

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
AIR FORCE BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NUMBER: BC-2011-05048

COUNSEL: NONE

HEARING DESIRED: NO

APPLICANT REQUESTS THAT:

1. He be awarded the Vietnam Service Medal (VSM).
2. He be awarded the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal (RVCM).

APPLICANT CONTENDS THAT:

He was ordered to Udorn AB, Thailand in November 1974 and assigned to the 432 CSG which was under the control of the 7th Air Force. His duties in the 432 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (AMS) were to maintain the ballistics and navigational systems on the F4 Phantoms. He rode launch trucks for dozens of sorties, debriefed returning pilots on aircraft systems performance, and repaired returned aircraft in direct support of Operation FREQUENT WIND. He left the Southeast Asia (SEA) region in August 1975 as part of the Palace Lightning withdrawal plan.

In support of his request, the applicant submits a copy of his DD Form 214, documents related to his Udorn AB assignment, and letters to the National Personnel Records Center and his Congressman.

The applicant's complete submission, with attachments, is at Exhibit A.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

The applicant is a former member of the Regular Air Force who served from 4 October 1972 to 30 November 1976. He was trained and served as an Inertial and Radar Navigation Systems Specialist and was progressively promoted to the rank of Sergeant (Sgt) with a pay grade of (E-4) effective 1 November 1974. The applicant was discharged with an honorable characterization of service and credited with serving 3 years,

9 months, and 27 days of active duty which included, 11 months and 18 days of Foreign and/or Sea Service.

The applicant's DD Form 214 does not reflect award of the VSM or RVCM.

AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

AFPC/DPSIDRA recommends denial. DPSIDRA states the applicant's dates of assignment in Thailand were well after the ending date of 28 March 1973 for award of either the VSM or the RVCM; therefore, the applicant is ineligible for award of the VSM or the RVCM based on the inclusive period of the award.

The VSM is awarded to all service members of the U.S. Armed Forces serving at any time between 4 July 1965 and 28 March 1973, in Vietnam, its contiguous waters or airspace there-over and to all members of the U.S. Armed Forces serving at any time between 4 July 1965 and 28 March 1973, in Thailand, Laos or Cambodia, their contiguous waters or the airspace there-over, in direct support of operations in Vietnam. To be eligible a service member must: 1. Be permanently assigned, attached or detailed for one or more days, with an organization participating in or directly supporting ground (military) operations. 2. Be permanently assigned, attached or detailed for one or more days, aboard a naval vessel directly supporting military operations. 3. Have actually participated as a crew member in one or more aerial flights directly supporting military operations. 4. Have served on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days. Those limitations may be waived for personnel participating in actual combat operations.

The RVCM is awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who: 1. Served for six months in South Vietnam during the period 1 Mar 61 to 28 Mar 73; 2. Served outside the geographical limits of South Vietnam and contributed direct combat support to the RVN Armed Forces for an aggregate of six months. Only members of the Armed Forces of the United States who meet the criteria established for the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM), (Vietnam) or the VSM during the period of service required are considered to have contributed direct combat support to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces; or 3. Did not complete the length of service required in item (1) or (2) above, but who, during wartime, were: a. wounded by the enemy (in a military action); b. captured by the enemy during action or in the line of duty, later rescued, released; or c. killed in action or in the line of duty; or 4. Were assigned in Vietnam on 28 January 1973, and who served a minimum of 60 calendar days in Vietnam during the period of 29 January 1973 through 28 March 1973.

DPSIDRA further states the dates of the applicant's tour in Thailand coincides with Operation Eagle Pull (OEP), Operation Frequent Wind (OFW) and the SS Mayaguez incident, which are all operations eligible for the AFEM. If entitlement to the AFEM can be verified, it could be traded for the VSM. However, they were unable to locate official documentation that verifies the applicant was directly deployed in support to one of the operations. Without evidence to support the claim of his presence in the designated AOE for any of the operations, the applicant is ineligible for award of the AFEM.

The complete DPSIDRA evaluation is at exhibit C.

APPLICANT'S REVIEW OF AIR FORCE EVALUATION:

In addition to reiterating his duties in support of the aircraft assigned to the 432 TRW, the applicant responded with a comment that the 432 TRW was "deployed" in support of all the sorties for OEP, OFW and the SS Mayaguez incident in 1975. He questions whether or not the flight line crews of the 432nd that supported the sorties were also considered to have been deployed. Additionally, he included, as an attachment, an internet document outlining the DoD 1348 C6.6.1.1.5., September 1996, revision of dates of eligibility for the VSM between 15 November 1961 to 28 March 1973, and from 29 April 1975 to 30 April 1975.

The applicant's complete response, with attachments, is at Exhibit E.

THE BOARD CONCLUDES THAT:

1. The applicant has exhausted all remedies provided by existing law or regulations.
2. The application was not timely filed; however, it is in the interest of justice to excuse the failure to timely file.

. Insufficient relevant evidence has been presented to demonstrate the existence of error or injustice. We took notice of the applicant's complete submission in judging the merits of the case; however, we agree with the opinion and recommendation of the Air Force office of primary responsibility (OPR) and adopt its rationale as the basis for our conclusion that the applicant has not been the victim of an error or injustice. Due to the absence of official documentation that verifies the applicant was directly deployed in support to one of the operations, he is not entitled to the VSM. Without award of the VSM, the applicant cannot qualify for the RVCM. Therefore, in

the absence of evidence to the contrary, we find no basis to favorably consider this application.

THE BOARD DETERMINES THAT:

The applicant be notified that the evidence presented did not demonstrate the existence of material error or injustice; that the application was denied without a personal appearance; and that the application will only be reconsidered upon the submission of newly discovered relevant evidence not considered with this application.

The following members of the Board considered this application BC-2011-05048 in Executive Session on 9 August 2012, under the provisions of AFI 36-2603:

Panel Chair
Member
Member

The following documentary evidence was considered:

- Exhibit A. DD Form 149 dated 19 December 2011, w/atchs.
- Exhibit B. Applicant's Master Personnel Records.
- Exhibit C. Letter, AFPC/DPSIDRA, dated 3 February 2012.
- Exhibit D. Letter, SAF/MRBR, dated 24 February 2012.
- Exhibit E. Letter, Applicant, dated 4 March 2012, w/atchs.

Panel Chair