the rank of Colonel and San Francisco to the rank of Major.

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US Government Information

SPECIAL REPORTING: Reported that one pilot had been "picked up in Quang Binh this date." Discussed

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Refno # 1329

SG'd by LMR
on 16 MAR 16

Reviewed by DPLA
IAW 50 USC 435 Note & DOD 5400.7-R
Date: 15 MAR 16 Initials: RW


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whether to transport him and another pilot captured the same day to Hanoi, raising the possibility of using an aircraft to move the pilot. ((Note: the reference to the Quang Binh pilot relates to Case 1327 (Ruhling), who was transported by air.))

WARTIME MEDIA: On 26 November 1968, the People's Army Newspaper (Nhan Dan) carried an article congratulating the people of Quang Binh for shooting down an F-4 on 25 November 1968. The article said the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. Hanoi broadcast also noted the downing, stating the pilot(s) was/were captured alive. [Analyst note: the article addressed the shoot-down of the case 1328 aircraft as well, and the "capture of both crews", hence, the total number of captured crewmen is unclear]

APRIL 2005, NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (NGA) RESEARCH: No usable pre-incident imagery was discovered. Post-incident aircraft imagery from 18 December 1968 proved best for analysis. The imagery revealed the possible crash site for Case 1329 in the vicinity of XE 2705 1842. The primary impact site and probable debris field appeared cone or triangular-shaped. The debris field fanned-out from the likely impact site in a west-southwesterly direction, suggesting this was the direction the plane was flying when impact occurred. There were no indications of aircraft wreckage or debris. A possible extension of the debris field, or possibly a second impact site, is located approximately 140 meters further west-southwest.

The area (XE 27873 15511) near Kilometer Marker 51 (52) on Route 20 (wartime Route 137) was analyzed for signs of a burial site. Full analysis was inhibited by the lack of pre-incident imagery. Imagery revealed numerous craters in the area; joint teams discovered two large craters believed to have been caused by rocket strikes from SAR forces.

IIR 6 024 0238 10: A hand-drawn map depicting the burial location of two American aviators (first turned over to U.S. officials in 1995) resurfaced in a letter sent to the U.S. Embassy, Hanoi on 2 August 2010. Mr. Nguyen Huu Ngoi personally drew two diagrams related to two U.S. pilots as he photographed the 3,000th aircraft shot down and its pilots. Photographs of 30 American pilots were turned over to the Vietnam News Agency. The diagram of the graves of two American soldiers who flew an RF-4C (sic) shot down on 25 November 1968 at KM 54 along Route 20 in Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province were described. Lieutenant's grave is about 15 to 20 meters off the right hand side of Route 20 at kilometer marker 54.  grave is about 20 to 25 meters from the crash site. Area still has a lot of unexploded cluster bombs. It is in the jungle and uninhabited. (REF: MSG DTG 101727Z AUG 10)

20 January 2014 - E-mail Contact: The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) detachment in Hanoi was contacted by a U.S. citizen who was contacted by a Vietnamese national and forwarded a recounting of the wartime burial of a U.S. aviator. The reported first-hand witness detailed his account in an email forwarded to the detachment. The content of the email was as follows: "The incident occurred in August 1968, during the Vietnam War, in the crucial area of the Ca Rong ford [Ngam Ca Rong, vicinity 48Q XE 27123 17132 (WGS-84 datum)] on "resolved to Win" Route 20, Quang Binh Province, Vietnam. U.S. planes were bombing this area when one of them was shot down. A U.S. pilot parachuted and was captured by Vietnam's armed forces (combat engineers and ground troops). Mr. Le Huy Chinh removed some communications equipment from the pilot. Later, many U.S. aircraft attempted to rescue the pilot, but because they could not contact him, they returned and resumed bombing, intensely damaging this area and killing many people, including the U.S. pilot. When all the U.S. aircraft had gone, the Vietnamese forces began evacuating the wounded and burying the dead. The U.S. pilot was buried directly by Le Huy Chinh on a mountain 45 kilometers west of Phong Nha [vicinity 48Q XE 37534 46066 (WGS-84 datum)], in Quang

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Binh Province. (Ref: Additional Information Report from JPAC, 220648Z Jan 14; Det-2 Info Email, 14 Feb 2014) [Analyst note: see follow-up with Mr. Le Huy Chinh under JFAs 14-2VM & 14-4VM below]

Joint Investigations

SUMMARY: This case has been jointly investigated eighteen times. The crash site has been positively identified. Photos have been identified of the wreckage, one of the crewmen, and related ID media for the other crewman. Multiple eyewitnesses and informants have reported on locations of burial sites for both crewmen. One site is being recommended for excavation, while a second site awaits the corroborative testimony of another alleged eyewitness before it too is recommended for excavation.

August 1989, 7th Joint Field Activity (JFA): Team found the crash site at XE 272185, just 200 meters west [analyst note: should read "east" vice "west"] of the coordinates listed in U.S. records. ID numbers on wreckage allowed team to confirm the crash site. There were no witnesses because local people had been evacuated during the war, and only North Vietnamese Army (PAVN) troops, long since gone, were present. Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) member Ngo Hoang said someone in Bo Trach had told him in 1988 that remains for one or two Americans were buried vicinity KM 55 marker, Route 20 (war-time Route 137), but team could not confirm this. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329; 230946Z Aug 89)

January 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity: Team was told VNOSMP had found information on this case indicating that an F-4C was shot down by unit stationed near "Cau Lang". The crew was a Major and a First Lieutenant with no information on the fate of either crew member. "Cau Lang" could be a Vietnamization of Ko Roong, which is a ford at the 52 KM marker and describes the general area. Investigated KM 54 marker (XE 279 156) of Route 20, looking for alleged burial site; found nothing. (Ref: AIR of Case 1329, 270354Z Feb 91)

February 1991, 13th Joint Field Activity: The Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) liaison office in Bangkok provided further observations on case 1329 and the source of information in the previous January 1991 investigation. There was conflicting reporting on whether the suspect burial was at KM 54 or KM 55 markers. Mr. Tho from the VNOSMP team provided hearsay that the location was most likely the KM 54 marker. (Ref: 260729Z Feb 91)

April-May 1992, 17th Joint Field Activity: Visited Thuong Trach Village; no witnesses, no information. (Ref: None)

January 1994, Priority Case Investigation Team (PCIT) investigation: Vietnamese said no more documentation was available. Said no individuals present at downing were in the province or available for interview. Interviews of authors of books about actions in this general area produced no information on this case. (Ref: PCIT Report Case 1329, 081802Z Apr 94)

May 1995, Oral History Interview: Former Vietnam News Agency (VNA) combat photographer Nguyen Huu Ngoi said he photographed the bodies of two American pilots whose aircraft had been downed by a unit of the 280th AAA Regiment. Ngoi said he learned right away when the 280th had downed an aircraft in the area of Kilometer 54, Route 20. He reached the incident site the next morning which was 20 kilometers from the unit headquarters (14th Battalion?). At the scene, troops and members of an assault youth group told him about the incident. Two pilots had ejected and landed two kilometers apart.

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The first pilot, a First Lieutenant, was captured almost immediately and had been wounded in the leg. He was being treated for his injury when a rocket from one of the SAR aircraft hit and killed him and a number of others. The pilot was buried about 15 meters to west of Route 20. Ngoi asked the soldiers to exhumate the body so he could photograph it; only the face uncovered, and he took a picture. The body was no longer intact.

The second pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). The body was approximately two kilometers northwest of the first body, in jungle so thick that it had to be cut away to provide enough light for photography. Troops had found and surrounded him, but he had shot at them, and they had returned fire, killing him. Ngoi saw the body lying on its back and took a couple of photographs. He did not observe the burial but assumed that one took place. Ngoi speculated burial would have been on the spot, since it would have been very difficult to move the body, given the difficult terrain.

He next went to the aircraft crash site where he took photos of wreckage. The crash site was 2-3 kilometers southeast of the second body (Lieutenant Colonel). He returned to unit headquarters and took photos of identification media that soldiers had taken from the two bodies. He also took pictures of a large roll of film. He never saw the finished photos after turning them in and never returned to the Route 20 area. Nonetheless, Ngoi believed he could point out the burial site and offered to help the team find graves. He also identified the photos of the wreckage and remains as photos that he had taken.

Ngoi identified additional possible witnesses: Mai Thanh Hai, former director of Vietnam News Agency in Military Region 4; Lai Van Thanh, aka Lam Thanh, former chief of Group 559 and vanguard cells of Military Region 4; Nguyen Van Soan, member of Group 559 and vanguard cells; Bui Hoang Chung, former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell (interviewed 8 APR 95); Duong Duc Quang, former member of Quang Binh Vinh Linh cell. (Ref: OHP Report, 270922Z Jun 95)

October-November 1995, Letters from photographer Nguyen Huu Ngoi: in two letters, Ngoi provided details of the burial locations. He explained that his medical problems prevented him from accompanying the team to the site at present. He repeated that the lieutenant was buried 15-20 meters west of Kilometer Marker 54. He said the lieutenant colonel (sic) died and was buried 20-25 meters from the aircraft on the left hand side; the crash was two kilometers from the Route 20 Kilometer 54 marker to the right from Xuan Son. He provided a sketch of the graves. His second letter placed [REDACTED] grave on right side of the aircraft. (Analyst note: these letters conflict with his original oral history report) (Ref: JTF-FA Report VN95-043 (Letter): Mr. Nguyen Huu Ngoi, 110922Z Jan 96; 170902Z Oct 96; IIR 6 024 0238 10) (b)(3)

January 1996, Letter from Nguyen Huu Ngoi: Ngoi said he was gradually recovering and asked for a status update of this investigation. He said he would still like to help. He also said there was a marker stone at the crash site and with patience, it could be found. Finally, he said that members of the 7th Youth Assault Group were the ones who buried the crew members in this incident. (Ref: 110922Z Jan 96)

January 1997, Oral History Interview: Tran Su said Mr. Lien might have information on wartime volunteer youth members who knew of U.S. burial sites. (Ref: None)

May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity: Thanh Hoa Province task team leader reported that Mr. Ngoi's health was very poor, and he could not accompany the team to Quang Binh. If he recovered, the U.S. would be notified. The VNSOMP provided a written report to this effect. (Ref: DRI on SRT Case 1329, 280732Z Jul 97)

May 1997, 46th Joint Field Activity Research and Investigations Team (RIT): The VNOSMP reported

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that the Vietnamese had interviewed Doan Duc Liem, but he had indicated he did not directly observe any crash sites. (REF: MSG DRI of SRT 1329 280732 JUL 97)

May 1997, Oral History Interview: Nguyen Cong Huan, current chief of staff of the Quang Binh Province youth association. Huan was too young to be a wartime participant in the volunteer youth. He said they did not keep regular records since they were not a regular unit. Huan suggested the following witnesses:

Vo Trong Bao (Vox Trongj Baof) Xuan Thuy Village, Le Thuy District;
Luong Thi Kim Tien (Lwong Thij Kim Tieens), Van Hoa Village, Tuyen Quang District;
Tran Van Xang (Traanf Vawn Xangj), Quang Trach Village, Bo Trach District;
Nguyen Thi Kim Cung (Kim Cungx), Bac Ly Ward, Dong Hoi Town;
Nguyen Thi Nay (Naayj), Quang Long Village, Quang Trach District;
Ngo Van Truyen (Ngoo Vawn Truyeen), Minh Hoa Village, Minh Hoa District;
Dao Viet Thau (Daof Vieets Thaur), Nghia Ninh Village, Dong Hoi Town.

(Ref: None)

May 1997, Oral History Interview: Dao Viet Thau was a former political officer of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company. He described the organization of the volunteer youth and said that 19 companies comprised the Route 20 "construction site." Before November 1965, what became Route 20 was called the Route 16 site, encompassing Kim Thuy, Ngan Thuy, and Phu Thuy villages. [Analyst note: wartime topographical maps identified this road at Route 137, which became Route 912 upon crossing into Laos]. In November 1965, he and the 7th Company began work on the Route 20 site and stayed there until July 1967. They worked between Km 17 and 54. The area was virtually unpopulated due to its remoteness and U.S. bombing. He described three downings during his tenure, two of which preceded the Case 1329 incident and one that occurred in 1972.

He named the following individuals as possible witnesses: Vo Trong Bao (Vox Trongj Baof) who served as the deputy chief of the Quang Binh Youth Association during July 1967 to September 1972; and Le Cong Thu (Lee Coong Thus) who assumed command of the 7th Volunteer Youth Company after Thau left and is a current resident of Dong My Ward, Dong Hoi Town; and Mr. Tho (Thoj) former commander of the 4th Quang Binh 12.7mm AAA company. (Ref: 190912Z Dec 97)

December 1997, 48th Joint Field Activity: Team interviewed four witnesses who had no information on this case.

1) Le Ba Cuong (Border Defense Group Deputy Commander at KM 54) knew about five crash sites, but he witnessed only one incident, a 1972 crash at Kilometer 16. Later he visited crash sites at Km 43 (Case [REDACTED] Km 46 (1 died; 1 ejected, Case ?); a reconnaissance prop plane near Km 52 (no information on fate of crewmen, Case ?); and one jet crash at Km 61 (Heard one Lieutenant Colonel ejected and forces searched for him, but Cuong did not know what happened to him, Case 1698?).

Nguyen Dai Nghia (12.7mm Battery Commander, 7th Youth) knew of three incidents: 1) A fighter aircraft was shot down in March 1966 near Km 14 marker, 2) Late afternoon in late 1968, shot an aircraft that he heard crashed near Km 68 in Laos, 3) At about 1700 hours on an unspecified day in 1966, a 37mm AAA gun from Binh Tram 14 (BT14) shot down what Nghia thought was an A1 (propeller) aircraft. It crashed in a mountainous jungle area near the Ca Roong Stream and Km 54. Nghia had no information on the fate of any of the crews.

Le Cong Thu (7th Youth Company Commander) stated that at approximately 1100-1200 hours, in October-November 1968, his unit shot down an F-105 near Km 54. Also, during the dry season of 1969 [which standardly runs from November to April], an unknown unit shot down an A-6 flying low, and it crashed

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near Km 68, on the border, in the general area of Nui Dai Ngang. Lots of SAR activity ensued, and he assumed the pilot was rescued.

Nguyen Phu Tho (12.7mm Battery commander) described the capture of one American in 1966 (Case 0240). He described five incidents that probably involved rescued aviators and one downing of a C-130 (Case 1807). (Ref: DRI Special Remains Case 1329, 060712Z Jan 98)

May 1998, 50th Joint Field Activity: While investigating another case (1816), team interviewed three former members of the volunteer youth:

Nguyen Thi Nay served in the Route 12/15 area, not Route 20, with Team 732, (a.k.a. C2, D73).

Tran Van Xang also served in the Route 12/15 area, as commander of Team 75. He asserted that Luong Thi Kim Tien had served with Team 73 and only worked a short stretch of road, and would not know anything about U.S. losses.

Nguyen Thi Kim Cung operated on Route 12A up until February 1967, at which time he moved to Ba Trai area, south of Gianh Ferry. From 1968-72, he served in Quang Tri. (Ref: DRI of Case 1816, 240702Z Jun 98)

September 2000, 62nd Joint Field Activity: Joint team returned to survey the crash site and search for the two graves. A Vietnamese team first swept the site with metal detectors and marked possible unexploded ordnance. Dinh Nhot, previously interviewed in August 1989, said he observed a burning aircraft crash into the hills near where he was stationed. He did not visit the site until about one month later, and he had been there numerous times since. He never saw any remains.

The team searched the surface of the crash site area, finding small pieces of unidentifiable wreckage. The area of old Route 20, which was used during wartime, was also searched. Local Vietnamese officials pointed out where they believed Kilometer Marker 54 had been located; it was now Kilometer Marker 51. Team found no signs of a burial, but did locate two large craters (vicinity of XE 2780 1555). The team thought these might have been the rocket strikes that reportedly killed one crewman. No signs of a burial site could be found nearby. The team recommended searching again, spending one whole day near the road and a second near the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 262016Z Oct 00)

January 2002, 68th Joint Field Activity: VNOSMP reported that Mr. Ngoi was in extremely poor health and would be unable to attend an interview or lead a team to the burial site. Team could not fly to the site itself due to inclement weather. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 200812Z Feb 02)

May 2003, 73rd Joint Field Activity: Nguyen Huu Ngoi again reported information on this case and how he came to photograph the two aviators. He could not recall the names of the guides that took him to the areas where he took the photos. One pilot was buried in proximity of the crash site in the direction of Route 20 (NFI). Mr. Ngoi guided the team to the alleged burial site of a First Lieutenant using terrain association, but he was only able to identify a general area. Mr. Ngoi could only walk with great difficulty, had to be carried most of the time, and required frequent breaks.

The joint team thoroughly searched the area he pointed out, paying special attention to craters. A local official said that several recently dug holes in the area were made by a man who was killed by unexploded ordnance. The area searched included the area around the Kilometer 54 marker, which was at XE 27873 15511. The VNOSMP reported that there were no persons living in the area at the time. Team surveyed the crash site at XE 27364 18189 (XE 27850 17550 on the map), finding a piece of unexploded ordnance, and also searched several craters along the road. The team assessed there was a high probability of more unexploded ordnance in the area. (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 020902Z Jun 03)

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October 2005, 83rd Joint Field Activity: While investigating another case, the Research and Investigation Team (RIT) obtained additional information that may correlate to Case 0761 (resolved), Case 1105 (unresolved), or Case 1329 (unresolved). Mr. Mai Ingoc Dong, former communications specialist with Volunteer Youth Team 25 from July 1965 to early 1970, provided secondhand information on the crash of a U.S. aircraft. While on duty in the headquarters of Volunteer Youth Team 25 during the 1967-1968 timeframe, Mr. Mai Ingoc Dong heard a report from members of the 458th Company that an aircraft had crashed at kilometer marker 54, of Route 20, near Ca Roong Hamlet, Thuong Trach Village, Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province. The aircraft was described as an AD-6 (A-1) and the remains of an aviator were in the plane. Mr. Dong never visited the site and did not know about any associated grave; however, he identified Mr. Pham Viet Hung, a former 458th Company member, as a person who had visited the crash site and viewed the aviator's remains. Mr. Hung resides in Ngai Tri Hamlet, Liem Tuyen Village, Thanh Liem District, Ha Nam Province, Vietnam. (Analyst Note: Both the Case 1105 and Case 1329 loss incidents involved F-4 aircraft. The aircraft involved in the Case 0761 incident was a T-28, an aircraft very similar in appearance to an A-1 aircraft). (Ref: RIT AIR for 83rd JFA, 122154Z Dec 05)

August 2010, Joint Field Activity 10-4VM (100th JFA): An investigation team interviewed Mr. Pham Viet Hung, a 458th Company veteran, who provided information concerning the November 1967 crash of an aircraft and his subsequent observation of the body of an American pilot near Route 20, in Quang Binh Province. The hope was that his information might correlate with case 1329. It clearly did not. Mr. Hung served in the Co Roong Ford area (48Q XE 279 171) until March 1968. He was not present in that area at the time of the case 1329 loss incident, his information possibly correlates with another case [REDACTED] (Ref: DRI Case 1329, 132339Z Oct 2010)

(b)(3)

May 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 280th Air Defense Regiment, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau and Mr. Le Duc Qua. Both individuals provided information that correlates to Case 1329.

- Mr. Dau, who commanded the 105th AAA Battalion, witnessed an F-4 shot down on 25 November 1968 and saw both pilots eject. One parachute landed near the 1st Company's 37mm AAA battery. Personnel from this battery left their position to capture the pilot. Mr. Dau was in a vehicle approaching the position when a bomb strike killed the captured pilot, and Mr. Dau was wounded. The pilot, a 1st Lieutenant, was buried several hours later at the location where he died, near the eastern edge of Route 20. Three days after the incident, a PAVN photographer requested the remains be exhumed so he could take pictures. The body was then reburied in its original location. Mr. Dau knows the burial site and is willing to point it out to a future joint team. Mr. Dau sent three soldiers from the Battalion HQ to capture the second pilot, reportedly a Lieutenant Colonel (sic). This pilot was killed the next morning when he resisted capture and his body was not buried. Mr. Dau has never been to the crash site or the location where the second pilot was killed, although he was given a map taken from the slain pilot, which he turned over to the joint team. The map is a 1:250,000 scale U.S. DoD Escape & Evasion Chart (EVC) inscribed "souvenir" at 1400 on 26 November 1968 (Mau Than) at kilometer 54, Ka Rong, Route 20, shot down one F-4H and captured two bandit pilots. This is the map of the Lieutenant Colonel staff officer (sic) who was shot and killed on the spot by the capturing group (600 meters west of the road as the bird flies). C1-D105-E280 (signature illegible) [Note: C1-D105-E280 translates as 1st Company, 105th Battalion, 280th Regiment]

- Mr. Qua was a communications soldier attached to the 280th AAA Regimental HQ and observed the shoot down of the aircraft by the Regimental observation station. he saw both parachutes and estimated that one landed near kilometer marker 51 on Route 20 and the second landed near kilometer 54.5 (sic), on Route 20.

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He heard (primarily from Mr. Dau) that the first parachute was that of a Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed resisting capture and the second was a First Lieutenant who died in a bomb strike and was buried where he fell. Mr. Qua knows the second burial site (of the First Lieutenant), located 20-30 meters east of Route 20 and was willing to point it out to a joint team. He does not know the location where the Lieutenant Colonel was killed, and he never went to the crash site. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA), 250350Z Jun 13)

August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed two veterans of the 103rd Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment concerning Case 1329.

- Mr. Dau Van Viet, a former gunner in the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, described his discovery of an intact human skeleton in September 1969. The remains were in close proximity to an F-4 crash site, approximately 300-400 meters northwest of Route 20, near the Co Roong ford in Quang Binh Province. He left the remains where they lay.

- Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chi related his first-hand observation of the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft in November 1968 near kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Quang Binh Province. He observed one parachute clearly and a second parachute that opened at a lower altitude and may not have fully deployed. Mr. Chi heard that the body of one crewman was buried near Route 20. He heard that the second crewman was shot and killed while resisting capture and may not have been buried. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 conducted during 13-4VM (112th JFA), 210800Z Oct 13)

March 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-2VM (114th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) met with Mr. Le Huy Chinh, and former squad leader of the 5th Squad, 5th Platoon, 5th Volunteer Youth Company, serving under the command of the 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14). Mr. Chinh related that on a day in probably August of 1968, his squad was located a few hundred meters west of Route 20, in the vicinity of the Ca Roong ford (48Q XE 279 171 (India Thai datum)) when they heard gunfire to the south and witnessed a stricken aircraft heading in their direction. They saw one pilot eject and ran to the area to capture him. They found him on a ridge (XE 270 173) with his helmet off, parachute still clipped on, and talking on a hand-held radio. They captured him, took his gear and were intending to turn him over to a formal military unit when they were forced to take cover as U.S. aircraft began bombing the area. When the bombing ceased after a few minutes, they emerged from cover to discover the pilot had been killed by the bombing. They buried him in a fresh bomb crater 6-7 meters away. They supposedly did not report the capture or death of the pilot to higher headquarters. Mr. Chinh said they visited the actual aircraft crash site two or three days later (indicated as near the southeast corner of grid square XE 27 20), and although they saw no other body, they noticed a "terrible stench" of decomposition suggesting that another body was nearby. Mr. Chinh named two other individuals from his youth group who were with him during the incident; Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay and a Mr. Binh. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 070723Z May 14)

June 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-3VM (115th JFA): An investigation team re-interviewed Messrs. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, age 81, former Commander of the 105th AAA Battalion, Group 559, and Le Duc Qua, age 65, former communications soldier of 47th Company, 280th Air Defense Regiment. Three other potential witnesses, Messrs. Le Huy Chinh, Nguyen Huu Vay, and Do Van Viet, were unavailable for interview. Both PAVN veterans provided accounts consistent with their interviews during JFA 13-3VM; new insights from Mr. Dau being that he recalled the time of incident as 1400 hours, that he saw red and green parachutes leave the stricken aircraft, and that the lieutenant had his right leg broken when captured. He recalled this pilot as being very young, large build, with yellow hair, light skin, and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit. Mr. Dau's subordinates surrendered this pilot's ID media, papers, and radio he had been carrying, which Mr. Dau

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subsequently sent back to 260th Regimental headquarters. This pilot was buried in his uniform and boots, in a 60 centimeters deep grave, at the only flat area east of Route 20, with a dirt mound resulting over the grave. Mr. Dau stated that the exhumation conducted in order for a photographer to take pictures of the body, occurred five days later, rather than the three days that he cited during JFA 13-3VM, and he asserted that the body was reburied in the same grave. The only new insights he offered into the disposition of the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) who was killed, was that he recalled him as being of large build, white skin and wearing a leaf-colored flight suit, and that Mr. Dau's subordinates did not attempt to bury or cover that crewman after killing him.

New insights provided by Mr. Qua were that the aircraft had been shot down by AAA fire, and burst into flames. He recalled hearsay accounts of the captured lieutenant having two broken legs. Mr. Qua further specified that the bomb that killed the American lieutenant and injured Mr. Dau was a cluster bomb.

The team conducted a pedestrian/subsurface search of a 40 by 20 meter area of the alleged burial site (48Q XE 27679 17075, site # VM03267) using metal detectors, but was unable to find any evidence of remains, personal effects, or a burial. Shrubs and elephant grass cover the area, but it had at one time been cultivated for corn, and in 2012, the adjacent Provincial Highway 20 (wartime Route 137) had been widened and paved. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During JFA 14-3VM, 022119Z Sep 14)

August 2014, Joint Field Activity 14-4VM (116th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team re-interviewed Mr. Le Huy Chinh and interviewed Mr. Do Van Viet. A third desired witness, Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay was unavailable for interview.

Mr. Do Van Viet, a former 37mm AAA gunner of 9th Company, 103rd AAA Battalion, 280th Air Defense Regiment, provided hearsay information about an F-4 shoot down which correlated to resolved Case 1253. He provided additional information on one other F-4 crash site near the Ca Roong River (Thuong Trach district, Quang Binh province). None of Mr. Viet's information correlated to Case 1329.

Mr. Le Huy Chinh recalled that on an unknown date during the 1968 dry season [standardly runs from November - April], while stationed at the A Ky ford, he heard a AAA battery open fire and witnessed an F-4 trailing fire and smoke, heading in his direction, from the north. He witnessed one parachute emerge from the aircraft and with his squad, ran to the area to capture the pilot. They found the pilot sitting and talking on his hand-held radio. He was described as Caucasian, dark hair, neatly trimmed sideburns, with his left thigh soaked in blood, and his name tag ended with [REDACTED]. The pilot reportedly surrendered, once threatened with weapons. They began to take the pilot down the ridge to their position when other aircraft began to bomb the area. They pushed the pilot down and took cover. After the bombing, they emerged from cover to find that the pilot had been killed - suffered a large wound to the chest. They then dragged the pilot's body 20 meters upslope and buried him with his equipment in a bomb crater less than one meter deep. He was placed head up slope (west) in the grave and a small dirt mound piled over him, yet the grave was not marked. They reportedly did not formally report the death and burial. Approximately 10 days later, on patrol near the area, Mr. Chinh and his squad encountered a terrible stench in the area. Mr. Chinh cannot remember the names of any other members of his squad. He later heard that someone from the Quang Binh provincial militia headquarters exhumed a body for photographs but did not know if it was the body he had buried a few weeks prior. Mr. Chinch identified a 20 by 20 meter area encompassing a dirt mound which he said was similar to the one where he had buried the pilot (48Q XE 27630 16411). (Ref: DRI of Case 1329, 282041Z Oct 14)

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March 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-2VM (118th JFA): The Research and Investigation Team (RIT) interviewed five witnesses of the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, Binh Tram 14.

- Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the capture and subsequent burial of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. The American was a field grade officer who was accidentally killed by a U.S. airstrike. Mr. Son helped bury the American on a hillside near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. Mr. Son identified a photograph of the remains of [REDACTED] as the individual he helped bury. - On 25 November 1968, at approximately 1200-1300 hours, while (b)(3) stationed in the Ca Roong area (vicinity 48Q XE 271 171) of western Quang Binh Province, Mr. Son witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. The burning aircraft crashed near the waterfall at Ca Roong and two crewmembers parachuted from the plane. One of the two crewmembers, a Lieutenant Colonel, landed near Mr. Son's position. He and Mrs Vu Thi Minh, who was a member of a volunteer youth unit, quickly went to capture the American. When they found him, they saw he was severely injured, with both thighs broken just below the groin. The pilot was caucasian, weighed approximately 90 kilograms, and was 1.8-1.9 meters tall. He surrendered immediately and said in Vietnamese that he should be taken to Hanoi. Mrs Minh took the pilot's pistol and radio so he could not signal search and rescue forces. By this time, several members of the anti-aircraft unit that shot down the aircraft arrived at the pilot's location. The group confiscated items including survival gear from the pilot's seat kit and a parachute. Mr. Son did not know what became of these items. In anticipation that SAR forces would attempt to rescue the two downed pilots, Mr. Son's unit arranged itself in hastily dug fortifications encircling the downed pilot in order to ambush U.S. aircraft when they arrived. Approximately two hours later, a helicopter flew into the area and hovered over the pilot. The pilot and the helicopter crew established visual contact with each other and the helicopter lowered a line to the pilot. Someone from Mr. Son's unit opened fire on the helicopter, which then flew away. Mr. Son's unit remained in concealment anticipating U.S. aircraft to return. Shortly thereafter, AD-6 [A-1 Skyraider] aircraft strafed the area with rockets. After the rocket attack, Mr. Son and members of his unit came out of hiding and discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket attack, with a fatal wound to the back of his head. BT-14 authorities ordered the burial of the pilot, and a PAVN photo-journalist photographed the body (still in his flight suit) prior to the burial. Members of Mr. Son's combat engineer unit along with some of the AAA unit members buried the pilot in a meter-deep hole, some three meters from where the pilot was killed. The pilot was buried clad only in a white t-shirt and boxer shorts. Approximately 10 days later, the body was briefly exhumed for another photograph and then reburied. The grave was located on the side of a hill, south of Ca Roong, approximately 100 meters above Route 20, between kilometer markers 52 and 53. Mr. Son believes he could still find the grave and is willing to assist a Joint Team in this effort.

- Mr. Son had only hearsay information concerning the other U.S. crewmember. The unit involved with this pilot was the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, (as opposed to Mr. Son's 2nd Battalion). The two battalions were only 20-30 meters apart, but separated by a small stream. His unit heard over the radio from the 1st Battalion that the other pilot was a Second Lieutenant who landed north of Ca Roong, near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. His parachute had become entangled in a tree and he was already dead when the 1st Battalion members found him. Mr. Son had no further details concerning this pilot or his burial.

- Mr. Le Van Lam provided credible hearsay information about the American field grade officer killed and buried near kilometer markers 52-53 on Route 20. Though he did not view the body or participate in the burial, he was stationed in the area for six years and knew the grave location. - He confirmed this incident as the same one described by Mr. Son, although he described the downed aircraft as an F-105. He heard that one of the pilots, a Second Lieutenant, landed near kilometer marker 49 of Route 20. The other pilot was a Lieutenant Colonel who landed on a hill between km markers 52 and 53 of Route 20. The 5th

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Company received orders to capture this pilot, but because Mr. Lam was the platoon leader, he stayed in place and detailed Mr. Bui Cong Quyet to capture the American. The pilot was wounded in the legs and subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. The pilot was later buried 100 meters above Route 20. A week or so later, the dead pilot was exhumed for photographs and then reburied. Although Mr. Lam did not participate in the burial or reburial, he knew the grave's location, having seen it many times while stationed in the area. He is willing to assist a joint team in relocating the grave.

- Mr. Bui Cong Quyet was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft. Mr. Quyet's information corroborated that of Mr. Lam and Mr. Son concerning the Lieutenant Colonel pilot on the hillside, subsequently killed by U.S. airstrikes. He was a participant in the exhumation and reburial of one of the U.S. field grade pilot. He believes he can still find the grave and is willing to assist a joint team in a search to locate the remains.

- Mrs. Vu Thi Minh was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and a participant in the capture of one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. She did not participate in the burial and did not believe she could assist in finding the grave location.

- Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay was a direct witness to the shoot down of an F-4 aircraft and he viewed one of the two crewmembers of this aircraft. He did not participate in the burial and did not believe he could assist in finding the grave location. He did, however, positively identify a photograph of [REDACTED] as the U.S. crewmember he saw.

(Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-2VM, 100741z Apr 15) (b)(3)

May 2015, Joint Field Activity 15-3VM (119th JFA): A joint team re-interviewed Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son, Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay, and Mr. Nguyen Duc Lam. All three witnesses reiterated their testimonies from JFA 15-2VM and then accompanied the Joint Team to the incident location. Mr. Son was able to identify a 24 by 14 meter area as the probable burial site (48Q XE 267 164). A survey of the area revealed no discernable evidence of a burial. (Ref: DRI of Case 1329 Conducted During Joint Field Activity 15-3VM, 071755Z Oct 15)

SEA Government Unilateral information/Investigations

PHOTOS: Numerous photos have been received for this case, the most important depicting [REDACTED] intact remains. Another showed identification media for both men. Vietnamese information identified several photos showing the aircraft wreckage from this incident. (b)(3)

MUSEUM: 280th Air Defense Museum had data plate with a receipt, both alleged to come from this incident. Pistol at this museum correlated to [REDACTED] by serial number. Also a possible flight checklist.

MUSEUM: The Central Army Museum in Hanoi had a museum item receipt and data plate said to belong to aircraft shot down 23 November 1968 in western Quang Binh. Data plate is for F-4 -- probably relates to Case 1327. Air Defense Museum had signal flare receipt for which identifies it with this aircraft.

RECORDS: 1. The Military Region 4 shoot down record cited Case 1329 aircraft as being downed by Battalion 73, 280th Air Defense Regiment, at Co Roong Ford, on Route 20. No indication on fate of crew.
2. Quang Binh list of U.S. casualties notes both men and that their bodies were buried at Kilometer 54, Route 20.

3. Military Region 4 'Killed and Torn Apart' roster says both remains obliterated, implying failure to recover the remains; should not be taken as a literal description.

4. 1978 central government list of remains not recovered says both men's graves were lost.

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RECORDS: V95C3B8. Vietnamese reports on the 84 Special Remains Team Cases, provided to the U.S. on 13 May 1995. Report recommends determining unit and troops stationed in this area in 1968 and finding and interviewing retired militia members who have experience with Quang Binh and Bo Trach teams.

REPORT OF UNILATERAL INVESTIGATION, PROVIDED 24 JUNE 1996: VNOSMP noted that Mr. Ngoi had suffered a stroke and was half paralyzed. If they can organize and ensure safe passage for him, will try to get him to the site and help search for the graves. Said only military and youth assault teams were stationed in this area during the war. These units moved frequently, were replaced, or were subsequently dispersed. Many have died, and the youth assault groups have disbanded. (Ref: JTF-FA, 100712Z Sep 96)

OCTOBER 1996, MEETING WITH VNOSMP ON UNILATERAL REQUESTS: VNOSMP reported that in cases where they had been asked to search for veterans from the 280th Air Defense Regiment, including Case 1329, that the Vietnamese and the U.S. have attempted to locate records from this unit. VNOSMP had returned to the unit to search for more records but found nothing. VNOSMP recommended against returning to this unit but instead concentrate continued investigation in other areas.

JUNE 1997, REPORT OF UNILATERAL VIETNAMESE INVESTIGATION: The VNOSMP followed up on information from a former military officer in Quang Binh Province, Tran Su, who had identified a potential source who might be able to identify former members of Youth Assault Groups that had served in the province. These units were made up of young men and women who supported the military, often by building, maintaining, and repairing strategic roads. The VNOSMP reported that the witness Mr. Su identified (Doan Duc Lien) could not help, but Lien recommended talking to Nguyen Cong Huan, the chief of staff of the province youth association. (Huan had been interviewed unsuccessfully in May 1997, as per joint investigation section narrative above.) (REF: MSG DTG 100712Z SEP 96)

VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY ARCHIVES: In 1999-2000, U.S. researchers re-inventoried the photos of the Vietnam News Agency. They found seven photos related to this case, copies of the photos described above.

VIETNAMESE HISTORY: 1999 history of Route 20 (Duong 20 Quyet Thang), p. 140 identifies youth assault (thanh nien xung phong--TNXP) groups operating in the area. Company 23 TNXP Ha Tinh was at Ca Roong. Company 25 TNXP Nam Ha was at Kilometer 68. See p. 160, which identifies Dr. Hoof Hoong Hatj as commander of Phaaux Thuaatj 2 at Kilometer 68.

Joint Field Activity 13-1VM (109th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work (AW) Team interviewed 48 veterans of Binh Tram 14 (Troop Station 14) who did not provide any information relating to Case 1329. The team also interviewed two veterans of the 280th Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA) Regiment who provided specific, detailed information that correlates to Case 1329. Mr. Le Duc Qua and Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau provided detailed information on the aircraft shoot down, and the ejection of both pilots. They reported the Lieutenant Colonel (sic) resisted capture and was shot and killed during the capture attempt. The First Lieutenant crewman was successfully captured, but was killed by U.S. aircraft bombing the area to suppress the anti-aircraft fire in order to facilitate a rescue attempt. At least one of the two individuals indicated he could be of assistance in locating the burial site of the U.S. Lieutenant. (more detailed information included in Joint Information section 05/13, 13-3VM / 111th JFA) (Ref; Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Concerning Case 1329, dtg 300708z Jan 13)

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June 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-3VM (111th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work Team interviewed four individuals who provided information relating to Case 1329;

- Mr. Nguyen Thanh Chi, while serving as the Watch Officer of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, witnessed the shoot down of an F-4 on 25 or 26 November 1968. He identified the 1st Company, 105th Battalion as the unit responsible for the shoot down, and after hearing that one of the crew had been captured, was en route to the area when he heard that the captured pilot had been killed. This information was passed to him by two members of a volunteer youth unit, Ms. Vinh and Ms. Xuan.
- Mr. Do Van Viet, a former member of the 9th Company, 103rd Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, related that while his unit was stationed at kilometer marker 54 on Route 20 in Thuong Trach village (Bo Trach District, Quang Binh Province) in approx. February 1969, he and other soldiers from his unit discovered the wreckage of an F-4 aircraft 300 meters northwest of Route 20. About 20 meters from the tail of the aircraft, they found intact skeletal remains, with a pair of "American-style" boots. The skull contained intact teeth, three of which were gold. The did not discover any clothing or personal effects, although they did find a green parachute hung up atop a clump of bamboo. The remains were left unburied and Mr. Viet did not hear of anyone else ever burying them. He then related information of another incident that occurred during November-December 1968 near the Xuan Son Ferry (48Q XE 387 479) in which an F-4 was shot down and two pilots were captured and one later died. He directly witnessed the shoot down of the F-4, with both pilots ejecting. He later heard that both of the pilots were captured (one reportedly being an Australian and one an American). The American was said to have been shot and wounded while violently resisting capture. Three days later, while the two prisoners were being escorted to the Regiment, the American pilot died of his wounds and was buried near a lime kiln in the vicinity of Chot hamlet, Son Trach village (south of the Trooc River and southwest of the Xuan Son Ferry).
- Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, the former Commander of the 105th Battalion, 280th AAA Regiment, (interviewed by the RIT Team during the 109th JFA - see the Joint Investigations entry) reconfirmed that he was a participant to the capture and burial of the 1st Lieutenant who was shot down in an F-4 on 25 November 1968.
- Mr. Le Duc Qua, former member of the 47th Communications Company, 280th AAA Regiment, had only second-hand hearsay information about the F-4 shoot down, capture, death and burial of one pilot, as related to him by Mr. Dau.

- Site Surveys:

- Mr. Do Van Viet could not accurately determine the location where he found aircraft wreckage and remains in February 1969.

- Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Dau, after much deliberation, was able to determine the burial location for the deceased 1st Lt, approx. 250 meters from the stream ford, "next to" Rt. 20, near the position of the 1st Co., 105th Bn identifying the site as located at 48Q XE 27688 17061.

- Note: Joint teams have identified and correlated the 1329 crash site at 48Q XE 277 179, approximately 300 meters northwest of the nearest section of Route 20. Mr. Viet's account of discovery of aircraft wreckage and remains appears to correlate with the Case 1329 pilot [REDACTED] while Mr. Dau's account appears to correlate with the Case 1329 backseater (1Lt Francisco). (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report - Case 1329, 090241Z Oct 13)

(b)(3)

August 2013, Joint Field Activity 13-4VM (112th JFA): The Vietnamese Advance Work Team located and interviewed 14 veterans of the Thanh Hoa Volunteer Youth Group and an additional 12 veterans of the 280th AAA Regiment, none of whom were able to provide any information on the Case 1329 loss incident. (Ref: Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 070722Z Jan 14)

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December 2014, Joint Field Activity 15-1VM (117th JFA): The VNOSMP team interviewed three veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group attached to the 5th Company, 2nd Engineer Battalion, PAVN Binh Tram 14 (BT14). (A Binh Tram was a North Vietnamese military way station on the Ho Chi Minh Trail.)

- Mr. Nguyen Huu Vay provided hearsay information concerning the death of both U.S. pilots associated with the case. He claimed to know the area of the burial of one of the pilots. Mr. Vay recalled that around midday in 1968-1969, 12.7mm and 37mm AAA units subordinate to BT14, shot down an F-4. Two pilots ejected near the Ca Roong ford along Route 20. One caucasian pilot, possibly a captain, landed on a hill, one kilometer from the Ca Roong ford in the direction of Pha Long Dai. Mr. Vay heard that the pilot was killed on the spot and buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. He did not personally know the burial location of this pilot. The other pilot, a major, suffered a broken leg and landed near his unit's position. Mr. Vay's unit was ordered to capture the pilot, but was unable to do so, as he was killed by U.S. aircraft rocket strikes. Volunteer youth and AAA soldiers buried the pilot. Mr. Vay did not participate in the burial, but knew of the area of the pilot's grave.

- Mrs. Vu Thi Minh and Mr. Dinh Ngoc Son, both veterans of the Volunteer Youth Group, provided first-hand information concerning their participation in the capture, death, and burial of one of the U.S. pilots, and also provided hearsay information on another. They recalled the midday shoot down of an F-105 (sic) by the 27mm/12.7mm AAA unit attached to BT14. The aircraft crashed at the Ca Roong ford and the two pilots ejected, died, and were buried by soldiers and volunteer youth personnel. One pilot ejected and died while suspended in the top of a tree in the area of Km 49, north of the ford. The pilot was a Second Lieutenant and caucasian. Personnel of Volunteer Youth unit 115, Team 263, along with soldiers from BT14's 12.7mm AAA unit buried the pilot. Mr. Son did not participate in this burial, but knows the location of the grave. The other pilot was caucasian and a Lieutenant Colonel landed next to Mr. Son's unit's positions. The pilot was seriously injured with two broken legs, but was able to use his survival radio to contact rescue forces. Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh approached the pilot, pulled down his parachute, and confiscated his handgun, knife, and other personal equipment. Seven soldiers from the light AAA unit assisted Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh in the capture. They claimed that a U.S. rescue helicopter approached the injured pilot and lowered a rope ladder, but because of his broken legs, the pilot was unable to climb up. The PAVN forces fired on the helicopter and forced it to depart. The Vietnamese retreated to a combat trench some 50-100 meters away as AD-6 [A-1 Skyraiders] attacked the Vietnamese held positions. When the airstrikes were over, the Vietnamese discovered the pilot had been killed by the rocket strikes. Mr. Son and Mrs. Minh participated in the burial of the pilot's body. About 10 days later, the pilot's body was exhumed for photographs and then reburied in the same spot. (Ref: Translation of Vietnamese Advance Work Report Concerning Case 1329, 110712Z Mar 15)

Knowledgeability Assessment

Vietnam has demonstrated extensive knowledge of this loss, but we have no evidence that officials recovered these men's remains.

Case Coordination Chronology:

Re-Coordination

	<u>Date</u>
A--JOINT EXCAVATE VM (Site 1 VM 03267, Site 2 VM 03299)	9/3/2015
A--US RESEARCH HI (JFA 15-3VM IT1 AND JFA 15-3VM AW VM RIT REPORTS)	6/4/2015
A--US RESEARCH JPAC EDB (SITE 1); JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (15-2VM)(SITE 2)	1/20/2015
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (MR. LE HUY CHINH)	2/25/2014

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A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (13-3VM); AW VM RIT (13-2VM REPORT PENDING)	5/22/2013
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT	12/12/2012
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (REAFFIRM)	2/29/2012
A--US RESEARCH DPMO/JPAC (SKETCH AND IIR 0238 10)	3/2/2011
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM RIT (REAFFIRM-2006)	2/25/2009
A--JOINT INVESTIGATE VM (458TH CO-- MR. HUNG)	6/9/2006
A--USA RESEARCH (JPAC W/IMAGERY)	5/20/2005
A--USA RESEARCH (DPMO - IMAGERY)	2/27/2004
A--JOINT SURVEY (W/HRDT) (XE 27873 15511)	6/13/2003
A--JOINT SURVEY (XE278155 & XE277173) (REAFFIRM)	1/24/2001
A--JOINT SURVEY (REAFFIRM)	3/1/2000
A--JOINT SURVEY CRASHSITE; RESCIND UW AND UA	8/6/1999
PP--JTF ASSESSMENT	3/12/1999
PP--PENDING REPORT ANALYSIS	12/17/1998
PP--50TH JFA	4/17/1998
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS; UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRM BOTH)	10/30/1997
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (REAFFIRMED; NGO ASSIST WHEN RECOVERED)	11/22/1996
A--UNILATERAL WITNESS, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES (OB LEADS)	2/29/1996
A--JOINT ARCHIVES, UNILATERAL ARCHIVES, WITNESSES, REMAINS; VNA PHOTO	4/27/1995

Further Pursuit Information

JOINT EXCAVATE VM: This case passed an Excavation Decision Board (EDB) on 3 September 2015. There are two isolated burial sites that will be excavated: Site 1 VM 03267, and Site 2 VM 03299 (48Q XE 27699 16434). Both sites will be excavated by the Vietnam Recovery Team (VRT) (1 MAY-JUNE)

Further Pursuit Deferred Information

NA

No Further Pursuit Information

NA

During (16-30M)
Primary -

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WEBSITE
TOGETHER WE SERVED
It is my hope that during
Burial in 2016 they
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(RAB)
Nayer Romero

Maj Francisco, USAF

