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THE RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

Bush Records Belatedly Released

October 06, 2004 | From Associated Press

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WASHINGTON — More than a week after a court-imposed deadline to turn over all records of President Bush's military service, the Texas Air National Guard belatedly produced two documents Tuesday that include Bush's orders for his last day of active duty in 1973.

The orders show Bush was on "no-fly" status for his last days of duty because he had been grounded almost a year earlier for skipping an annual medical exam.

The files, released under a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit, are orders for Bush to appear for two stints of active-duty training: a 1971 exercise in Canada and eight days of duty in July 1973.

The records released Tuesday are the fifth set of documents related to Bush's Vietnam-era National Guard service to be released in response to an Associated Press lawsuit. The federal judge overseeing that case ordered the Pentagon to disclose all of Bush's records by Sept. 24. Tuesday's four pages of records were the second set of files released after the deadline.

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The Texas Air National Guard did not explain the delay in releasing the records.

The last day of the orders is July 30, 1973, Bush' final day in the Texas Air National Guard. Previously released documents include a form Bush signed that day stating he had been counseled on his plans to leave his Texas unit because he was moving out of the area.

Bush started at Harvard Business School in September 1973, and the Texas Air National Guard honorably discharged him into the Air Force Reserves, effective Oct. 1 of that year. The Air Force discharged Bush in November 1974.

The records released Tuesday also include orders for an August 1971 training mission in Canada, where Bush impressed his commanders. An evaluation written nine months later said Bush's "skills as an interceptor pilot enabled him to complete all his ADC [Air Defense Command] intercept missions during the Canadian deployment with ease."

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