



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY FORCES COMMAND
4700 KNOX STREET
FORT BRAGG, NC 28310-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFDC

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: AR 15-6 Interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) former
Commanding Officer, Task Force Belleau Wood, Regional Command Southwest

1. The investigation team conducted a recorded interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) former Commanding Officer, Task Force Belleau Wood, Regional Command Southwest [RC(SW)]. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) is a Reserve Officer in the Marine Corps, and he is currently deployed in Afghanistan in his (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) is unavailable for the purposes of signing and returning his sworn statement, so the purpose of this memorandum is to certify that the dialogue transcribed below is an accurate account of the interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). The recorded interview is on file with the investigative team.

Q: Where are you currently assigned?

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Q: What is your current duty position?

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Q: What is your background in the Marine Corps?

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Q: What was your duty position at the time of the 14-15 September 2012 attack on the Camps Bastion-Leatherneck-Shorabak (BLS) Complex?

A: I was the Commander of Task Force Belleau Wood (TFBW) and I MHG (FWD).

Q: When did you arrive as XO of TF Belleau Wood (TFBW)? When did you take command of TF Belleau Wood (TFBW), and when did you relinquish it?

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

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(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

Q: What was TFBW's mission?

A: We had ADCON over the I MHG (FWD) component. And we also had the battle space owner responsibility for the AO around the BLS Complex. We also technically had TACON over the SECFOR.

Q: Who did you answer to in the RC(SW) chain of command for AT/FP issues? Directly to MajGen Gurganus? Who else in the RC(SW) chain of command did you report to or coordinate with regarding AT/FP?

A: I often reported in practice to (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) some too. MajGen Gurganus wrote my FITREP, but I normally spoke to (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Q: How was your relationship with MajGen Gurganus? How often did you interact?

A: I e-mailed him mostly, and a lot of times that was about Military Police issues on Leatherneck. I spoke to him or briefed him in his office on 2-3 occasions. I specifically remember sitting down with him when they made me the acting CO and again when I became the full time CO. There may have been one other occasion. I was in his office other times with others to discuss AT/FP matters. I remember one specifically when there was a breach in the fence in late June.

Q: As CO of TFBW, did MajGen Gurganus specifically delegate authority to you for AT/FP? What was the scope of the delegation? Was the delegation verbal, written, or in an official order? What was his guidance to you?

A: I don't think I received anything in writing. He told me in person that I was the CO, and we talked about AT/FP measures. But I don't remember anything specifically in writing.

Q: How did MajGen Gurganus ensure that you properly exercised that delegated authority? How often did you report to him?

A: Most of our reporting went from the CJOC up to the RC. He called me a few times when an issue arose to his level, or we conversed over e-mail.

Q: Did you have an adequate transition with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)? Do you feel that he helped prepare you to assume command of TFBW?

A: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) goal was to come back, and he thought I would just be a placeholder until he got back. He strictly controlled the operational side of things when he was the CO, and I took care of the administrative matters of the staff. There was a clear delineation. So, we did not have the greatest turnover because

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I think he thought he was coming back. He also left three months before he thought he was going to. I could have been read into things better, and I would have pushed harder on that if I would have known I was going to be the CO. The transition was done quickly right at the end.

Q: Did you utilize a primary source of Marine, Joint, or other Doctrine to conduct your AT/FP responsibilities? If not, what did you use to establish your standards?

A: We had an AT/FP Officer. We were really reliant on (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) for AT/FP guidance, and we sent (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) to school after (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) left. We also had (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) who took over right after (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and she was very knowledgeable. So I relied on those professionals, and I'm not sure exactly what standards they used.

Q: What about (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) AT/FP Officer for RC(SW)?

A: We didn't use (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) very much, because he actually came to my AT/FP personnel for guidance. Our impression was that anything AT/FP related was handed down from (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) to us. We didn't have much confidence in him. So when things came up as we prepared for the JSIVA, for example, it was all my AT/FP personnel working on that. We wanted to get more help from him. 2/10 Marines also had an AT/FP Officer, I think a Captain.

Q: Do you think (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) had the sufficient training, background, and experience to perform his duties?

A: Honestly, I don't know, Sir. I don't know what his background is. He just didn't give me much confidence.

Q: Where were you during the attack on 14-15 September 2012?

A: I was initially in my room when I heard some weird announcements going over the Big Voice. So I went back to the office, and that's when I learned that the base was under attack.

Q: Based on your experience of living on the BLS Complex and providing security for it, what were your initial thoughts as the attack unfolded?

A: I went to the CJOC, and we were getting mixed reports. You could see the flames across the airfield. We started getting word from the MPs over there, and the Wing, and the British. It was very confusing. We were in disbelief that 15 people could be attacking. Then we got an ISR feed, and we could see them moving around. Fifteen seemed awfully high. In the CJOC, (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) from the Brits mainly worked on setting up control measures for the QRFs to avoid blue-on-blue. That QRF response was the highlight of an otherwise disastrous night.

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Q: What Intelligence, Reconnaissance, and Surveillance (ISR) assets or early warning devices specifically focused on AT/FP of the BLS Complex were operational at the time of the attack?

A: I would not be the best to answer that question for the Bastion side, because that was done by the Brits. They were not the most cooperative for getting information. We did not believe with some of their scheduling and manning. We had a breach on Camp Leatherneck in late June around Tower 40 or 41 where an individual got through the triple strand of wire and up on the berm. The important thing is that we were observing him the whole time. We ended up taking warning shots at him and he left, but that fundamentally changed how we did business with the manning of the towers. We re-looked everything to make sure we had the right coverage of the towers. We still didn't man them 100%, but we moved things around to make sure we had the right observation of the perimeter. The UK, prior to the attack, had three breaches where they found their wirecut down in the southern end of Camp Bastion. I think they were near Tower 8, and it was in the July-August timeframe. They explained it away as scrapping. And these were undetected until their patrol along the fence line found them later. We asked them to man more towers and to change the way they were manning their towers in the Ops and Intelligence briefing at the CJOC. The British O-6 actually counseled me when I called it a breach. He said that was criminal activity and not a breach. I did not agree with that at all. I think they were very concerned about their image.

Q: The JRB Initial Inquiry Report that (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) conducted mentions that OP CONGO, the combined US/UK crisis management plan, did not clearly address seams between your area of responsibility and CO Bastion's area of responsibility. How were the Camps delineated? Was it clear? Were they walled off from one another?

A: There was a fundamental difference between what people thought OP CONGO was. It was presented to me as a consequence management plan, not a crisis response plan. I think CO Bastion viewed it as an information clearing house to send information to his higher headquarters. So I didn't think OP CONGO was even contemplated as a crisis response.

Q: Did you identify this deficiency in OP CONGO prior to the attack? If so, how did you address it?

A: I don't think any concerns came out of our rehearsals for OP CONGO.

Q: Did you and your UK counterparts rehearse OP CONGO prior to the attack? Including communications interoperability? Did you note and correct any deficiencies identified in the rehearsals?

A: We did rehearse, and we identified that the UK OP CONGO cell didn't have systems that we could talk to.

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Q: Did your intelligence section receive the proper support from RC(SW) and higher echelon intelligence sections? Please explain.

A: I never heard of a problem. I think we were getting more intelligence after the attack, because before that, I don't think we were seen as that critical. Nobody thought anyone was going to attack BLS, unless it was by a rocket.

Q: What threats to the BLS Complex were you primarily focused on prior to the 14 September 2012 attack on Camp Bastion?

A: Our focus was on rocket attacks, and we patrolled the rocket boxes out in AOBW. We were also concerned about the insider threat from Shorabak.

Q: Describe how you formulated TTPs for TFBW based on the assessed threat. How did you mitigate the threats?

A: We patrolled the rocket boxes. The biggest thing we did for the insider threat was 24/7 guards at the chow halls and gyms. We also stepped up patrolling internally.

Q: Was TFBW responsible for vetting and security of all contractors, or was it split among the various Camps? If the latter, how did you coordinate vetting and security with your UK and Afghan counterparts?

A: It was split, and the coordination occurred at the AT/FP officer level. I don't know how well coordinated it was.

Q: Describe the security measures in place for contractors to get onto the BLS Complex once they were vetted and hired. What control measures, if any, were in place for contractors once they were inside the compound?

A: I am not the authority on that, Sir.

Q: Who was responsible for counter-intelligence efforts on the BLS Complex? Were these efforts sufficient? Did they identify any specific insider threats?

A: There was a British team that did the British side, and we had a team that I think was an ancillary duty out of the intelligence battalion. They seemed more active after the "burning man incident."

Q: Were you aware of an intelligence collection gap on Camp Bastion? Did you discuss it with the RC(SW) J2 or J2X? How did you mitigate it?

A: I was not aware of it, Sir.

Q: Was the UK responsible for a specific part of AOBW? (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(1)1.4g

(b)(1)1.4c, (b)(1)1.4g

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A: (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(1)1.4g

(b)(1)1.4c, (b)(1)1.4g

We didn't have

AOBW broken into parts. (b)(1)1.4c, (b)(1)1.4g

(b)(3),

(b)(6),

(b)(3),
(b)(6),
(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) coordinated directly with his counterpart in the 5th FP Wing to coordinate the patrolling.

Q: Did you receive any indications and warnings (I&W) prior to the attack? In your post-attack analysis, did you identify any missed dissemination of I&W or any collection failures?

A: Not that I'm aware of, Sir. I don't recall any threats that made it to me other than a rocket threat or a VBIED threat every once in awhile, but no specific threat before the attack. There was certainly intelligence missed, but I don't know if that doctrinally qualifies as an intelligence gap.

Q: Although there was no unity of command over AT/FP for the entire BLS Complex, what mechanisms were in place to ensure unity of effort with your UK and Afghan counterparts? If you identified an area of concern, did you have adequate means of expressing those concerns and rectifying the situation with your counterparts?

A: I think it was personal relationships. I think we had means to work out our problems.

Q: What was your assessment of the UK forces' ability to protect Camp Bastion? Please explain.

A: I don't think that their standards are the same as Marine Corps standards. They work long shifts, it was not an integrated unit, and they were basically "camp tax." I don't think they manned enough towers over there, because there was so much space between some of those towers.

Q: Did you feel that they had adequate resources and manpower?

A: I don't really know, Sir.

Q: Did you have any specific concerns about the Tongan Marines manning guard towers on Camp Bastion? If so, what were your concerns and who did you address them to?

A: I didn't like the fact that they had sleeping posts out in their towers, but I don't think I had any concerns that they weren't good quality. It was just a philosophical difference of doing business. But I never climbed up in their towers to look at the British guards.

Q: There have been reports in the media that the Tongan soldiers slept in their guard towers. However, we have learned from some interviews that there were lower levels in the towers where the Tongans slept when they were off-duty, and

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that they had never been caught sleeping in the towers while on-duty. Can you confirm or deny either version of events?

A: I know that they slept on the bottom and outside of the towers, but I don't know if they fell asleep on duty.

Q: Did TFBW ever inspect the towers or perimeter defense on Camp Bastion? Would this have been tenable under the relationships established on Camp BLS?

A: I don't think we inspected their towers. I didn't and I don't think (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) **did either.**

Q: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)**, CO of RCT-6 at the time, told us that he noticed inattentiveness and patterns in the guard towers during his PT runs along the Camp Bastion perimeter. What was your own assessment of the Camp Bastion towers?**

A: My honest opinion was I was worried that someone would get through that wire, take me out at gunpoint, and nobody would even know I was gone. There were some remote stretches. Sometimes you could see people up in the towers, sometimes you couldn't. It is some pretty lonely land out there.

Q: Considering that there were Marine personnel and aircraft on the flight line, did you have any responsibilities for AT/FP on the flight line?

A: To my knowledge, no Sir.

Q: Did the 3d MAW or any subordinate Marine units present on the airfield have AT/FP responsibilities on the flight line?

A: I don't know, Sir.

Q: Explain the coordinating mechanisms in place, both between you and the tenant Marine units and between you and your UK counterparts.

A: There was coordination at the AT/FP level especially after the JSIVA, and we would send MPs over there for Marine issues, but that's it, Sir.

Q: Did the 3d MAW (FWD) ever request AT/FP assistance or guidance from you? Please describe.

A: I don't recall anything, Sir.

Q: The report also mentions that TFBW with support from the 215th ANA Corps patrolled daily outside the perimeter fence. What was the task and purpose of these external patrols? How often did you patrol? Did you vary the time and route? Did you conduct patrols at night? Did the patrols cover the entire exterior of the BLS perimeter?

A: The ANA patrols were pretty rare. We patrolled daily, partnered with the Jordanians. 2/10 Marines and the Jordanians were our main forces for patrolling.

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Q: How many patrols were you doing at the time of the attack?

A: I don't know, Sir. I'd had to try and give a number.

Q: We've been told that these external patrols had reduced their visibility to the local populace in the days preceding the attack due to the anti-Islam YouTube video that had sparked violence in the Middle East in the days leading up to the attack. Is this correct? Were you ordered to do this, or was it your decision based on the sensitivities involved? Was there any increase in FPCON or other posture on the BLS Complex due to the video? If so, had this been directed from higher or was it your decision?

A: We went to what they called Patrol Minimize. We sent patrols out there, but we were trying to avoid contact with populated areas. That was an order from higher. I don't think we had a formal change to a different FPCON, but we put out the word to the patrols and the perimeter to let them know there might be increased tensions.

Q: Looking back, were there security incidents on the BLS Complex leading up to the attack that should have prompted increased vigilance, or do you believe the AT/FP posture and activities at the time of the attack were reasonable under the circumstances?

A: The breaches doubled our exterior patrols and increased our interior patrols. We changed some looks in the towers, and so did the Brits. I think more towers should have been manned.

Q: Were the responsibilities clear for each unit in the SECFOR? 2nd BN, 10th Marines? 51 Sqdn RAF Regiment? Bahrain Special Security Forces? Jordanian Armed Forces? Partnered ANA? Triple Canopy?

A: Everyone's responsibilities were clear. The only ambiguity was the battle space. We did not break down the AO

Q: Which units patrolled outside the wire?

A: We patrolled with the Jordanians. And a British Squadron patrolled as well.

Q: Did you feel that the SECFOR was trained and proficient?

A: I think they were trained and proficient. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and I talked every day or every other day.

Q: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) told us that 2nd BN 10th Marines had been cut from approximately 310 to 210 during his tenure as CO TFBW, and that they were working 18 hour days at that number. When informed that he would be cut another 100, he recalled informing MajGen Gurganus that he would only be able to patrol 2-3 times a day at that number. Were you aware of this conversation? Did you agree with the impact of the cut in SECFOR?

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A: I don't know what conversations he had with MajGen Gurganus, Sir. We knew that cutting down down to 110 would be detrimental, because 2/10 also had an artillery mission. With 110 people with different tasks, we were really left with about a Platoon that could actually go out and patrol, and they were 100% required to be partnered with Jordanians just for manpower. We also had the main gate, the friendship, and manning of Patrol Base Boldak. They were tapped out. Once you manned PB Boldak, we were lucky to have a squad per day that actually go out and patrol.

Q: When did you get down to 110?

A: We were definitely down to that number by the end of August. One squad partnered with the Jordanians. We really had to pull back to do in-close patrolling. (b)(1)1.4c

The greater threat was down south, but we couldn't get down there as much.

Q: Do you know if MajGen Gurganus knew of the risk he was assuming?

A: I think he was aware of it. We certainly reported it. The decisions had been made months ago who to cut, and it never changed. We also had the TRAP mission and Zaranj SECFOR mission.

Q: How many patrols were being conducted per day and night at the time of the attack?

A: I don't know, Sir. I'd hate to give you a guess.

Q: Were you aware of a request from MajGen Gurganus to higher HQs for an additional Rifle Company for the SECFOR? When did he make this request? Did you ever receive the additional Rifle Company?

A: I had heard rumor of that, but I didn't get a Rifle Company until after the attack. I believe he had requested it before the attack, and we were waiting to hear an answer. I remember now that we had done the analysis on how we would use that company.

Q: Do you recall the patrols that you conducted on 14 September 2012?

A: I don't, Sir.

Q: As part of your risk analysis, did you ever raise concerns about insufficient security forces to MajGen Gurganus, Brigadier Skeates, or anyone else in the RC(SW) chain of command? If so, what was their response?

A: The manning decisions had been made before I took command. I'm sure the risk had been discussed, but I don't think there was ever a feeling of emergency about it.

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Q: The JRB Report mentioned that there was no guard force assigned to monitor the dead space between the perimeter guard towers and the flight line. Although this was CO Bastion's area of responsibility, were you aware of this vulnerability? Did you coordinate with CO Bastion to address it or mitigate it? Did you coordinate with the 3d MAW to address it or mitigate it?

A: I was not aware of that vulnerability, Sir. I don't recall them asking for my assistance.

Q: Are you aware of any changes to the FP posture on Camp Bastion prior to the attack? Had the UK reduced its manpower or patrolling along the perimeter of Camp Bastion? Please explain.

A: We were in Patrol Minimize, but that is all I know, Sir.

Q: All reports indicate that Camp Bastion manned approximately 50% of their towers. Was this also common on Camps Leatherneck? Why was manning roughly 50% of the towers deemed sufficient?

A: We manned more than 50% on our side. I don't think 50% on their side was sufficient. There is more space over there between towers. There are huge expanses of space, and if you cut one out in the middle, you just make that area even larger.

Q: The JRB's Supplemental Review stated that the 14 March 2012 airfield incursion (often referred to as "the burning man incident"), "...raised concerns regarding the security of the flight line and its assets and access to critical areas within the Bastion airfield. This incident also demonstrated the need to improve airfield and perimeter security and to institute some level of increased access control to the airfield operating areas." Do you agree?

A: The "burning man incident" identified that, but I don't think much was done to change it. I remember going over to the airfield for the dignified transfer of remains, and seeing approaches directly to the airfield that were unmanned. I don't think it was ever fixed to the level that it should have been.

Q: In your opinion, did the entire US chain of command share concerns about the flight line and feel the need for improved security? Do you feel that RC(SW) reasonably attempted to address these concerns after the "burning man incident"?

A: The British became very closed, because that was embarrassing to them. I know there were discussions at higher levels. I know that the ESG discussed building a fence around the airfield, but I think funding was the reason for it not getting built. Once I took command, I started going to the ESG and there were still some discussions about airfield security. So I know it was a known concern.

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Q: Were the improvements adopted, e.g. a ditch and berm system, responsive to the threat identified by the “burning man incident?”

A: I think it was responsive to the JSIVA, and they did do some things to mitigate the vulnerability.

Q: Did you discuss the “burning man incident” with MajGen Gurganus after it occurred? Please describe the conversation. What guidance did he give you?

A: No, Sir. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) was still the CO then.

Q: The JRB Supplemental Review addressed a 3d MAW request to emplace concertina wire to secure vulnerable areas around the flight line and to channelize pedestrian traffic to ECPs, which was approved and completed prior to the attack. There is also an exhibit in the Supplemental Review of a 3d MAW flight line barrier plan request (enclosure 7 of the supplemental review) submitted at the same time (11 May 2012) to emplace (b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4g

(b)(1)1.4a, (b)(1)1.4g

The request stated, “Without these improvements, the flight line equipment and personnel will remain vulnerable to enemy attack at multiple access points, including numerous high speed avenues of approach.” This project was eventually approved after the attack. Do you recall why this request was not approved after the “burning man incident”? Do you know if it reached a decision making body? Did you discuss this request with 3d MAW personnel?

A: I’m not familiar with the request, Sir.

Q: Are you aware of any other AT/FP improvements completed or requested in response to the “burning man incident”?

A: Ditch and Berm was one, and I know of a concertina project. I’m not sure of others.

Q: Please describe the process for seeking AT/FP improvements while you were the XO and CO of TFBW. What was the ESG’s role? Was this process responsive? Did you have adequate funding? Do you feel that the RC(SW) chain of command provided you the support you needed to accomplish your mission?

A: I think we were actually doing pretty well, Sir, based on what my responsibilities were. We were getting a Sense and Warn system in. We were getting more cameras. I think they were responsive, other than manpower, but everyone was facing the manpower constraints.

Q: When did you learn that a Joint Staff Integrated Vulnerability Assessment (JSIVA) team (led by Marine (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)) would be conducting an assessment of the BLS Complex?

A: Maybe February, Sir.

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Q: How comfortable were you with your AT/FP Program and its mechanisms – such as working groups – at that point in time?

A: We had completed a lot of work to prepare for that, and as far as moving forward, I was very comfortable that we were moving forward.

Q: Did you feel that your AT/FP Officer was trained and proficient? If not, did you seek any additional assistance or training for him/her?

A: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) was definitely trained and proficient.

Q: How much input/assistance did the RC(SW) AT/FP Officer, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) provide to TFBW? Did you feel that he assisted your command adequately?

A: I did not see him as helpful, Sir. If anything, he was a pain to the Gunny, because we felt that the Gunny was doing his job and the RC's job.

Q: What was your reaction to the JSIVA outbrief from (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and the rest of the JSIVA team? Did you agree with it?

A: I attended the outbrief, and I don't recall having any contention with it.

Q: The report states that a "vulnerability" is "a situation or circumstance that if left unchanged may result in the loss of life or damage to mission-essential resources." Did you agree with the six vulnerabilities assessed by the JSIVA team [flight line access exploitable; ECPs lack AT/FP design features; inadequate protective shelters; no overhead cover for areas of large concentrations of personnel; inadequate or missing sidewall protection for assessed billeting and mission assets; inadequate Mass Warning and Notification System (MNWS) capability]?

A: I think so, Sir.

Q: Did you brief MajGen Gurganus on the results of the JSIVA? What guidance did he give you regarding the results of the JSIVA? Did he require you to follow up with him on mitigation strategies or progress?

A: I did not brief him, Sir. I was not aware of any specific guidance either.

Q: Did you develop a plan to mitigate the assessed vulnerabilities? What was your mitigation plan? Did you have the resources that you needed to accomplish your plan? Did you request support from RC(SW) or a higher headquarters? Did you receive the support that you needed from RC(SW) or a higher headquarters to accomplish your plan?

A: We immediately doing some of the things identified. We made changes to the Friendship Gate and the Main Gate, but nobody gave me an order to take any specific action. In fact, I never got the final report. I just had the outbrief. I don't know where that report even went.

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Q: What coordination did you conduct with your UK counterparts after the JSIVA, considering that some of the vulnerabilities involved their areas of responsibility?

A: We increased our exercises, Sir. We discussed things at the CJOC O&I briefs. I know it came up in the ESG, but I don't remember any specific meeting where we were supposed to check up on them on improvements.

Q: Did they request assistance or resources from TFBW or RC(SW)? If so, were you or RC(SW) able to meet the request?

A: Not that I can think of as far as TFBW, Sir.

Q: The JSIVA report describes the flight line access at BLS Complex as an "exploitable" vulnerability and "thus, personnel and equipment are largely exposed." Some AT/FP measures (e.g. the airfield perimeter fence) were denied after the "burning man incident." Did you use the JSIVA as new justification to mitigate the vulnerability to the flight line?

A: I don't know, Sir. I'm sure that they did, but I don't have specific knowledge of it.

Q: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) informed us that inputting vulnerabilities into the Core Vulnerability Assessment Management Program (CVAMP) is the best way to get visibility of those vulnerabilities all the way up to the Joint Staff. The JSIVA Report indicated that CVAMP had not been updated for the BLS Complex since a CENTCOM Joint Security Office (JSO) Vulnerability Assessment conducted in January 2011, and that neither you nor your ATO had access to CVAMP. The Report recommended that you both get access to CVAMP and input the results of the JSIVA. The Report also recommended that you prioritize the identified vulnerabilities and identify mitigation strategies in the Risk Assessment field, and then approve the mitigation strategies in CVAMP. Were you able to do this after the JSIVA? If not, why?

A: No, Sir. I'm not familiar with anything called CVAMP, Sir.

Q: The JRB Supplemental Review seemed to focus on the fact that an airfield perimeter fence, even if completed in response to the "burning man incident" or the JSIVA, would not have presented a barrier to the 14 September 2012 attackers. Even if true, couldn't other measures have been undertaken in response to these assessments?

A: You know, Sir, they cut through a fence and through concertina wire. The only thing that could have stopped it was somebody observing that area and seeing the attackers doing that. In my opinion, they can put all the cameras they want out there, but all that does is put more little boxes in front of someone already looking at a screen with a ton of little boxes. The only thing that could have prevented it in my opinion was an alert, properly-postured guard force that had total coverage of the perimeter. Regardless of what the JSIVA said.

AFDC

SUBJECT: AR 15-6 Interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Q: Did you discuss increasing the local security posture of 3d MAW Squadrons (additional ECPs, guards, patrols, lighting)? Do you know whether (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) provided assistance to 3d MAW (FWD) after the JSIVA? Would it have been your role or (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) role to assist 3d MAW?

A: I do recall some conversations of that at the AT/FP level, but nothing came to my level. I only remember sending MPs over there for patrolling, and the Wing may have requested that. I don't know what (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) did to assist them, but I would think that was his responsibility. I was never directed to do anything on Camp Bastion.

Q: The JRB Supplemental Review identified concerns from the JSIVA (TFBW's Risk Management Program, AT/FP Plan, and lack of formalized AT/FP-related working groups) that were not addressed between the time of the JSIVA and the time of the attack. What do you attribute this to?

A: Part of it could have been that I never saw the JSIVA report. If there were more things than the overarching six vulnerabilities, I wouldn't have known about it. I'm positive that there was absolutely an increase in working group activity, but I can't tell you if all of the units were participating. And we did a ton of work beforehand too. To his credit, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) really took the JSIVA and used it as a way to improve before the actual assessment.

Q: RC(SW) established a BLS Complex Force Protection OPT and a Counter-Threat Working Group led by the RC(SW) DCOM in the aftermath of the attack. Did you sense a lack of senior leader emphasis on AT/FP prior to the attack?

A: I don't think so, Sir. My opinion of what came out of that JRB was an image thing as opposed to needed organizational change. A lot of things that we tried to put into the JRB report were changed. To me, it was how do we protect the image vice what do we need to do. And I don't think we needed to do a whole lot. I attribute the attack to failure of basic infantry skill – just guarding a post. Things didn't get easier with the British afterwards.

Q: Two of the immediate changes to Force Protection identified in the JRB Supplemental Review were 100% manning of all Camp Bastion guard towers and additional Marines assigned to TFBW SECFOR. What do you attribute this to? Did the collective group underestimate the threat of a breach attack prior to 14 September 2012?

A: I attribute the additional numbers to MajGen Gurganus and those of us who realized that we needed more people to patrol that huge area. I am a firm believer of an active defense, and we did things a little differently when I took over the SECFOR. I think the UK underestimated, Sir. If they would have responded like we did to the breach on our side, it certainly would have helped. We increased interior and exterior patrolling and moved around our towers.

AFDC

SUBJECT: AR 15-6 Interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

Q: Did you identify any complacency or lack of discipline regarding Force Protection by US personnel prior to the attack? How about from the UK? If so, what do you attribute this to?

A: I don't think so, Sir. Only what I've already said about the Bastion towers and response to the breaches.

Q: One interview informed us that the attitude of personnel on the BLS Complex might have been that it was "too big to fail." Do you agree?

A: The SECFOR took an inordinate cut, and we might have been seen as second string before the attack. There might be some truth to people thinking we were a bit invulnerable.

Q: You mentioned earlier that (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) thought you were going to be an interim commander. Do you think you had the right qualifications and background to do the job?

A: I thought so when I took command, Sir, that I had the right qualifications. But two things cropped up as time went on, one from the UK side and one from the US side. From the UK side, it was the issue of rank, and (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) was all about status and rank. An O-6 would have been better suited to deal with (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). On the US side, the issue came from me being a Reservist and dealing with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C). I respect (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) and I think he did a fine job, but it was a tenuous relationship at best, because I was put in a position of being his superior. I technically had TACON of him, but he worked for General Berger. We got along and accomplished the mission, but in that sense I also don't think I was the right guy for the job in hindsight. There needed to be an O-6.

Q: You raised concerns about the perimeter on many occasions during this interview. Did you have the avenue to address these concerns and did you?

A: I definitely raised it to (b)(6), (b)(7)(C), maybe not so vividly as the story about being kidnapped, but it was discussed. I know that I also discussed it with MajGen Gurganus after one of the cuts in the fences was discovered, because he blew a gasket too. Rightly so. I told him that I didn't agree with (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) decision to call it criminal activity. But I don't think complaining about it to MajGen Gurganus or anyone else in venues other than the ones set up to discuss these issues with the UK would have achieved any results.

Q: Were you at the morning stand up meetings at the RC?

A: I was not, Sir.

Q: Do you have anything to add that would be relevant to this investigation?

AFDC

SUBJECT: AR 15-6 Interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C)

A: I just want to mention again that this should have been stopped at the perimeter with very basic infantry skills. We could have put all the patrols out there that we wanted, but if we didn't have one right there at the time along their approach, they could have made it up to the wire. So it goes back to adequate manning of the posts with alert personnel in a trained guard force with the right equipment.

2. Point of contact for this memorandum is my legal advisor, (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) at

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Approved for Release