

CHAPTER 4

INVESTIGATION AND CASE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

Section I. GENERAL

4-1. Identification Specialist

a. Responsibilities. The identification specialist is responsible for the review, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of factual data contained in reports received from graves registration teams in the field and the central identification laboratory. The identification specialist uses the data to accomplish the following tasks:

- (1) Verify the identification of remains.
- (2) Establish the identification of unknown remains.
- (3) Recommend certain remains be listed as unidentifiable.
- (4) Recommend certain remains be listed as unrecoverable.

b. Duties. The identification specialist performs the following duties:

- (1) Conducts necessary research to associate an unknown remains with a given casualty.
- (2) Develops additional data required to substantiate or negate an association already established.
- (3) Summarizes all evidence obtained and recommends to higher authority, on the basis of a case history, the appropriate action to be taken.

4-2. Analysis and Presentation of Completed Cases

a. Review of Case Papers. Case papers of all casualties sustained in the area are reviewed by the identification specialist. The purpose of the review is to gather information and clues that may be associated with the remains in question and that

may be used in making a positive identification. The association is established by reviewing the military records of the casualties that occurred in the area and by comparing fingerprints, physical and dental characteristics, laundry markings, personal effects or equipment, and medical records.

b. Research Conducted. The extent of research conducted on a case depends on the amount of information available after the case papers have been examined in detail. When the results of the research are insufficient to warrant a positive association, an extensive investigation is made of field reports, military records, the recovery of associated remains and identified casualties, and any other source of information, as applicable, in an effort to strengthen the association.

c. Case Writeup. After a case has been thoroughly researched and analyzed, the identification specialist evaluates the data and prepares a comprehensive case history to support his findings. The case history is supplemented by DD Form 897 (Physical and Dental Comparison Chart) for remains recovered and casualties lost within the geographical area involved and by statements obtained from individuals possessing information pertinent to the case. Also included with the case history are military records, to include missing air crew reports, if applicable; cemetery records; cemetery or appropriate map sketches; enemy records; and any additional supporting information.

Section II. INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

4-3. Using Identifying Media in the Final Processing of Remains

Identifying media include objects, records, or data which may provide information leading to the establishment of positive identification. Sufficient pertinent data on the remains must be available to furnish a basis for comparison, either positive or negative, before a particular medium can be used. A single source of identifying media is not considered conclusive evidence of identification of a

remains; such a source must be supported by other identifying media. In addition to the use of identifying media, supporting data obtained from sources indicated in paragraphs 4-4 through 4-6 may furnish evidence to assist in establishing the identification. Principal identifying media consist of the following:

- a. Fingerprints.
- b. Identification tag or bracelet.
- c. DD Form 1380.

- d. DD Form 565.
- e. Dental data.
- f. Physical characteristics (race, height, weight, age, hair, and healed fractures).
- g. Military service insignia.
- h. Personal effects.
- i. Military equipment, which usually identifies the branch of service. In air crashes, the type and identifying numbers of aircraft and equipment are of considerable value.
- j. Statements of circumstances, such as geographic-location or eyewitness statements.
- k. Title of organization and location at the time of casualty.

4-4. Field Reports and Records

Field reports and records furnish basic information for all cases, whether the remains are recovered or are nonrecoverable. If the case involves a recovered remains, the reports may consist of the following:

- a. DD Form 551 (Record of Interment).
- b. DD Form 565 (Statement of Recognition).
- c. DD Form 567 (Record of Recovery of Remains).
- d. DD Form 896 (Field Search Record).
- e. DD Form 1076 (Record of Personal Effects—Military Operations).
- f. DD Form 1380 (US Field Medical Card).
- g. Missing aircraft reports, when applicable, which include the crew lists, type of aircraft and numbers, and other information.
- h. Eyewitness statements, both by civilians and survivors.
- i. Map overlay with grid coordinates.
- j. Certificate of area clearance.
- k. Unit historical and operations records.
- l. G3 operations reports.
- m. G2 periodic intelligence reports.
- n. Operation and situation maps and overlays.
- o. Chronological casualty listings, by unit.

4-5. Laboratory Reports

Reports of CIL findings (DD Forms 890 through 894) that result from the technical processing of remains accompany the material in field reports.

4-6. Search for Additional Supporting Data

The identification specialist seeks information, as circumstances require, from sources other than field and laboratory processing reports to support his findings in investigating a case. The sources include those given below:

a. *Enemy Reports.* Reports and records received or captured from the enemy are used. They include lists of prisoners of war, deceased, and escapees; records of interment; material for propaganda broadcasts; and reports of the International Red Cross. Search of these reports and records may

reveal names of persons killed or missing in action and disclose valuable information that may be used in establishing a possible association between a casualty and a given deceased.

b. *Operational and Organizational Reports.* Operational reports furnish information on unit movements; organizational reports furnish the location of units by date and list unit personnel losses. This type of information may provide a tentative association between a casualty sustained in a specific geographical area and remains recovered from it.

c. *Maps and Gazetteers.* The geographical location of the casualty is pinpointed to a specific area by degrees and minutes of longitude and latitude and by grid coordinates. Use of gazetteers, map sheets, overlays, and other material is essential to correlate information from case papers.

d. *Miscellaneous Records.* Tentative associations between remains and casualties may be established by researching civilian and temporary military cemetery records, passenger and crew lists, military history publications, and other miscellaneous office records, including plot maps and indexes of recoveries by map sheet.

e. *Governmental and Civilian Contacts.* When essential data for substantiating or negating an association are missing, the US Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs Directorate, TAGO, or, when established, the Armed Services Graves Registration Office—CONUS, is responsible for obtaining the data. Actions by the US Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs Directorate, TAGO, include transmitting prints obtained from remains to the FBI for comparison with prints on file and contacting other sources of information for essential data not available from service records or case papers.

4-7. Recovered Remains Cases

a. *Potentially Identifiable Cases.* A potentially identifiable case may be a name case, a believed-to-be (BTB) case, or an unknown case.

(1) *Name case.* In a name case, the identifying information found on or with the remains warrants identification beyond a reasonable doubt.

(2) *Believed-to-be case.* Remains in a BTB case may be designated an X-number; however, the case papers reflect information indicating that a tentative identification was made at the time of initial recovery and burial. Investigation of a BTB case is confined to the following:

(a) Establishing the identifying media as furnished in the case papers.

(b) Requesting verification of fingerprints, if obtained, from the FBI.

(c) Reviewing and analyzing casualty

personal history file for dental records, physical characteristics, decedent's organization, location where casualty was reported killed or missing, statement of witnesses as indicated on DD Form 898, and any other information which would serve to substantiate or negate the association.

(d) Comparing location of recovery and location of casualty by geographic or grid coordinates.

(e) Analyzing operational reports of unit movements. Information obtained may be valuable in supporting an identification.

(f) Screening enemy records to eliminate contradictory information.

(g) Screening International Red Cross reports for prisoner-of-war lists.

(h) Initiating necessary correspondence to obtain data, such as dental and health records and X-rays, to support identification.

(3) *Unknown case.* A remains is designated unknown when initially recovered and interred without benefit of information which would permit establishment of an initial association with a specific casualty. However, as a result of laboratory processing, the remains may be subsequently identified. This type of case may involve a single or a group remains case. A single remains case involves one decedent, and identification may be established for a specific person. A group remains case involves two or more remains. Identifying data may be conclusive enough to warrant identification as a group of two or more deceased persons but inadequate to establish individual identification. Since case papers for an unknown remains have little or no information on which to base an association, the specialist lists tentative associations by narrowing the range of possible associations and eliminating impossible ones. He forms his lists of tentative associations by carrying out the following procedures:

(a) Reviews and analyzes identifying media and information on associated recoveries (DD Form 567), area sketch showing recovery and gravesites, and other records contained in case papers.

(b) Searches rosters and lists, as applicable, including organizational rosters, casualty listings, and civilian and temporary military cemetery records to obtain a list of possible associations among the casualties killed and missing in the area from which the unknown was recovered.

(c) Compares extracted identifying media for unresolved casualties and for unknown recovered remains with casualty rosters.

(d) Reviews and analyzes casualty personal history file for most logical association.

(e) Compares location of recovery of the unknown and location of casualty of the individual by geographic or grid coordinates.

(f) Checks operational reports of unit movements.

(g) Screens enemy reports and records, including lists of prisoners of war, deceased, and escapees, and records of interment.

(h) Initiates correspondence, as required, to obtain supporting identifying data.

b. Erroneously Identified Case. An erroneously identified case is one in which discrepancies are found in verifying the identification as originally established, or in attempting to establish identification in related cases. All evidence is carefully analyzed before concluding that identification as originally established is erroneous.

c. Foreign Remains Case. A foreign remains case is one in which the decedent is determined to be other than a US citizen or a member of the US military forces. This type of case is usually uncovered as a result of processing at a CIL.

d. Unidentifiable Case. An unidentifiable case is one in which the remains cannot be identified. Laboratory processing and investigation fail to establish conclusively whether the remains is of a single decedent or part of a group of two or more deceased. Investigative procedures for unidentifiable cases are as prescribed for unknown cases. A remains is determined to be unidentifiable when one of the following conditions exists:

(1) Circumstantial evidence is inadequate to support an identification.

(2) Pathological data are inadequate and unsupported by circumstantial evidence.

(3) All efforts to establish an identification have failed.

e. CIL (Extra Portions) Remains Case.

(1) A CIL remains case is one in which portions of remains are separated from a principal remains at the CIL and cannot be consolidated with the principal remains because of one of the following reasons:

(a) Anatomical deficiencies or differences.

(b) Unavailability of principal remains.

(c) Nonrecovery of principal remains.

(2) When remains under investigation are determined to be extra portions of remains and meet the criteria for possible CIL designation, a recommendation is made that the remains be designated CIL remains and that disposition be made according to established policies.

4-8. Unrecovered Remains Cases

Unrecovered remains cases are classified as either deferred-search or nonrecoverable cases.

a. Deferred-Search Case. A deferred-search case

is one in which the specific burial or recovery location is known. Case records may show the remains were interred in a civilian cemetery, an isolated grave, or a temporary military cemetery that an allied or military force established. Although the location of the recovery is known, the area is temporarily inaccessible to graves registration personnel because recovery attempts may endanger the lives of recovery personnel.

(1) *Criteria for deferring search.* The criteria for deferring the search for remains because an area is temporarily inaccessible are based on such local conditions as follows:

(a) Hazardous terrain.

(b) Climatic conditions, such as monsoon season or extreme cold, which delay recovery efforts.

(c) Mined areas.

(d) Guerrilla activities that endanger the lives of recovery personnel.

(e) Burial in enemy-controlled territory or in the territory of an unfriendly foreign power that has refused admission of recovery teams.

(2) *Investigation.* Investigative procedures outlined for unknown cases are followed, as appropriate, for deferred-search cases. Pending final resolution of deferred-search cases, all files of such cases are kept fully documented, and a roster is maintained, by map sheet area, on casualties for whom search has been suspended. Final resolution of deferred-search cases takes place after all reasonable efforts have been made to recover the remains. Remains recovered are investigated and classified as either identified or unidentifiable. 1

b. Nonrecoverable Case. A nonrecoverable case is investigated by reviewing and analyzing data the same as for an unknown remains. Any additional information which would further support the findings is also used.

(1) *Basis for determination.* A remains is determined nonrecoverable based on one or more of the following reasons:

(a) The deceased was lost at sea or over water.

(b) Death resulted from the explosion of a mine, ammunition ship, airplane, or invasion craft.

(c) The remains was incinerated and the ashes not recovered.

(d) The remains disappeared because of terrain or climatic conditions.

(e) The remains was not recovered because of the hazardous nature of the terrain.

(f) The area was inaccessible to recovery operations because of geographic or political

(g) The remains was recovered from the original site by an unknown agency.

(h) The remains was disposed of by the enemy in an undetermined manner.

(i) Information as to the whereabouts of the remains is insufficient or erroneous.

(2) *Reinvestigation.* A finding of nonrecoverability of remains may be approved; however, the case is never considered permanently closed. In the event additional information or developments warrant, a nonrecoverable case is reopened for further investigative action.

Section III. CASE RESOLUTION

4-9. Board of Review

A board of review, composed of disinterested officers, is appointed in CONUS by the Director, US Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs Directorate, TAGO, to review findings of the identification specialist. The board is appointed according to requirements of AR 15-6. Three board members constitute a quorum.

4-10. Material for Board of Review

The identification specialist is responsible for preparing material for the board of review. All facts are presented in proper sequence to permit an orderly review by the board. The following is the general sequence of criteria that should be included in the investigation.

a. Identifiable (Name, BTB, and Unknown Cases).

(1) Recovery information for remains being identified.

(2) Casualty information for the casualty being identified, including, if available, pertinent data relative to military units, their tactical operations, and battle losses.

(3) Basis for the association of the casualty with the remains.

(4) Factors which tend to conflict with the association, with clarifying explanations as to why they are not considered disqualifying.

(5) Extent and results of screening process when other casualties or remains are eliminated as bearing on the proposed identification. When possible, the extent of screening should be clearly defined by listing map sheets or geographical areas with the number of unresolved casualties or

remains cases that were considered from each area. The extent of research required in this portion of the investigation is basically dependent upon the accuracy and completeness or other affirmative identifying media.

(6) Extent and results of search for prisoner-of-war information.

b. Unidentifiables.

(1) Recovery information for the remains.

(2) Evidence found on or with remains which establishes, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the decedent was a citizen of the United States.

(3) Circumstantial evidence and evidence concerning physical characteristics are insufficient to permit comparison of the remains with other remains of unresolved identity.

(4) Circumstantial evidence and physical characteristics of the remains compare negatively with all unresolved casualties.

(5) Anthropological statement which indicates that the remains is of a single decedent and not a previously identified decedent.

(6) Indication that search and recovery activities in the area of original recovery have been completed.

c. Nonrecoverables.

(1) Complete and detailed casualty data on the decedent.

(2) Available physical and casualty data for the deceased compare negatively with similar data for all unknown remains.

(3) Area in which the casualty is presumed to have occurred has been either thoroughly searched or closed to further search activity.

(4) All reasonable efforts to recover the remains have failed.

4-11. Review and Acceptance of Identification Specialist Findings

The identification specialist submits his findings to the board of review which reviews the findings and decides whether a case should be classified as identified, unidentified, or nonrecoverable. Final approval of the board's decision is made by the Director, US Army Casualty and Memorial Affairs Directorate, TAGO, or his designated representative.