

## Vietnam MIA Identified

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WASHINGTON - The Department of Defense today identified another Airman missing in action from the Vietnam War.

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The department's POW/Missing Personnel Office said he is Tech. Sgt. Patrick L. Shannon of Owasso, Okla.

DOD returned the remains to his family for burial with full military honors. His family has yet to set funeral arrangements.

Sergeant Shannon and 18 other servicemen operated a radar installation atop Pha Thi Mountain in Houaphan Province, Laos, about 13 miles south of the border with North Vietnam. The site, known as Lima Site 85, directed U.S. bombing missions toward key targets in North Vietnam.

In the early morning of March 11, 1968, North Vietnamese commandos attacked the site. They had scaled the sheer mountainsides in the hours before the attack and overran the site. During the attack, some Americans made their way down to ledges, but survivors reported that several were killed.

Several hours later, U.S. aircraft attacked enemy positions around the site, enabling helicopters to rescue eight of the 19 Americans. But one of the survivors died en route to a base in Thailand. Later that day, and for four more days, U.S. air strikes bombed the site to destroy technical equipment left behind.

Beginning in 1994, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command began interviewing witnesses in both Laos and Vietnam to gather information on the fates of the Americans. Some of those interviewed were villagers who lived near the site. Others were former enemy soldiers who carried out the attack. In 2002, one of those soldiers said he helped throw the bodies of the Americans off the mountain after the attack, because they were unable to bury them on the rocky surface.

Between 1994 and 2004, 11 investigations were conducted by joint command, as well as unilaterally by Lao and Vietnamese investigators on both sides of the border. During one of them, several mountaineer-qualified JPAC specialists scaled down the cliffs where they recovered remains and personal gear on ledges.

Joint command and Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory scientists used mitochondrial DNA and other forensic techniques to identify Sergeant Shannon's remains.

Of the 88,000 Americans unaccounted for from all conflicts, 1,812 are from the Vietnam War. Another 771 Americans have been accounted for in Southeast Asia since the end of the war. Of those identified, 199 were lost in Laos.

For more information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO Web site: [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo) or call (703) 699-1169.