

Appendix XI

INTRODUCTORY LETTERS

- Secretary of Air Force
- USAF Surgeon General with Fact Sheet



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, D C 20330

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

James W. Doe  
1215 Middle Grove  
Norfolk, MD 23456

Dear Mr Doe

The Air Force will soon begin conducting a very comprehensive health assessment of certain Air Force members who served our Nation in the Vietnam conflict. This health assessment is part of a medical study designed to help determine if you or your fellow Vietnam veterans may have had any compromise to your health as a result of exposure to the complex environment of Southeast Asia.

Scientists at the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine have been given the responsibility for conducting this important project. The Air Force Surgeon General will contact you soon with more details and ask for your voluntary participation.

A major focus of the President's program for veterans is the resolution of health issues raised by them. The Air Force and I are committed to doing our part in resolving these issues. I ask that you help us and all Vietnam veterans by voluntarily participating in this major study.

Sincerely,

Verne Orr  
Secretary of the Air Force



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

BOLLING AFB DC 20332

James W. Doe  
1215 Middle Grove  
Norfolk, MD 23456

Dear Mr Doe

The Air Force is conducting a very comprehensive health assessment of certain Air Force members who served our Nation in the Vietnam conflict. The USAF School of Aerospace Medicine has been given the responsibility for conducting this study.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether there may be any causal relationship between health problems and exposure to the complex and unique environment of the war in Southeast Asia. Simply stated, we do not know if such health effects exist. You are being asked to voluntarily participate in this study because of your unique Southeast Asia experience. Your participation is critical to the success of this study. However, you should not view this invitation to participate as a cause for alarm nor as an implication that you are at risk for any known disease.

To insure the scientific validity of the study, both an in-depth interview and a detailed physical examination will be conducted. The administration of the interview will begin soon under the direction of a nationally recognized health survey organization. You will be contacted by phone or letter to arrange a convenient time for an in-home interview which will take from two to three hours.

Shortly after the interview you will again be contacted to schedule a physical examination at a nationally recognized civilian medical facility. The physical examination will take approximately four days. Every effort will be made to minimize disruption of your normal activities and to facilitate your participation in the study. Travel and per diem will be paid by the Air Force. For those not precluded by law, a stipend of \$100 per day will be paid as a partial compensation for your time.

Our intent is to maintain all individual health data in strictest confidence. In case outside parties attempt to gain access to the data, the Air Force and the Department of Justice are committed to protect this individual confidentiality. Only in the event of an adverse final court decision, or in the highly unlikely instance where serious medical deficiencies must be shared with appropriate medical authorities to protect public health and safety, will any personal health data be revealed. You are referred to the Fact Sheet for further information regarding this matter.

This is perhaps one of the most important health studies undertaken by the Air Force. Your voluntary participation is critical to its success. Although you may feel healthy, numerous Vietnam veterans believe that they have illnesses which may be attributable to service in Southeast Asia. The only way we can get clarification of these difficult questions is through your cooperation and participation.

Sincerely

PAUL W. MYERS  
Lieutenant General, USAF, MC  
Surgeon General

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Fact Sheet

## FACT SHEET

### INTRODUCTION

- The USAF School of Aerospace Medicine, Brooks AFB, Texas, is conducting the study.

- You are being invited to participate in this study because of your specific duties and period of assignment in Southeast Asia.

### PURPOSE:

- To determine whether there is a causal relationship between adverse health effects and exposure to the complex environment of Southeast Asia.

### METHODS

- An in-depth health questionnaire will be administered to you by a member of a health evaluation team from Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

- A complete profile of your current health will be obtained by a physical examination which will be conducted by a nationally recognized outpatient clinic.

- Follow-up abbreviated health questionnaires and physical examinations will be conducted at years 3, 5, 10, 15, and 20 of the study.

- Travel expenses (including board and lodging) for the physical examination will be paid by the Air Force.

- Stipend of \$100 per day will be paid to study participants who are not on active duty, Government employed or otherwise precluded by law from receiving such a stipend.

- Confidentiality is to be maintained except in two cases:

- A judicial order to release personal medical data following an Air Force and Justice Department defended lawsuit.

- Serious medical findings which impact public health and safety. Two examples of situations in which public health and safety would raise the questions of disclosure are: a participant has typhoid fever, a participant who directly impacts the safety of others either in his profession, or as a volunteer, is found to have a serious nerve, heart or mental disorder. In this instance a committee composed of a physician (whose specialty is the area of the identified problem), a physician of your choice, a flight surgeon, a judge advocate (lawyer) and a representative from your field of expertise will be convened to review the medical findings. Before any disclosure is made to medical authorities, the committee must determine that the findings jeopardize the public health and safety.

## BENEFITS TO YOU

- You will receive a complete health review and physical examination of top level executive calibre at no cost to yourself.

- You will be completely informed of all examination results.

- The information from this study will be provided to a physician of your choice if you so request.

- Questions concerning the study may be referred to the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine, Epidemiology Division, Brooks Air Force Base, Texas 78235, or by calling collect AC 512 536-3309.

- If you have recently changed your address or have an unlisted phone number, please advise the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine at the above address and phone number so that your records may be properly updated.