

ARMY BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 19 February 2025

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20240006344

APPLICANT REQUESTS: correction of his DD Form 214 (Report of Separation from Active Duty) to reflect the following awards:

- Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device
- Air Medal
- Combat Medical Badge

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record)
- Headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam General Orders Number 907, 8 May 1972
- partial DA Form 20 (Enlisted Qualification Record)
- DD Form 214 (Report of Separation from Active Duty) covering the period ending 14 December 1973
- National Personnel Record Center (NPRC) letter 1 April 2024

FACTS:

1. The applicant did not file within the 3-year time frame provided in Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b); however, the Army Board for Correction of Military Records (ABCMR) conducted a substantive review of this case and determined it is in the interest of justice to excuse the applicant's failure to timely file.

2. The applicant states:

a. He is requesting administrative correction to his DD Form 214 to reflect award of the Air Medal, Combat Medical Badge, and Bronze Star Medal with V Device.

b. He served as the company medic with D Company, 2nd Battalion (Air Mobile), 5th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam from September 1971 until December 1971, when he was medically evacuated to Fort Gordon, GA.

c. During his time as the D Company medic, he took part in multiple combat operations and numerous air mission sorties. He was awarded a Combat Medical

Badge in country and advised that he had participated in enough combat sorties to earn an Air Medal. He was also awarded a Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device at Fort Belvoir, VA. No awards or unit citations are noted or appear on his DD Form 214 and he was advised they would be added by his Reserve unit. He believes there is a different copy of his DD Form 214 other than the one he has.

3. The Board will not consider the applicant's request for Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device, the Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze service stars, the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation, or an amendment to item 18f (Foreign and/or Sea Service this Period) to show 9 months and 15 days in lieu of 4 months and 15 days. These items will be addressed through an administrative correction without action by the Board.

4. The applicant enlisted in the Regular Army on 15 March 1971.

5. The applicant's DA Form 20 shows:

a. He was awarded the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 91A (Medical Corpsman) in August 1971 and 91B (Medical Specialist) in October 1971.

b. Item 31 (Foreign Service) shows his foreign service was in the U.S. Army Pacific, in Vietnam, from 28 August 1971 through 13 June 1972, 5 months. Note to the Board, this period of time actually amounts to 9 months and 15 days, not 5 months and covers two Vietnam Campaigns.

c. His record of assignments shows his USARPAC assignment was to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion (Air Mobile), 5th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division from 3 September 1971 to 13 June 1972, where his duty MOS was 91B.

d. His conduct and efficiency were listed as blank or excellent.

e. Item 41 (Awards and Decorations) shows the National Defense Service Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal.

6. Headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam General Orders Number 907, 8 May 1972, awarded the applicant the Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device for heroism in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 7 December 1971, while serving as a combat medic with Company D, 2nd Infantry Battalion (Airmobile), 5th Cavalry Regiment, exposing himself to enemy fire on numerous occasions, giving aid to wounded comrades.

7. The applicant's DD Form 214 shows:

a. He was honorably released from active duty on 14 December 1973, due to early release, to join the U.S. Army Reserve.

b. He was credited with 2 years and 9 months of net active service.

c. Item 18f (Foreign and/or Sea Service) shows 4 months and 15 days.

d. Item 26 (Decorations, Medals, Badges, Commendations, Citations, and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized) shows:

- National Defense Service Medal
- Vietnam Service Medal
- Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device (1960)
- Expert Marksmanship Qualification Badge with Rifle Bar

8. The applicant's available service records do not contain any flight records, logs, or comparable documents annotating his aerial flight status or evidence that he was awarded or authorized the Air Medal.

9. The applicant's available service records do not contain orders awarding him the Combat Medical Badge.

10. An NPRC letter, 1 April 2024, shows they advised the applicant they could not find an award of the Combat Medical Badge or Air Medal in his service records, or any unit citations. They also advised him a review of his records reflects he should have been awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Medical Badge, but they did not have the authority to approve amendments to military records and recommended he apply to the ABCMR.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

1. After reviewing the application, all supporting documents, and the evidence found within the military record, the Board found that partial relief was warranted. The Board carefully considered the applicant's record of service, documents submitted in support of the petition and executed a comprehensive and standard review based on law, policy and regulation. Upon reviewing the applicant's petition and available military records, the Board determined that the documentation lacks the required flight hour information necessary to assess eligibility for the Air Medal; therefore, relief for this award is denied. However, based on the correspondence from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), the Board found sufficient evidence to support awarding the applicant the Combat Medical Badge.

2. During deliberation, the Board noted that the applicant’s service record did not reflect the award of the Army Good Conduct Medal (1st Award), despite receiving “excellent” conduct and efficiency ratings throughout his service from 15 March 1971 to 14 December 1973. Based on this evidence, the Board granted partial relief by approving the award of both the Combat Medical Badge and the Army Good Conduct Medal.

3. Prior to closing the case, the Board did note the analyst of record administrative notes below, and recommended the correction is completed to more accurately depict the military service of the applicant.

BOARD VOTE:

<u>Mbr 1</u>	<u>Mbr 2</u>	<u>Mbr 3</u>	
:	:	:	GRANT FULL RELIEF
XXX	XXX	XXX	GRANT PARTIAL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT FORMAL HEARING
:	:	:	DENY APPLICATION

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

1. In addition to the administrative notes annotated by the Analyst of Record (below the signature), the Board determined the evidence presented is sufficient to warrant a recommendation for partial relief. As a result, the Board recommends that all Department of the Army records of the individual concerned be corrected by amending the applicant's DD Form 214 for the period ending 14 December 1973 to show in

- item 24 (Decorations, Medals, Badges, Commendations, Citations, and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized) Combat Medical Badge and
- awarding him the Army Good Conduct Medal (1st Award) for exemplary service from 15 March 1971 to 14 December 1973 and adding the medal to his DD Form 214 for the period ending 14 December 1973

2. The Board further determined the evidence presented is insufficient to warrant a portion of the requested relief. As a result, the Board recommends denial of so much of the application that pertains to award of the Air Medal.

X //SIGNED//

CHAIRPERSON

I certify that herein is recorded the true and complete record of the proceedings of the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in this case.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE(S):

A review of the applicant's records shows his DD Form 214 covering the period ending 14 December 1973, should be amended as follows:

- a. delete the Vietnam Service Medal from item 26 (Decorations, Medals, Badges, Commendations, Citations, and Campaign Ribbons Awarded or Authorized).
- b. add the following to item 24: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device; Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze service stars; and Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation; and

c. amend item 18f (Foreign and/or Sea Service this Period) to show 9 months and 15 days in lieu of 4 months and 15 days.

REFERENCES:

1. Title 10, U.S. Code, section 1552(b), provides that applications for correction of military records must be filed within 3 years after discovery of the alleged error or injustice. This provision of law also allows the ABCMR to excuse an applicant's failure to timely file within the 3-year statute of limitations if the ABCMR determines it would be in the interest of justice to do so.

2. Army Regulation 600-8-22 (Military Awards) prescribes Army policy, criteria, and administrative instructions concerning individual and unit military awards.

a. The Bronze Star Medal is awarded in time of war for heroism and for meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, in connection with military operations against an armed enemy, or while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. As with all personal decorations, formal recommendations, approval through the chain of command, and announcement in orders are required.

b. The Army Good Conduct Medal is awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves by their conduct, efficiency, and fidelity during a qualifying period of active duty enlisted service. This period is 3 years except in those cases when the period for the first award ends with the termination of a period of Federal military service. Although there is no automatic entitlement to the Army Good Conduct Medal, disqualification must be justified.

c. The Air Medal is awarded in time of war for heroism and for meritorious achievement or service while participating in aerial flight. This award is primarily intended for personnel on flying status, but may also be awarded to those personnel whose combat duties require them to fly; for example, personnel in the attack elements of units involved in air-land assaults against an armed enemy.

d. The Combat Medical Badge is awarded to medical department personnel (colonel and below) who are assigned or attached to a medical unit of company or smaller size that is organic to an infantry unit of brigade, regimental or smaller size which is engaged in active ground combat. Battle participation credit is not sufficient; the infantry unit must have been in contact with the enemy and the Soldier must have been personally present and under fire during such ground combat.

e. There are special provisions for award of the Combat Medical Badge during the Vietnam conflict. These provisions permitted award of the Combat Medical Badge to Soldiers assigned to a Vietnamese unit engaged in actual ground combat or as a member of a U.S. Army Infantry unit of brigade or smaller size including Special Forces Detachments serving with the Republic of Vietnam units engaged in actual ground combat. The special provisions required the Soldier to be personally present and under hostile fire while assigned as specified.

f. A bronze service star is authorized with the Vietnam Service Medal for participation in each credited campaign.

g. The bronze "V" device indicates acts of heroism involving conflict with an armed enemy and authorizes the bronze "V" device in conjunction with awards of the Army Commendation Medal, the Air Medal, and the Bronze Star Medal. Although more than one award of the Army Commendation Medal, the Air Medal, or the Bronze Star Medal may be made for heroism to the same person, only one "V" device may be worn on awards of the Army Commendation Medal, the Air Medal, or the Bronze Star Medal.

3. U.S. Army Vietnam Regulation 672-1 (Decorations and Awards) provided guidelines for award of the Air Medal. It stated that passenger personnel who did not participate in an air assault were not eligible for the award based upon sustained operations. It defined terms and provided guidelines for the award based upon the number and types of missions or hours. Twenty-five Category I missions (air assault and equally dangerous missions) and accrual of a minimum of 25 hours of flight time while engaged in Category I missions was the standard established for which sustained operations were deemed worthy of recognition by an award of the Air Medal. However, the regulation was clear that these guidelines were considered only a departure point.

4. Department of the Army Pamphlet 672-3 (Unit Citation and Campaign Participation Credit Register) lists the awards received by units serving in Vietnam. This pamphlet shows:

a. The 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment was awarded the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation for the period 13 September 1965 through 1 April 1972, in Department of the Army General Orders Number 54, dated 1974.

b. The named that occurred, between 28 August 1971 and 13 June 1972, in Vietnam Campaigns are:

- Consolidation I, 1 July 1971 - 30 November 1971.
- Consolidation II, 1 December 1971 - 29 March 1972.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//