

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE MATTER OF:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2022-01378

COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING REQUESTED: NO

APPLICANT'S REQUEST

His DD Form 214, *Report of Separation from Active Duty*, issued 28 October 1975, be amended to reflect:

- a. Foreign Service in Thailand.
- b. Foreign Service in the Republic of the Philippines.
- c. Vietnam Service Medal.
- d. Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

APPLICANT'S CONTENTIONS

He believes he earned the Vietnam Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal during his temporary duty (TDY) assignment to Thailand in 1972 in support of operations in Vietnam. In addition, he was stationed in the Philippines from 1973 to 1975; however, this overseas duty is not reflected on his DD Form 214.

The applicant's complete submission is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

The applicant is an honorably discharged Air Force staff sergeant (E-5), who entered the Regular Force on 15 April 1969.

On 26 February 1972, Special Order X-XX was published placing the applicant in Assignment Deferment Code 51 with a date of availability of January 1973. The order cites a letter dated 1 December 1971, Subject: O/S (Overseas) Selection of F-111 Qualified Airmen.

On 27 September 1972, Special Order Number XX-XXXX, provided by the applicant, was published naming the applicant as a traveler on a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed deployment from XXXXXX Air Force Base (AFB), XXXXXX to an undisclosed location with proceed on or about date 28 September 1972 for approximately 179 days.

Standard Form 600, *Chronological Record of Medical Care*, provided by the applicant, contains entries indicating the applicant received medical care on 27, 28, and 29 December 1972 at XXXXth USAF Hospital, APO (Army Post Office) XXXXX (XXXX, Thailand).

According to enlisted performance report (EPR) for the period 1 December 1972 through 15 May 1973, the applicant was assigned to the Field Maintenance Squadron, XXXXX AFB, XXXXX. Section II, *Duties*, reflects the applicant's duty title as Jet Aircraft Maintenance servicing F-111 aircraft. The report contains ratings but no comments.

According to EPRs for the periods closing 16 October 1973, 30 April 1974, and 30 April 1975, the applicant's unit of assignment is reflected as Organizational Maintenance Squadron, XXXXX Air Base, XXXXXX.

On 28 October 1975, the applicant was discharged for the purpose of reenlisting and issued DD Form 214 for the period 29 October 1971 through 28 October 1975 (4 years). He was not credited with Foreign Service.

On 29 October 1975, according to DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, the applicant re-entered active duty. On 28 October 1979, he was discharged and credited with 10 years, 6 months, and 14 days of total active service and 2 years, 6 months, and 12 days of Foreign Service. Block 13, *Decorations, Medals, Badges, Citations and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized*, reflects: Air Force Good Conduct Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Longevity Service Award with one Oak Leaf Cluster, National Defense Service Medal, and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one Oak Leaf Cluster.

On 22 June 2022, the Air Force Personnel Center Directorate of Assignments (AFPC/DP3AM) notified the applicant they were unable to verify service in Thailand. While they were able to verify service in the Republic of the Philippines, they were unable to determine the inclusive dates of this service.

On 14 March 2024, AFPC/DP3AM notified the applicant they were able to confirm boots on ground in Thailand and the Republic of the Philippines; however, they were unable to determine inclusive dates for each location. The Foreign Service on the DD Form 214 appears correct; therefore, a correction is not needed. Since specific locations are not annotated on the DD Form 214, the applicant may use their letter as proof of "boots on ground" for Thailand and the Republic of the Philippines.

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

APPLICABLE AUTHORITY/GUIDANCE

Title 10, United States Code, Section 1168: Discharge or release from active duty: limitation; DoDI 1336.01, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214/5 Series)*; AFI 36-3202, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214/5 Series)*; DD Form 214 Total Force Personnel Services Delivery Guide. The DD Form 214 is prepared in accordance with the aforementioned publications and is used to record qualifying active duty service. Foreign Service locations are not an authorized entry on the DD Form 214. Foreign Service is annotated in increments of years, months, and days.

The AFPC Directorate of Assignments (AFPC/DP3AM) is responsible for determining an Air Force member's Foreign Service. Since specific locations are not annotated on the DD Form 214, they will prepare a Boots-on-Ground letter if they are able to verify a member served at a specific foreign location. This letter may be used to validate overseas service.

Per DoD Instruction 1336.1, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214/5 Series)*, the DD Form 214 does not list TDY locations. According to AFI 36-2110, Total Force Assignments, "...use a combination of the following documents to verify completed TDY assignments: travel vouchers, PCS orders, decoration citations, enlisted or officer performance reports and records review Report on Individual Personnel."

AIR FORCE EVALUATION

AFPC/DP3SP (Evaluation and Recognition Programs) recommends denying award of the Vietnam Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. After a thorough review of the applicant's official military personnel record and provided documentation to possibly provide administrative relief, they were unable to verify the awards. In accordance with AFMAN 36-2806,

Awards and Memorialization Program, the Vietnam Service Medal is awarded to any member of the United States Armed Forces serving in Vietnam, contiguous waters, or air space, including service in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, or their air space, on or after 4 July 1965 through 28 March 1973. To qualify for the award a member must meet one of the following qualifications: 1) Be attached to or regularly serve for one or more days with an organization participating in or directly supporting military operations; 2) Be attached to or regularly serve for one or more days aboard a naval vessel directly supporting military operations; 3) Actually participate as a crewmember in one or more aerial flights into airspace above Vietnam and contiguous waters directly supporting military operations; 4) Serve TDY for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days in Vietnam or contiguous areas, except that time limit may be waived for personnel participating in actual combat operations.

The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal was awarded to members of the United States Armed Forces between 1 March 1961 and 28 March 1973 who, served for six months in South Vietnam during the award period or served outside the geographical limits of South Vietnam and contributed combat support to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces for an aggregate of six months. Only members of the United States Armed Forces who meet the criteria established for the Air Force Expeditionary Medal (Vietnam) or the Vietnam Service Medal during the period of service required are considered to have contributed direct combat support to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, or did not complete the length of service required as listed above, but who during wartime were either: 1) Wounded by the enemy in military action; 2) Captured by the enemy during action or in the line of duty, but later rescued or released, or 3) Killed in action or in the line of duty; 4) Were assigned in Vietnam on 20 January 1973 and who served a minimum of 60 calendar days in Vietnam during the period 29 January 1973 to 28 March 1973.

The applicant provided a TDY travel order indicating travel from XXXX Air Force Base, XXXXX to an undisclosed location effective 28 September 1972. However, AFPC/DP3AM was unable to verify service with inclusive dates in Thailand.

Based on a review of the official military personnel record and documentation provided, there is no evidence of an error or injustice. The applicant does not meet established criteria for award of the Vietnam Service Medal or Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. To grant relief would be contrary to the criteria established by AFMAN 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 14 March 2023 for comment (Exhibit D), and the applicant replied on 9 May 2023. In his response, the applicant contends the basis for the advisor's recommendation is lack of evidence/proof he was in Thailand the minimum length of time for award of the requested medals. In support of his request, he provided a buddy statement from a retired service member testifying he and the applicant served TDY in Thailand and that the applicant arrived in Thailand in late September or early October 1972. He also provided a document from his medical records, dated December 1972, documenting medical treatment at the XXXXth USAF Hospital, APO XXXXX. He maintains he did not return to XXXXX until January or February 1973. These documents show he spent over 90 days in Thailand.

In the buddy statement, the retiree states he was sent TDY to XXXXX, Thailand in August 1972 for six months as an Aircraft Hydraulic Specialist. In late September or early October 1972, while on a call on the flightline he met up with the applicant who was TDY from XXXXX as an assistant crew chief on an F-111A. He and the applicant knew each other from occasional contact on the flight line at XXXXX. The applicant told him he had just arrived a couple of days earlier and that

he had a permanent change of station (PCS) assignment to the Philippines for March 1973 with an availability date of January 1973. However, he believes they held him until February 1973.

The applicant's complete response is at Exhibit E.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The application was not timely filed. The Board notes the applicant did not file the application within three years of discovering the alleged error or injustice, as required by Section 1552 of Title 10, United States Code, and Department of the Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*. While the applicant asserts a date of discovery within the three-year limit, the Board does not find the assertion supported by a preponderance of the evidence.
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 not the victim of an error or injustice. Although AFPC/DP3AM was able to confirm service in Thailand and the Republic of the Philippines, they were unable to determine the exact dates of this service. Since foreign locations are not included on DD Form 214, the applicant may use their memorandum (boots on ground letter), dated 14 March 2024, as proof of his foreign service in Thailand and the Republic of the Philippines. With respect to the request for award of the Vietnam Service Medal and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Board took note of the applicant's entire submission including his response to the AFPC/DP3SP advisory opinion. The Board concurs with the rationale and recommendation of AFPC/DP3SP and finds a preponderance of the evidence does not substantiate the applicant's contentions. While there was evidence of service in Thailand, there was insufficient evidence the applicant served in the area of eligibility for 30 consecutive days for award of the Vietnam Service Medal or six months for award of the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. Therefore, the Board recommends against correcting the applicant's records.

RECOMMENDATION

The Board recommends informing the applicant the evidence did not demonstrate material error or injustice, and the Board will reconsider the application only upon receipt of relevant evidence not already presented.

CERTIFICATION

The following quorum of the Board, as defined in DAFI 36-2603, paragraph 2.1, considered Docket Number BC-2022-01378 in Executive Session on and 24 April 2025:

, Panel Chair
, Panel Member
, Panel Member

All members voted against correcting the record. The panel considered the following:

- Exhibit A: Application, DD Form 149, w/atchs, dated 9 October 2019.
- Exhibit B: Documentary evidence, including relevant excerpts from official records.
- Exhibit C: Advisory Opinion, AFPC/DP3SP, dated 9 March 2023.
- Exhibit D: Notification of Advisory, SAF/MRBC to Applicant, dated 14 March 2023.
- Exhibit E: Applicant's Response, w/atchs, dated 9 May 2023.

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.

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Board Operations Manager, AFBCMR