

***GEOINT has the unique ability to locate and identify these areas*** around the time the personnel went missing by (1) using historical imagery, then (2) using current imagery to note changes in the area over long periods of time. This partnered effort increases situational awareness for the DPAA recovery team, and can negate the need for an operation.

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Team,

Today is ***National POW/MIA Recognition Day***. It's commemorated on the third Friday in September, and it honors those who were prisoners of war, as well as those who are still missing in action (<https://www.dpaa.mil/Families/Posters.aspx>).

In recognition of all who we haven't yet been able to bring home, I want to share some of NGA's contributions in direct partnership with the ***Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency*** (DPAA). We're so proud to help DPAA achieve its mission of "Fulfilling our Nation's Promise" to provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel (<https://www.dpaa.mil/About/Vision-Mission-Values>).

***DPAA conducts searches where conflicts have definitively ended***, including battlegrounds of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the first Persian Gulf War. They also operate where any U.S. personnel may have gone missing during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. DPAA researchers determine, by interviews or historical records, where someone could have gone missing, or possible burial sites.

Where do we come in? ***GEOINT has the unique ability to locate and identify these areas*** around the time the personnel went missing by (1) using historical imagery, then (2) using current imagery to note changes in the area over long periods of time. This partnered effort increases situational awareness for the DPAA recovery team, and can negate the need for an operation.

***DPAA and NGA utilize unique collection from commercial and NTM*** to search sites of current interest. Both the historical and current-day imagery give DPAA's recovery teams a starting point to search, as well as current information on the environment where the team will be conducting recovery efforts. The DPAA teams use GEOINT to plan and maintain the security of their staging areas, ingress and egress routes, as well as to identify any potential "no go" areas.

There are several moving parts from our Agency. Our ***DIA NST*** is home to the lead GEOINT analyst supporting DPAA. Source's team assigned to DIA HQ is a vital partner, ensuring maintenance and availability of historical imagery. ***CIO-T*** is a key player too, because of their maintenance support of one of the few remaining light tables in NGA. DIA plays a supporting role, because they still host thousands of historical images stored for us at their headquarters.

***DPAA recovery teams and volunteers willingly and proudly go*** into many of the most inhospitable environments in the world to search for the remains of Americans. They've searched some of the most well-known places in U.S. military history: Tarawa, Iwo Jima, the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea, and the Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam.

After the June 2018 summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, the North Korean government returned 55 boxes with remains of unknown U.S. military personnel listed as MIA from the Korean War. Several offices within NGA (with close coordination between the DIA and USFK NSTs) participated in the planning, monitoring, and departure of the U.S. Air Force transport aircraft that retrieved the remains and escorted them home for identification and eventual return to their families.

Last November, I was proud to host DPAA's Principal Deputy. We showed her more of what ***and how GEOINT can contribute to DPAA's world-wide mission***, and she shared her insights into the incredible mission and responsibilities of DPAA to our Nation – and to the families of those who await being reunited with their loved ones.

***Team NGA will always remember and honor*** those who were held captive and returned, as well as those who remain missing.

Stay Strong, Stay Safe, Be Well.

Bob

Robert D. Sharp

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Director, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA)

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