



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, TASK FORCE MOUNTAIN WARRIOR  
COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE-82  
FOB FENTY, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09310

AFZC-BCT-BJA

28 October 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: AR 15-6 Investigation Statement of CW3 (b)(3), (b)(6)

1. On 25 October 2009, I, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) interviewed CW3 (b)(3), (b)(6) at FOB Fenty, Afghanistan. The primary purpose was to ascertain CW3 (b)(3), (b)(6) involvement during the attack on COP Keating on 3 October 2009. The following are questions I asked and the answers provided by CW3 (b)(3), (b)(6)

a. What is your duty position? Standardization Instructor Pilot / Pilot in Command / Task Force Palehorse Master Gunner

b. How long have you been in the Army? 15 Years

c. How many combat deployment have you had? Provide location and time frame?

Iraq: 28 April 2003 – 01 April 04

Iraq: 20 March 05 – 06 February 06

Afghanistan: 12 December 08 – Present

d. How long have you been in Afghanistan for your current deployment? When did you arrive? Arrived 12 December 2008

e. What training have you received to fly an AH-64 helicopter? Include total number of hours, total number of combat flight hours, and specific training completed.

I have 3200 plus flight hours, 1600 combat flight hours, I have completed the following flight training schools:

AH-64A Aircraft Qualification Course

AH-64D Aircraft Qualification Course

Aircraft Survivability Equipment/Electronic Warfare Officer Course (ASE/EWO)

AH-46D Instructor Pilot Course

Instrument Flight Evaluator Course (IFE)

High Altitude Aviation Training Course (HAATS)

Additional Training:

Air Mission Commander Training

Overwater/HEEDS

f. What was your duty position with the attack weapons team? What was your callsign?

Flight Lead Pilot in Command Back Seat, Callsign (b)(2)High After the aircraft assigned the callsign (b)(2)High sustained battle damage I flew the aircraft with the (b)(2)High Callsign.

g. When did your team initially arrive on station at COP Keating? 0240Z

h. Describe your team's actions on the day of the attack at COP Keating? Be as complete as possible.

On the morning of 03 October 2009, the Day Quick Reaction Force (QRF) Team (b)(2)High Pilot in Command (PIC), (b)(3), (b)(6) Copilot Gunner (CPG), CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) and (b)(2)High - PIC, CW3 (b)(3), (b)(6) CPG, CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) was launched in support of a Troops in Contact (TIC) Mission at Combat Out Post (COP) Keating and its Observation Post (OP) Fritsche. At 0133z approximately 150-200 AAF conducted simultaneous and well coordinated attacks against COP Keating and OP Fritsche.

At 0150z we were informed by Taskforce Palehorse TOC that COP Keating and OP Fritsche were in sustained heavy fighting with Anti-Afghanistan Forces (AAF). At 0200z we departed JAF with little information on the actual battle taking place. While enroute we were informed that the enemy was at the wire, all Coalition Forces were within the COP and that all forces outside the wire were to be considered enemy, it was now being considered a massive coordinated attack and COP Keating was in danger of being overrun. We requested that TF Palehorse contact TF Thunder (159th Aviation Brigade) and arrange for additional AH-64Ds to be alerted. We decided that in order to prevent early warning of our arrival, by spotters in the Konar Valley, we would utilize a route that took us outside of normal flight routes. At the time we realized that our choice of flight route would get us to the battle quicker with less observation from spotters, but at a cost of a re-fuel stop at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Bostic which would ultimately result in less on station time. As we began our cross country flight route we were informed that the AAF had compromised the final defensive lines at COP Keating, the enemy was now in the wire and occupying U.S. buildings. It was also stated that it was possible that the Afghanistan National Police (ANP) may have joined the AAF prior to the beginning of the fight. While enroute we discussed our Team Employment Techniques and we decided that we would use a low bird / high bird technique that would enable us to maximize our visual coverage of the area while providing lead / wing coverage of each other. We were able to fly our aircraft in such a way that we were able to enter the valley from the south, a direction the AAF are not used to seeing us approach from, and maximized our element of surprise. We immediately saw that COP Keating was in flames and the valley was obscured by heavy smoke. My aircraft was the low bird and as we approached COP Keating we immediately began a visual search of the surrounding area and within seconds identified a large group of personnel (20-30) walking down the mountain on the east side of COP Keating. The personnel appeared to be armed and approaching a building that we later discovered was one of the entry points for the breach in COP Keating's perimeter. At this point we were able to contact (b)(2)High COP

Keating's JTAC, he advised us that all friendly forces were in the remaining four buildings, AAF forces were in the wire on the west and east sides, and that all personnel in the immediate vicinity and outside the wire were hostile. My CPG, CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) talked (b)(2)High onto the personnel that we previously identified and we confirmed that the personnel had weapons and were in position to further infiltrate the compound and link up with the enemy already within the wire. At this point my aircraft engaged the AAF, followed by (b)(2)High until it was believed that all AAF were either dead or unable to further influence the battle. We expended 280 rds of 30mm. (b)(2)High informed us that more enemy personnel were inside the compound and that they had suffered large casualties. We began a search of the compound for enemy personnel but were hampered by heavy smoke, the heat signature of the burning buildings, and heavy enemy fire directed at our aircraft. Over the next one hour and twenty minutes the aircraft continued to receive heavy ground fire from every side of COP Keating and the surrounding area. Both aircraft continued to engage targets of opportunity within the area expending a total of approximately 525 rounds of 30MM and over 30 2.75 inch High Explosive Rockets. Prior to departure for fuel, the Team was involved in seven separate engagements from different locations.

Around 0300Z CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) and CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) were woken up and launched in aircraft (b)(2)High (b)(2)High and escorted another Dustoff aircraft up to FOB Bostick. After arriving at FOB Bostick; CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) relayed through (b)(2)High who was acting as a retrans aircraft, to the AWT on station notifying them that (b)(2)High had arrived and ready to escort the MEDEVAC aircraft in to Keating. (b)(2)High notified CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) that the LZ was still hot and to keep the MEDEVAC at Bostick. The AWT returned to Bostick to rearm and refuel and gave (b)(2)High a SITREP.

We rearmed and refueled and departed FOB Bostick to get an assessment of the feasibility of conducting a medevac mission. We arrived back on station at 0500z and immediately began to conduct area security in the vicinity of COP Keating. We contacted (b)(2)High upon our arrival and we began Close Combat Attacks (CCAs) to engage small teams of AAF surrounding COP Keating. At approximately 0600z, (b)(2)High was engaged by a DShK within 800 meters of the perimeter and identified its location with smoke rounds so that our Team could engage the larger threat to the COP. We engaged the dismounts in the vicinity of the DShK with 30MM and HE Rockets. During this engagement the team was engaged on two occasions by small arms and DShK fire.

After destroying the DShK, (b)(2)High directed us to engage a building at (b)(2)High that was being used to engage COP Keating with small arms and RPG fire. Being the low bird, I approached the target from the east and CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) attempted to engage the building with a Hellfire Missile. On our inbound run our Hellfire Missile failed to ignite and we turned away to allow (b)(2)High take the shot. At this point we noticed a vibration in the pedals and only later did we realize that on this pass our aircraft sustained damage from 2 DShKs that had been emplaced, 800 meters to the east of COP Keating, to focus specifically on responding aircraft. (b)(2)High was in trail and was able to engage the building's east wall with a Hellfire while I

changed position to attack the target from the south. Our aircraft noticed that the Mosque had not been completely destroyed and could still be utilized as a fighting position, so we decided to re-engage it to ensure the enemy could no longer use it for cover. As we began our Hellfire run, (b)(2)High radioed that he had been "hit" and was starting to have system failures. In my aircraft, CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) fired our last remaining Hellfire at the Mosque, hitting the southern wall, and we began our egress of the area. CW2 (b)(2)High, (b)(3), (b)(6) informed me that he was having a Back up Flight Control issue and that his Environmental Control System was failed along with automatic stabilator failure and multiple electrical system failures. I positioned my aircraft behind and below Weapon 20 so that we could cover him while he attempted to troubleshoot his aircraft. While we were egressing the area, (b)(2)High contacted me and advised us that he was at the BK Pass with a (b)(2)High attempting to establish radio communications with us for Destroyer TOC. We informed him that (b)(2)High was damaged from enemy fire and had to return to FOB Bostic for assessment. We made the decision that (b)(2)High would join me and return to the fight while the Flawless Aircraft escorted Weapon 20 back to FOB Bostic. At this time our aircraft master warning system activated informing us that we had a low utility hydraulic level low indication. At this point, we advised all the other aircraft of our situation and began to egress towards FOB Bostic with (b)(2)High as our wingman and (b)(2)High escorting (b)(2)High. Within two minutes we had a complete Utility Hydraulic System failure. CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) while monitoring the aircraft systems, noted that the Hydraulic Accumulator PSI was also decreasing; we advised (b)(2)High of our situation and continued to FOB Bostic. While enroute we contacted Destroyer TOC and advised them to call TF Palehorse and alert the Downed Aircraft Recovery Team (DART) and prep them to launch with an additional aircraft to replace one of the damaged airframes. Shortly after arriving at FOB Bostic Overdrive (TF Eagle Lift AH-64Ds) arrived in the FARP. Myself and CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) ran over to the relieving aircraft and informed them of the situation on the ground, the location of all of our weapon engagements and the probable location of the enemy fire that damaged our aircraft. I also advised them altitude, attitude, direction of flight and location that both aircraft were in at the time they were hit.

Upon landing, CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) Maintenance Test Pilot from the (b)(2)High Aircraft) determined that both AH-64Ds (b)(2)High were no longer flyable. We were advised that a Dart Team and an additional aircraft were being sent from TF Palehorse. Our team with the assistance of CPT(b)(3), (b)(6) acting as the TF Palehorse LNO, went to the Destroyer TOC and began to put together a plan to air assault additional ground forces into the battle space. About forty minutes after we arrived at FOB Bostic we were informed that the (b)(2)High element had also sustained battle damage and were on their way back to FOB Bostic. CPT(b)(3), (b)(6) and I decided that if the crews from (b)(2)High would agree that my crew and the remaining aircraft from (b)(2)High would become a team and go back to FOB Keating. Ultimately this was denied. While we waited for the Dart Team and the new aircraft we developed the plan for the air assault. The plan was to have the original Weapon Crews move to the operating aircraft and escort three UH-60s into OP Fritsche.

Myself and CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) climbed into (b)(2)High and when the new aircraft arrived the original crews from (b)(2)High loaded aboard (b)(2)High. We had the UH-60s (b)(2)High running, loaded with the required personnel and ready to go. Several LZ's were identified but it was determined that the best and most secure place to put them into was COP Fritsche. Our goal was to insert 150 troops into OP Fritsche. By this time we noted that the forecasted thunderstorms and heavy rain had entered the area. Visibility began to decrease and the ceilings in and around the Konar/Kamdesh Valleys had started to come down. At this time the storm was directly over Bostic but we determined that it had passed over the Kamdesh area. We then launched as a flight of five. As the escort aircraft we routed the flight along a route that had not been used today and entered the valley scanning for enemy personnel in the vicinity of the COP and OP. The first UH-60 dropped off their 10 troops and departed the area to the south of Fritsche on their way out one of their crew members identified enemy personnel firing at their aircraft and returned fire. (b)(2)High identified the area they were engaging and engaged with 30mm and rockets. The additional two UH-60s also took fire from that area were engaged by the UH-60s and (b)(2)High. Due to the increasing volume of fire I decided to stay on the objective and allow (b)(2)High to clear the area with the (b)(2)High aircraft. Once the (b)(2)High aircraft were clear and enroute to FOB Bostic to pick up additional personnel (b)(2)High returned and we took up overwatch and security. While (b)(2)High provided (b)(2)High security we began to search for the DHsK position that had engaged us previously. From the damage to the two aircraft we were able to determine that the fire probably came from the southern side of the Kamdesh Valley. While searching for enemy locations we identified muzzle flashes coming from the suspected DHsK location. We immediately suppressed the location with 80 rounds of 30mm and 8 HE Rockets. While we engaged the DHsk position CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) witness additional heavy weapon muzzle flashes further west, Approximately (b)(2)High. We suppressed the second DShK position with 30 MM and Rockets. (b)(2)High then made a gun run on the location with 30mm and rockets. No more fire came from either location and the enemy was believed to be killed. Once the (b)(2)High aircraft returned we escorted them to OP Fritsche for off loading. While inbound to OP Fritsche the (b)(2)High aircraft took small arms fire and (b)(2)High (b)(2)High suppressed and bypassed. On first UH-60s way out of the area they were engaged again by small arms fire from a different location about 500 meters up from the location on the first trip in. That area was engaged by the (b)(2)High aircraft and by both (b)(2)High aircraft with 30MM. Once the (b)(2)High aircraft cleared the area our team returned in deteriorating weather and began to provide security. Immediately after returning (b)(2)High directed us to engage and destroy with Hellfire Missiles two ANP buildings at the ANP checkpoint west of COP Keating. (b)(2)High stated that it was occupied by enemy fighters and was in direct fire range of the COP. At this point heavy rain and deteriorating weather was starting to be an issue and my aircraft was below minimum fuel (Bingo). I was so low on fuel I had to head back immediately at max endurance airspeed. (b)(2)High engaged the building at (b)(2)High we signed off with (b)(2)High and returned to FOB Bostic for refuel. Due to the weather we decided to hold at FOB Bostic for one hour before attempting to return with the next loads of Soldiers. We advised (b)(2)High of the engaged DShK positions upon departure.

Upon or arrival at FOB Bostic we were informed that one of the original aircraft had been repaired by the DART and that we would have an additional aircraft for the remainder of the day (b)(2)High piloted by CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) – CPG CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) BS PC). While we were waiting in the FARP, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) came out to our aircraft to get a sitrep. We passed the grid of the two DShK positions to CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) who went back in to the TOC and he worked with the Destroyer JTAC to have a B1 Bomber drop on the location to try to destroy the weapons. (b)(2)High dropped 6 bombs on the DShk positions. After waiting for the thunderstorm to pass, we were advised that more weather was on its way, so we decided we had to try to go.

(b)(2)High and my aircraft departed in marginal weather and determined that the weather was better a little to the north and gave the mission the go. We linked up as a flight of six and headed back towards OP Fritsche. (b)(2)High joined the battle as trail to cover the Flawless aircraft from the rear due to the fact that they had been engaged on each of the previous flights. For the next 90 minutes we did another three turns from FOB Bostic to OP Fritsche. During this time we took fire and engaged four different locations, both UH-60s and Ah-64s were able to engage these locations. (b)(2)High stated that they were taking fire from the north ridge at grid (b)(2)High (b)(2)High Working with (b)(2)High we ran a JAAT on the northern side of the valley on the suspected enemy locations. After (b)(2)High performed a gun run on that location no further enemy fire was seen. While waiting on the last turn, (b)(2)High directed us towards a building on the east side of COP Keating. Since the initial (b)(2)High Aircraft attack they had been taking sporadic gun fire from that location. While eyes on the location we noticed several personnel with weapons. Both aircraft targeted the building with Hellfire Missiles and engaged the enemy location. On the second turn while egressing back to FOB Bostic (b)(2)High (b)(2)High as engaged with small arms fire. CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) was able to identify 6 AAF engaging the UH-60 and engaged with 50 rounds of 30mm killing 2 of the enemy AAF. On the last turn (b)(2)High was engaged with two RPGS and (b)(2)High was engaged with small arms fire. (b)(2)High suppressed with 30mm and CW2 (b)(3), (b)(6) witnessed the smoke trail and we engaged the position with 120 rounds of 30 MM. After searching the area we located two dead AAF. After the final air assault was completed (b)(2)High was engaged by small arms. The flawless aircraft returned fire and the position was engaged by (b)(2)High At this point all aircraft were mission complete and we returned to JAF to be relieved by the Night QRF.

Throughout the day My Team Flew over 10 hours per aircraft, and fired over 1600 rounds of 30 MM, over 100 rockets and 5 Hellfires.

i. How did your team PID targets? Our team PID Targets with a combination of direct visual, FLIR/DTV and CCA Handovers given to us by (b)(2)High

j. How did your team identify enemy locations?

Initially, our team identified enemy locations with TADS and visually. Several locations we identified by visual indicators such as muzzle flashes, smoke trails and obvious sightings. Once

(b)(2)High was able to regain visual assets on the line we identified targets they marked with smoke or talk ons.

k. How long did it take your team to engage enemy targets? Our Team engaged targets within five minutes of arrival.

l. Did your team identify enemy elements in the village of Urmul?

Our team did not initially identify enemy elements within the city. Later we conducted CCAs against targets in the village that were identified by elements within COP Keating.

m. Was your team in contact with ground elements? Who did your team communicate with during the battle? Yes, our team was in contact with (b)(2)High at COP Keating.

n. Was CAS on station prior to your team arriving? If so, how did your team deconflict airspace? We did not make contact with CAS until the second turn, we deconflicted airspace at 10,000 feet MSL, Weapon below.

o. Was your aircraft damaged from enemy contact?

Yes, Aircraft (b)(2)High sustained battle damage from DShK fire from the east of COP Keating during our second turn in the valley. The aircraft received one bullet round through a tail rotor blade which caused vibrations in the flight controls. Additionally, one bullet passed through the drive shaft cover, cutting the utility hydraulic lines, causing the utility hydraulics to fail.

p. Did your team fire on any structures? If so, what specific structures? Why did your team engage those structures? What weapon systems did your team use to engage those structures? Did your team receive any special permission to engage those targets?

Yes. We destroyed the Mosque in the village of Urmul and the ANP checkpoint, (b)(2)High stated they had PID of enemy personnel engaging COP Keating with small arms and RPG fire, we engaged these buildings with Hellfire missiles. We engaged the Clinic to the East of COP Keating with one hellfire missile. We attacked the clinic to the east of COP Keating based on the assessment of Destroyer TOC that is was being used as a staging point and base of fire for attacks into COP Keating.

q. Did your team assess collateral damage prior to engaging targets within the village of Urmul?

Yes, we used only point target weapons (Hellfire Missiles) to engage targets within the Village of Urmul. We only engaged targets that (b)(2)High advised they were taking affective and accurate fire from.

r. Did your team identify any non-enemy or non-AAF elements in the village of Urmul or any area within the target location?

We did not identify non-hostile elements within Urmul. We did observe personnel within the Kamdesh Village that is just east of OP Fritsche.

s. Did your team delay or not engage enemy targets after being requested to by ground elements? If so, why? No.

t. Did your team delay or not engage enemy targets in the village of Urmul at any point during the battle? Is so, why?

Yes, in order to engage the specific target, the mosque, we needed to verify the target with (b)(2)High (b)(2)High assess the target area for CDE, gain clearance to fire from higher (Destroyer) , and then position our aircraft in a position that would allow us to engage the target.

u. Did COMISAF tactical directive inhibit your team from engaging enemy targets at any point during the battle? If so, describe in detail how. No.

v. Did your team engage targets on COP Keating? Did anyone request that your team engage targets on COP Keating? No

w. Did your aircraft sustain any damage? If so, what cause the damage and when did it occur? See answer to question 15.

x. Did any weapons malfunction during the attack on COP Keating? Yes, we had a K2A Hellfire missile fail while attempting to engage the mosque. The missile did not leave the rail.

(b)(3), (b)(6)

CPT, JA  
Assistant Investigating Officer