



## **Korean War MIA Meeting**

**Wednesday 17 August 2016**

**Venue – Russell Offices, Canberra**

### **Summary of Key Outcomes**

This document is a summary of the key outcomes to facilitate working group members' ability to communicate with constituents and stakeholders. It does not cover all items discussed, nor does it replace the minutes which are distributed for members purposes. It deliberately does not document the full nature of discussions as it is considered that to do this would stifle open and honest working group discussion over time and is not in the common interest of working group members or their constituents.

### **Attendance**

**AHQ** - DCOS COL Andrew Hocking, Meeting Chair

**UWC-A** - Mr Brian Manns, MAJ David Wilson

**RAAF** – WGCDCR Mary Whiting

**RAAF Association** – WGCDCR Lance Halvorsen MBE (Rtd)

**77 Squadron Association** – GPCAPT Milton Cottee AFC (Rtd)

**Australian Council of Korean Veterans Associations** - National President

RADM Ian Crawford AO AM (Rtd)

**Korean Veterans Association of Australia** – ACT Representative

Mr Colin Berryman OAM

**Family of MIAs** - Mr Ian Saunders OAM, Mrs Jill Talty

### **Apologies**

CMDR Geoffrey Fiedler, SQNLDR Greg Williams, Brent Espeland, Ted Chitham, John Williams, Julie Dorrington

### **Opening remarks**

COL Hocking acknowledged the commitment of time and energy from working group members and noted the progress achieved by the group since its inception in December 2015. He also mentioned a number of significant events that UWC-A had recently been involved in – the repatriation of soldiers and their families buried in Singapore and Terendak, Centenary of ANZAC events in France, the burial of four unknown soldiers at Zonnebekke and Pozieres and the naming of a further six of the soldiers buried at Fromelles.

### ***Review of agreed actions***

#### **Liaison with DPAA**

Director DPAA, Mr Linnington, has replied to the letter from the DCA. He agreed that Australian FRS would be accepted for comparison against their DNA database of remains recovered from the Korean War. UWC-A has subsequently sent the mitochondrial FRS it holds to DPAA for comparison against its database of Korean War remains. Mr Linnington confirmed that enhanced bilateral arrangements, via an exchange of letters or statement of intent from each organisation, would be welcome. UWC-A is now liaising with the Department's International Policy Division regarding more formally recognising our bilateral relationship with DPAA. Mr Linnington also disclosed the locations of the joint field activities DPAA had undertaken in North Korea between 1996 and 2005, indicating that 111 of the 196 sets of remains recovered had been identified so far (all American). The 4 locations - Unsan, Kaechon, Kujang and Jangjin are generally north of the locations of our MIA pilots (except PLTOFF Armit) and well north of the DMZ, so it is unlikely Australians are included among these remains.

#### **Publication of information for MIA families**

The family fact sheet was published on the UWC-A website on 1 June 2016. A DNA Analysis fact sheet was distributed at the meeting and will also be published shortly.

#### **The four “unknowns” an UNMCK**

The meeting resolved that UWC-A will review all available information regarding the 4 UNMCK unknowns and report back to the November 2016 meeting.

#### ***Data supporting the possibility that DPAA may possess the remains of Australian Korean War MIA***

Mr Saunders discussed and tabled a number of documents that support the possibility that Australian MIAs may be included amongst “allied” Korean War remains held by US authorities.

This information strengthens the case for Australia to pursue with DPAA the status and timetable for the processing of Korean War remains within their custody and control.

#### ***Proposed additional actions***

The meeting agreed to pursue enhanced bilateral engagement with MAKRI (via a similar process being undertaken currently with DPAA) and agreed to facilitate the sharing of family tree and contact details among related family members of MIA, upon request, noting UWC-A actions must be consistent with the information privacy principles.

#### ***Next meeting***

The next meeting is scheduled for the last week of November 2016.