



POLICY

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2000

NOV 14 2013

The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCaskill:

Thank you for your October 25, 2013, letter to Secretary Hagel regarding arrival ceremonies conducted by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC). I have been asked to respond on Secretary Hagel's behalf.

In response to your request, I have enclosed the following information. At Enclosure 1 is a summary of JPAC ceremonies, noting the number of ceremonies, the number of remains honored at those ceremonies, and the number of those remains that have been subsequently identified since October 2004, which was determined to be the first time JPAC conducted periodic, symbolic ceremonies. Also at Enclosure 1, is a spreadsheet listing the dates of all ceremonies from October 2004 through April 2013, the dates that the remains first arrived at JPAC and were accessed into the laboratory, the ceremony date, the country from which the remains were recovered, the associated conflict for each set of remains honored, whether or not the remains were recovered by a JPAC team or were unilaterally turned over, whether or not the remains have been identified, and the date when the public was notified of the ceremony.

At Enclosure 2 are communications from the Department of Defense (DoD) and JPAC to the media, families and veterans organizations regarding the April 2013 ceremony and the ceremony scheduled for later this year. These documents have been reviewed for privacy information, and privacy-protected information has been redacted where appropriate. Similar communications of this nature were utilized for the ceremonies over the years. After the media reported on the JPAC ceremonies in October 2013, the only contact JPAC leadership had with veteran's organizations was when its leadership spoke with the Executive Director of the Washington Office of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who called to ask about the circumstances underlying the ceremonies.

JPAC did not issue formal policy guidance for these ceremonies. Instead, at Enclosure 3 are JPAC Letters of Instruction (LOIs) for conducting these ceremonies. The LOIs include those published by JPAC for the April 26, 2013 ceremony, and a revised one issued for the September 27, 2013 ceremony that was subsequently postponed. I have also enclosed guidance issued by



the JPAC Commander on April 29, 2013, directing a change to the name and to revise the press release for the ceremonies. These documents have been reviewed for privacy information, and privacy-protected information has been redacted where appropriate. We could find no record of the DoD or the USPACOM issuing specific guidance related to JPAC's ceremonies.

At Enclosure 4 is a spreadsheet with the estimated costs JPAC incurs during a typical Honors ceremony. Given the small amount of Operations and Maintenance funds required for these ceremonies, JPAC did not create documentation showing itemized expenditures. Therefore this spreadsheet does not depict actual costs for every ceremony, but is an estimate of costs JPAC incurs during a typical Honors ceremony.

Finally, the Commander of U. S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) directed his Deputy Commander to lead an inquiry into JPAC ceremonial procedures and whether JPAC misled the public about Arrival ceremonies. At Enclosure 5, I have provided a redacted copy of this inquiry. Although the inquiry found that JPAC was motivated by a desire to render appropriate public honors to fallen service members and that there was no intent to deceive the public, it was evident that the manner in which JPAC executed these ceremonies was misleading because observers were left with the impression that remains had arrived in Hawaii just prior to the ceremonies. The USPACOM Commander has directed corrective action to ensure that any future Honors ceremonies are conducted in a manner that will maintain the public's full trust and confidence. As you know, the Department of Defense has suspended the ceremonies while we re-evaluate how best to honor the remains of our missing.

I greatly appreciate your continued interest and strong support for our people in uniform, including missing service members and their families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Miller", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James N. Miller

Enclosures:
As stated