Headquarters
Regional Command (Southwest)
International Security Assistance Force
Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan
FPO AP 96427-2511

3000/RCSWLEGAD/CWM/12

TO: File

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF SUPPLEMENTAL REVIEW OF 14-15 SEPTEMBER 2012 INSURGENT ATTACK AT CAMP BASTION FOCUSING ON THE RESPONSE TO THE JOINT STAFF INTEGRATED VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT (JSIVA)

DATE:

REFERENCES:
A. Regional Command (Southwest) [RC(SW)] Joint Review Initial Report of 24 September 12
B. Deputy Commander International Security Assistance Force (DCOM ISAF) Administrative Enquiry into 14/15 Sep 2012 Insurgent Attack on Camp Bastion of 27 September 12

1. Having reviewed Enclosure 1, which is the Supplemental Review of the 14-15 September 2012 insurgent (INS) attack at Camp Bastion/Leatherneck/Shorabak (BLS) focusing on efforts taken in light of the JSIVA Report (Reference A), I approve the report in its entirety.

2. Enclosure 1 is the final report of other efforts to analyze the attack. The RC(SW) Joint Review Board (JRB) Initial Report (Reference A) provided a detailed comprehensive review of the facts and circumstances surrounding the attack as well as an assessment of functional areas and recommendations that paved the initial path for additional measures to be taken for force protection improvement. The DCOM ISAF Administrative Enquiry (Reference B) served as a supplement to the JRB and further informed COMISAF of the events surrounding the attack. The Force Protection Review (Enclosure 17 to Enclosure 1) provided a comprehensive review culminating in recommendations for force protection measures and policies at BLS. These measures and policies, encompassing physical security and command and control processes and procedures, incorporated lessons learned from not only the JSIVA report, but also the 14 September attack itself. But these efforts are not final as the Force Protection Review Group, under the supervision of my DCOM, continues to assess force protection at BLS and throughout the region.

3. A key factor in convening this review was to determine whether those commands and entities with primary responsibility for force protection at BLS, most notable Task Force Belleau Wood (TFBW)/ I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group (Forward) (I MHG (Fwd)) and 903 Expeditionary Air Wing (903 EAW), took appropriate action in light of the vulnerabilities and corresponding recommendations identified by JSIVA. After reviewing Enclosure 1 and the References, I am convinced that they did. Without repeating the entire assessment in Enclosure 1, I highlight the most relevant JSIVA vulnerability to this attack as being "flight line access exploitable." The key recommendation in light of the attack was to "install fencing or barriers to control unauthorized vehicle/pedestrian access to the flight line." This was not the first time such a recommendation was considered. UK forces submitted a requirement for a fence around the flight line shortly after a March 2012 incursion onto the airfield from inside the base. In considering this reqeuest, the UK chain of command, the RC (SW) Joint Force Utilization Board, and the Executive Steering Group disapproved this plan on the basis that the cost outweighed the force protection gains. Even had the plan been approved, the 15 October estimated completion date of the project would have not been in time to make a difference in the outcome of the attack. However, alternate plans, to include a berm/ditch and obstacle/barrier, were approved prior to the attack and were in various stages of completion prior to 14 September.

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4. Enclosure 1 concludes that a separate internal perimeter fence would likely not have presented any serious challenge, barrier, or impediment to the enemy on the day of the attack. DCOM ISAF echoed this conclusion, commenting that a fence around the flight line "would probably not have prevented access on the 14/15 Sep attack." Indeed, the enemy, equipped with wire cutters, easily exploited and overcame similar obstacles (perimeter fence line and concertina wire on the eastern side of the flight line perimeter road) during the attack. I believe fully implementing the JSIVA recommendation for a fence/barrier would not have prevented the enemy from executing their well-planned attack.

Charles M. Gurganus

CHARLES M. GURGANUS
Major General - USMC
Commander

ENCLOSURE:

1. Supplemental Review of 14-15 September 2012 Insurgent Attack at Camp Bastion dated 21 Nov 12

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