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DEPARTMENT OF AIR.  
MINUTE PAPER.

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(This side only to be written on.)

SUBJECT: Presumption of death of Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent (400866)

D.P.S.

Beaufort aircraft A9-244 was, on the morning of 21st October, 1943, detailed to carry out a torpedo attack on enemy naval units off the east coast of New Ireland and failed to return to its base.

2. The crew of the aircraft at the time of its loss comprised:-

Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent (400866)	Pilot	(Missing)
Flying Officer C.W. Vincent (404757)	W.O.A.G.	(Missing)
Flying Officer A.M. Brown (413955)	W.O.A.G.	(Safe)
4240 Warrant Officer Bailey, J.P.	Navigator	(Missing)

3. A9-244 remained with the other aircraft in the formation up to the time of the attack, but was not afterwards seen by the accompanying aircraft and no message was received from it. (Enclosure 11B).

4. Flying Officer A.M. Brown was subsequently reported as a prisoner of war in Japan and was repatriated to Australia at the conclusion of hostilities.

5. Flying Officer Brown reported on 24th October, 1945, (Enclosure 51A) that the aircraft crashed on 21st October, 1943, off the coast of New Ireland and all of the crew got safely ashore and were uninjured. Four days later they were handed over to the Japanese by natives and were taken to the Navy P.O.W. Camp, Rabaul, on 28th October, 1943. On the 13th January, 1944, Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent and Pilot Officer R.B. O'Loughlen from Squadron Leader Quinn's crew, were taken from the camp with fifteen American prisoners. As far as Flying Officer Brown could find out, they were taken away by ship. Flying Officer Brown later asked a Japanese interpreter where they had gone and he replied "To an island camp", but would give no further information. Flying Officer Brown heard nothing further of the other members of the crew after they left the Navy camp at Rabaul.

6. Major H.S. Williams, P.O.W.L.O. Tokio, reports that Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent and Flying Officer O'Loughlen, with fifteen American prisoners left Rabaul by ship on the 13th January, 1944. Lieutenant Commander Arbuckle, U.S. Navy, at Enclosure 70A, gives a full list of the 17 prisoners, including G.H. Vincent and O'Loughlen. None of these prisoners have been heard of again.

7. Information obtained from the Japanese Navy Department, Enclosure 56A, says that a convoy comprising two transports, "Kenyo Maru" and "Nihonkai Maru", and two escort destroyers, "Hayanami" and "Shimakaze", left Rabaul on the 13th January, 1944. The "Kenyo Maru" was torpedoed and sunk the following day and there were no survivors. The "Nihonkai Maru" was torpedoed in position 5 degrees 2 minutes north, 140 degrees 50 minutes east. The date is not given but from the position given it would appear to have been within two or three days after leaving Rabaul. There were some survivors who were rescued by the "Hayanami". Major Williams' report at Enclosure 56A, dated 5th December, 1945, states that Japanese Navy Department claims that difficulties are being experienced in locating any personnel from the "Hayanami". The Japanese Government has been directed to issue a report on all Japanese vessels sunk while carrying Allied prisoners of war, but no report has so far been received.

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8. Lieutenant Nyarady states that while he was a prisoner at Ofuna, Japan, he was told that early in February, a seventeen-man draft was expected. The draft never arrived. It was customary for advance information of incoming drafts of prisoners to be received.

9. As all Allied prisoners of war in camps in Japan have been accounted for, it is certain no members of this crew other than Flying Officer Brown, and none of the Americans referred to, ever reached a prisoner of war camp in Japan. There were separate Army and Navy prisoner of war camps at Rabaul, but none of the personnel referred to were transferred to the Army camp.

10. RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent be officially presumed to have lost his life whilst a prisoner of war on or after the 14th January, 1944.

12 Feb., '47.

*W. J. Keenan*  
Wing Commander,  
D/D.P.S. (Cas).

P.4.

Flight Lieutenant G.H. Vincent is officially presumed to have lost his life whilst a prisoner of war on or after the 14th January, 1944.

13 Feb., '47.

*Richardson*  
Group Captain, D.P.S.