

## JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND



ACCOUNTING FOR AMERICANS LOST DURING PAST U.S. CONFLICTS

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~ NEWS RELEASE ~

### **POW/MIA RECOVERY TEAMS TO SEARCH FOR MISSING AMERICANS FROM WWII** *JPAC searches for Marines lost during The Battle of Tarawa*

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (July 27, 2010) – An archeological team from the [U.S. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command \(JPAC\)](http://www.jpac.pacom.mil) is scheduled to arrive in the Republic of Kiribati in early August to search for Americans still missing from World War II; notably, missing Marines who fought during The Battle of Tarawa.

Up to six sites designated as areas likely to contain possible human remains and material evidence will be excavated during the month and a half-long operation.

In the event human remains and/or material evidence are recovered, the findings will be analyzed by scientific experts in the hopes of making a positive identification. A positive identification can often bring closure to families whose loved ones are still missing.

Falling directly under the U.S. Department of Defense, JPAC specializes in humanitarian missions. The jointly-manned organization of more than 400 military and civilian specialists has investigated and recovered missing Americans in the Pacific region since the 1970's.

Investigation and recovery teams travel annually to both Papua New Guinea and the Republic of Vanuatu in the hopes of returning fallen comrades.

An investigative team and analysts from JPAC visited the island of Betio, The Republic of Kiribati, in September 2009; JPAC's policy officials have worked closely with the Kiribati government since the initial visit last year.

"We truly value the support we get from our friends and officials based out of Kiribati, they really understand the importance of what we do and are always willing to help," said James Darby, a senior policy officer for JPAC.

To date there are approximately 74,190 unaccounted-for Americans from [World War II](#). The exact number of U.S. remains at Tarawa is unclear; however, according to recent assessments, it is likely there are several hundred.

The ultimate goal of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, and of the agencies involved in returning America's heroes home, is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of Americans lost during the nation's past conflicts.

"Until They Are Home"

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For more information, please visit the [JPAC website](#).