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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2021-03077

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COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: NO

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

His DD Form 214, *Armed Forces Report of Transfer or Discharge*, be corrected to reflect award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM) and the Korea Defense Service Medal (KDSM).

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

He only recently became aware he was entitled to the medals due to his membership in the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Even though the temporary duty (TDY) location on his orders was classified "Secret," he served in South Korea for the requisite time that has earned him one or both of these medals.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is a former Air Force sergeant (E-4).

According to the applicant's DD Form 214, on 6 Sep 68, he was honorably discharged and credited with 3 years, 11 months, and 20 days of total active service. Block 12, *Last Duty Assignment and Major Command*, reflects 366th TF Sq (TAC).

On 29 Jan 68, according to Headquarters 4th Tactical Fighter Wing, Special Order [Work-Prod...], dated 29 Jan 68, provided by the applicant, he was listed as member of organization to "proceed on or about CLASSIFIED from this station to CLASSIFIED on TDY for approximately 90 days for the purpose of performing a TAC Operation Mission..."

On 15 Apr 68, according to Headquarters 4th Tactical Fighter Wing, Special Order [Work-Prod...], dated 15 Apr 68, provided by the applicant, Special Order [Work-Prod...], dated 29 Jan 68, was amended to read "Approx Nr of Days 179."

According to the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA) fact sheet, the 366 Fighter Squadron was attached to the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing and "from Jan 68 - Jun 68 deployed to Korea; tasked with operations associated with the USS Pueblo incident."

According to the applicant's AF Form 7, *Airman Military Record*, Section 2, *Foreign Service Summary*, reflects: TDY, 30 Jan 68 – 20 Jun 68, for 143 days.

For more information, see the excerpt of the applicant's record at Exhibit B.

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Controlled by: SAF/MRB

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Limited Dissemination Control: N/A

POC: SAF.MRBC.Workflow@us.af.mil

APPLICABLE AUTHORITY/GUIDANCE

Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 36-2806, *Awards and Memorialization Program*: A14.4. The Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. The medal is awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who, after 1 Jul 58, participated in U.S. military operations, U.S. operations in direct support of the United Nations, or U.S. operations of assistance for friendly foreign nations (see Table A14.2). The Joint Chiefs of Staff designates operations that qualify for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, specifies the degree of participation required, and defines the area of operations. Service members must be bona fide members of a unit participating in or be engaged in the direct support of the operation for 30 consecutive days in the area of operations (or for the full period when an operation is less than 30 days duration), or for 60 nonconsecutive days provided the support involved entering the area of operations or met one or more of the following criteria:

Air Force Manual 36-2806, *Awards and Memorialization Program*, Table A14.2. Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal Qualifying Operations.

| Operation | Operation Dates |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| Korea | 1 October 1966 - 30 June 1974 |

Note: Also eligible for the Korea Defense Service Medal as an exception to DoD policy.

A14.12. The Korea Defense Service Medal was authorized by 10 USC § 9286, to recognize qualifying members of the U.S. Armed Forces who have served in the Republic of Korea subsequent to 28 July 1954. Service must have been in support of the defense of the Republic of Korea. The medal is awarded to members who, during the period of the award, were permanently assigned, attached, or detailed for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days to a unit operating in the area of eligibility or who met one of the following criteria, regardless of time spent in the area of eligibility. Members who serve in operations and exercises conducted in the area of eligibility are eligible for the medal provided the basic time criteria is met. Due to the extensive period of the award, the non-consecutive service period for eligibility remains cumulative throughout the entire period. Furthermore, members who qualified for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal by reason of service between 1 Oct 66 to 30 Jun 74, in an area for which the Korea Defense Service Medal was subsequently authorized, remain eligible for both the Korea Defense Service Medal and Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal. Award of the Korea Defense Service Medal for this time period is a one-time exception to policy.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION

AFPC/DP3SP recommends denying the application. After a thorough review of the applicant's official military personnel record and documentation provided by the applicant to possibly provide administrative relief, award of the AFEM and KD SM were unable to be verified. As no documentation was found in the applicant's official military record that indicated he was either assigned and/or attached to a authorized unit for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days operating in the area of eligibility for award of the AFEM or KD SM, there appears to be no error or injustice as he appears to not meet the established criteria for the awards. To grant relief would be contrary to the criteria established by Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1348.33, or AFMAN 36-2806 (Currently Department of the Air Force Manual (DAFMAN 36-2806).

The complete advisory opinion is at Exhibit C.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION

The Board sent a copy of the advisory opinion to the applicant on 8 Nov 22 for comment (Exhibit D), but has received no response.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The application was not timely filed.
2. The applicant exhausted all available non-judicial relief before applying to the Board.
3. After reviewing all Exhibits, the Board concludes the applicant is the victim of an error or injustice. While the Board notes the recommendation of AFPC/DP3SP against correcting the record, the Board finds a preponderance of the evidence substantiates the applicant's contentions. Specifically, the Board finds the applicant's available records along with the Air Force Historical Research Agency's verification of the applicant's unit deployment, are sufficient evidence the applicant met the eligibility criteria to be awarded the AFEM. Further the Board notes, in accordance with AFMAN 36-2806, *Awards and Memorialization Program*, in addition to the award of the AFEM, the applicant also met the one-time exception of policy to be awarded the KDSM. Therefore, the Board recommends correcting the applicant's records as indicated below.

RECOMMENDATION

The pertinent military records of the Department of the Air Force relating to APPLICANT be corrected to show he was awarded the Air Force Expeditionary Medal (AFEM) and the Korea Defense Service Medal (KDSM).

CERTIFICATION

The following quorum of the Board, as defined in Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*, paragraph 2.1, considered Docket Number BC-2021-03077 in Executive Session on 31 Aug 23 and 14 May 24:

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Panel Chair

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Panel Member

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Panel Member

All members voted to correct the record. The panel considered the following:

- Exhibit A: Application, DD Form 149, w/atchs, dated 17 Aug 21.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 6 Nov 22.
- Exhibit D: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 8 Nov 22.

Taken together with all Exhibits, this document constitutes the true and complete Record of Proceedings, as required by DAFI 36-2603, paragraph 4.12.9.

11/6/2024

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR

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