



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 Chief of Staff for 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) [3d MAW(FWD)]

1. The investigation team conducted a recorded interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c former Chief of Staff, 3d MAW(FWD) on 11 July 2013 at Quantico, VA as part of the AR 15-6 investigation into the 14-15 September 2012 attack on the Camps Bastion-Leatherneck-Shorabak Complex in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c is currently unavailable to sign and return a sworn statement. 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: Please provide a synopsis of your background in the Marine Corps?

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

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

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

Q: How would you characterize the RIP/TOA that you had with your predecessor?

A: Excellent, yes, absolutely a good overlap.

Q: Please describe any discussions that your predecessor had with you regarding Anti Terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP).

A: The only one specific issue for AT/FP that I would put in the "concern" category as opposed to daily business, was that we had a request for a fence line around the airfield. I believe that was submitted, to the best of my recollection, sometime in February or prior. It had been denied. My understanding was that it was for funding; however, that was just conversational. I saw no paperwork to say that it was denied for any particular reason.

Q: Upon assuming your position as COS, what were your primary concerns regarding AT/FP of your Wing?

A: In terms of AT/FP, my primary concern was to make sure that we could identify the proper badges; because we were intermingled constantly with civilian contractors and folks who weren't in uniform. I think that was subsequent to what people referred to as the "burning man incident." Subsequent to the burning man incident I think there was a renewed emphasis for identifying people that were cleared to be in certain areas. This became a greater concern in June and July and then probably peaked in early August because during that period the power generation system was frequently failing. We decided to take over, out of necessity because it was having mission impact, we were losing power over at the squadron so often that they were using handheld radios to talk to their own aircraft. Besides, it was really hot to work in the hangars. We took over the contract in order to get the power generation problem fixed. We had an increase of contractors in the squadron spaces, so it became more of a concern at that point to identify who was cleared to be in what space; who could escort, who could be unescorted, those kinds of things. I dwell on that for a reason because AT/FP was our focus vice the military mission of security.

Q: Did you have any specific responsibilities for AT/FP as Chief of Staff for 3d MAW (FWD)? Please describe. If so, what guidance did you give and to whom?

A: My responsibility as the Chief of Staff was to ensure the staff executed the CG's intent. In that role I would be responsible for ensuring that G-3/ G-3 Force

AFDC

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

Protection was executing whatever the Commanding General's intent was for that.

Q: Did MajGen Sturdevant or (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c direct any AT/FP assessments upon taking over as at 3d MAW (FWD)? Please describe.

A: Between the period of May to the time of the attack, I am not aware of a specific assessment of AT/FP other than a constant reemphasis of the procedures we were supposed to be executing as part of any tenant unit on the base.

Q: How often did you interact with Task Force Belleau Wood (TFBW), regarding security operations on the BLS Complex and on Camp Bastion specifically?

A: In terms of operations I wouldn't say we specifically interacted with them as in terms of Force Protection. If we were ever tasked to provide aviation support to Task Force Belleau Wood's operations that would have been the means by which we supported security missions of Task Force Belleau Wood.

Q: How often did you interact with RC(SW), (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c or others? How was your relationship with him? How often did you discuss AT/FP matters?

A: I interacted with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c anywhere from every day to multiple times per day. We had a good relationship, good communications. We discussed AT/FP matters as a small minority of our conversations. As Chiefs of Staff, our interactions primarily were about ensuring that the staff sections and functions were working smoothly.

Q: Did you have an orientation of Camp Bastion and the flight line prior to taking over as COS of 3d MAW (FWD)? Did it raise any concerns?

A: When I came aboard, one of the first things that my predecessor, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and I did was he gave me a drive around the airfield within the first couple of days after I first got there. There were internal concerns I had, and I want to be as helpful as possible to this investigation so please stop me if I'm unclear. My concerns were focused only on the interior lines -- once one was let inside the outer wire of the airfield you could come from any direction onto the airfield. There was absolutely nothing we could do about that. The general description of the "burning man incident" was pointed out to me and it was evident that that could happen in any direction once someone was inside that outer wire. I was encouraged by the fact that we had the concrete sangers, they're obviously a very formidable looking defense, so I was less concerned about the eastern side because those sangers were within visual distance of the squadron spaces. From my perspective there was really good coverage in that area. I was more concerned with the northern areas that I could not see along which we built the Munitions Storage Area. I was also concerned with the relatively open and exposed area to the south, which in retrospect obviously those concerns were

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

not as significant I had envisioned them to be. I was comfortable with the squadron's vigilance. I think each of them took force protection seriously; although it was incredibly difficult given the mission requirement, and having contractors in the spaces. There were routinely folks coming in and out of the ADAG area there, the passengers. It was a challenge but the squadrons were vigilant in questioning people whether or not they had access to be there or had the right badge.

Q: Did it concern you that your Squadrons were on a Camp not secured by Marines? Did you understand the doctrine, standards, and procedures that the UK utilized to conduct AT/FP on Camp Bastion?

A: I always feel more comfortable if I have Marines on my left and right.

Q: Do you know how the UK doctrine, standards, and procedures compared to Marine Corps standards?

A: I'll try to be fair to that question and try to live in the pre September 14th mindset. My interaction with the UK, as far as their force protection abilities, my understanding was that their ROE were slightly more restrictive than US ROE would have been for encountering anybody that approached the wire. It was my understanding that this concern was being addressed at the RC level. It was my understanding that the UK was manning the wire. It was my understanding that they had a reaction force that was capable and potent; that it was a vehicle born reaction force there was no aviation component reaction force. I was not worried about that because we had the aviation. I knew that we had guys that would be airborne in minutes if they needed aviation support. I'll be honest that I didn't think through the extent to which they would be able to successfully react to deep penetrations inside the wire because I envisioned this as a response force that would act at the wire on detection of attempted entry. I think that kind of sums up my general perception about what we had there. I thought we had UK Forces that were manning the wire. I knew that they had good technological tools at their disposal. They had a fairly robust operations center and they had the forces to be able to react to an attempted penetration to the wire. My understanding was that the fence was integrated and layered because we had US Forces on the outside of the wire who were actively patrolling. I would occasionally see an interesting encounter that they would have outside the wire. My understanding was that they were integrated with the UK Forces at the wire, but all of that would have been outside of my purview as the ACE Chief of Staff. I was aware that those activities were out there. I never had any visibility as to the level of performance of the integration, or any rubs. I had no reason to question it prior to 14 September. I will say that on one occasion there was a difference between the reporting we received through G2 channels from RC(SW) and the reporting from the force protection people on a specific incident up in the north at the munitions storage area where someone had attempted to cut through the

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

wire. It was not uncommon that people were reported to have tried to cut through the wire when they were either scrappers or doing some other kind of activity.

(b)(1)1.4c

Q: What was the local security posture of your Squadrons on the flight line? We have been informed that two of the Squadrons had local security, but the rest did not. Is this accurate? Did VMA-211 have local security?

A: Again, I would go back to--I don't want to parse too much the distinction between security and the AT/FP procedures that all tenant units were supposed to be executing, but I would say that they were all vigilant. Some had put in additional -- all had put in some additional force protection measures in or around their spaces. Some were far more robust than the others, being VMM-161 in particular, their Force Protection Officer was (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and he was particularly aggressive on posturing them for what I would say was a defensive posture beyond AT/FP, which I admired. But it was certainly a different level than some of the other squadrons around the flight line. The VMA spaces were particularly new and as VMA 211 transitioned to come down there, there was, let me back up to characterize their situation it was a little more fluid than the other units. Ironically, one of the reasons we were so happy to get VMA-211 down there was to get them away from the risk of the IDF up at Kandahar. So we were particularly thankful to get them down to what was at the time considered safer terrain. So their spaces were a little more in flux and I think that we had just finished up the high-power run-up area. We had a constant flow of cement trucks and construction that was going on. We did increase their local traffic management and security AT/FP physical piece components as they arrived in town with the fence line being finished up, FOD grates being put in, and on several occasions a gate being repaired. It was a constant struggle to keep up with when a vehicle would back up into brand new fence-line or something like that; so we had fairly frequent construction going on in their line, some of it related to AT/FP. Most of it having to do with just getting the squadron up and running.

Q: How often did you get out to the flight line to visit the Squadrons? Did you provide guidance on AT/FP based on that circulation?

A: Primarily I viewed my job as being a staff officer to free General Sturdevant to be able to do that, but I'd say I went out there on a scheduled basis every Saturday evening. I was also probably out there two to three times per week besides that.

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

Q: Many interviewees have expressed that the BLS Complex's location "out in the middle of the desert" made them believe that a ground attack was unlikely. Was that your impression as well?

A: I partially agree with that assessment but I don't necessarily agree with the thinking. Regardless if whether it was likely that we would be attacked there, I viewed it somewhat instinctively from, "do we have the right defenses in place that we can operate aviation and concentrate on our job?" Prior to 14 September, my gut instinct was, "yes we do." Although we have these exposed areas that are somewhat distant, and by exposed I mean the vast expanse of land to the south that was very open and people could travel across the airfield from any direction. I had a confidence in the layered defense of Task Force Belleau Wood and the UK on the wire. I'm not trying to be evasive on that question.

Q: You perceived it as a layered defense, but did you ever get out on the perimeter or get out on patrols?

A: I did not routinely go out on the patrols. I flew, but on the times that I could go out there I went with our MWSS convoys which I found to be tightly integrated in their local security procedures. But it wouldn't have given me an assessment of the interaction between Task Force Belleau Wood and the UK.

Q: How many patrols do you think the TFBW SECFOR was down to on the night of the attack?

A: I have no idea how many patrols Task Force Belleau Wood was down to the night of the attack. My sense of security came through the reporting from the daily Ops and Intel brief. I would see the activity that was generated by Task Force Belleau Wood; at least in terms of the volume of reporting and activity that they had. (b)(1)1.4c

(b)(1)1.4c **This gave me the sense that not only were they active, but they had also occupied a lot of the battle space. I felt secure based on their operations and the very imposing physical presence of the sangers and the wire.**

Q: What was your understanding of the primary threats to the BLS Complex?

A: My understanding of the primary threat to the BLS, again, I looked at it from the wing's perspective and what do we needed to do to be good stewards of our responsibility in the overall AT/FP posture. I'd say probably the badging, the insider threat; making sure that anyone who was in a space actually had authorization to be there. Quite frankly I was a little more concerned, this is indirectly an AT/FP concern, I was more concerned that we were going to shoot the wrong person at some point because we Marines tend to be a little aggressive and rough sometimes. I always held in my head a concern that we would make enemies where we didn't have to, so I always wanted to make sure that we balanced our contribution to the AT/FP component with dignity and respect for the folks who were feeding us our food, emptying the shitters, doing the work of

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

keeping the base running. I think we were successful at that. If I could add one anecdote on that, when everybody else was saying, "oh my gosh, somebody must have helped them from the inside," I said nobody who has worked with us would have helped from the inside because we've always treated everyone who works for us with dignity and respect. But we made them comply with procedures; if an escort was required then they had to have an escort.

Q: Were you aware that approximately every other tower was manned on Camp Bastion? Did you have any concerns regarding the tower manning? If so, who did you discuss your concerns with?

A: I don't recall knowing that the sangars were every other one were manned. Obviously I knew that immediately afterwards. I did know that if you ran all the way around the outside of the Camp Leatherneck that it was commonplace to see the little plastic guys that would turn a little bit in the wind. That never really drew concern. I always expected that that was part of the expert plan to be deceptive, be efficient with these resources and there was always some offset in terms of the layered security that was outside that. So I was aware, at least on the Leatherneck side, that not every post was manned all the time. I don't recall knowing that about the sangars prior to 14 September.

Q: The UK had C2 of Bastion, Marines C2 of Leatherneck; do you think there were any issues with that in terms of somebody being overall in charge of the entire BLS complex? I know that's not your focus there in the Wing, but did that effect you guys in anyway?

A: I really would not be comfortable hypothesizing how I would have done it or whether I would have been satisfied with that if I were at a different level command there in theater. I can say from the Wing perspective, I never saw or anticipated any problems in terms of security other than that one incident where something was reported differently by the Intel channels then it was by Triple Canopy. So I never had any sense that that would be problematic. My understanding was that each of the drills that were run had gone at least acceptably and any deficiencies identified had remedies in play. This I became aware of as a member of the Executive Steering Group; I would often listen to the dialogue between the UK and the US side on whatever force protection drill they were planning or had run; to include an occasional discussion of the joint security assessment that had been conducted prior to the 3d MAW coming out there. Again, from my seat in there, the way the BLS was structured, the C2, that was an issue that would have been worked at the RC, and I use the term RC intentionally as opposed to MEF and I realize the dual-hatted nature of everyone there. But when I would speak to the MEF Chief of Staff, I would speak to the MEF Chief of Staff not the RC Chief of Staff unless there was specifically something I needed to address that I thought was over on the RC side. I wouldn't have had visibility on anything except for the conversations that took place

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

incidental to the Executive Steering Group where I did hear issues addressed of concern but my sense always was that there was some plan to reconcile any perceived shortcomings or discrepancies.

Q: A number of leaders have told us that the C2 prevented them from inspecting the perimeter, inspecting the towers, or taking a look at any capabilities gaps that the UK side had. Did you have any knowledge of that?

A: I can say that the coordination would have been more difficult than if it were a Marine unit over there. For example, I couldn't, I could, but it wouldn't have been the appropriate thing for me to do to go inspect one of those towers -- it would have been outside of my purview to do that I think -- but I could have gone up the MEF Chain of Command to the appropriate RC hat which in my case obviously would have been (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and then have him coordinate for me to conduct some sort of an inspection of a coalition component of security. It would have been, I think, a long string to run over there. So if somebody has made the claim that it would have been difficult for them to inspect the UK side, then I would agree with that.

Q: Several leaders from 3d MAW said 3d MAW was not tied into OP CONGO. Are you familiar with OP CONGO?

A: I became familiar with OP CONGO after 14 September. We were not tied into OP CONGO.

Q: Any idea why?

A: My best guess of why we were not a part of the OP CONGO response would be that again, as a tenant unit, in general we would have been viewed, perhaps, as an obstacle in executing OP CONGO. Our job was to fix and fly airplanes. They would no more want or expect us to be a part of that response than any other tenant unit except to execute good self-defense, hunker down. I think primarily they thought of the attacks as being IDF or a limited insider attack or even something like a heavy crashing off the runway and through populated portions of the base so I don't think there was a perceived necessity to tie us into OP CONGO. Had there, and this is speculation, had there been, I think there would have been tension on use of resources; we probably would have asked, if you need more force to respond to any of these contingencies then you need to bring more force because we're here to fix and fly airplanes.

Q: Although there was no unity of command over force protection for the entire BLS complex, I would assume that there are some mechanisms in place to ensure unity of effort with your UK counterparts. You mentioned the ESG.

A: Yes, the Executive Steering Group. Each of the MSCs had a senior deputy, typically the O-6 level, who met every other week and it would switch between the UK side and the US side. I would say that this was part of the standard good

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

coalition warfare work in terms of staffing and there was very rarely an issue of substance for the MAW. However, I think it was important for everybody to be a good coalition listener in there. It was in that venue that was my only exposure to any of the RC-level concerns with security.

Q: The JRB Supplemental Review identifies that a request for a perimeter fence around the airfield was denied by both the UK chain of command and by the BLS Executive Steering Group (ESG). Are you aware of the deliberations behind the ESG's decision to deny funding for the fence?

A: I am not. In fact, I think I became aware of the denial of that request at my first ESG in May. In contrast to the statement that it was a US and UK denial, my understanding was that it was a UK denial. That is what I remember from -- I think it was my first ESG that I attended. I do not recall there being a discussion of the US side being a part of that denial. Again, I was not part of the deliberations. Obviously the MAW was not part of any funding approval.

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)1.4a **to protect the flight line. 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"? Did you discuss this request with RC(SW)?**

A: I do not.

Q: Do you know if that request made it to a decision making body like the ESG?

A: I do not.

Q: Did you discuss this request with your leadership?

A: I don't recall discussing that specific request in terms of any concern with security. I know that we had security improvements ongoing; for example, the laying of the concertina wire subsequent to the disapproval of the fence line. But I would have probably viewed those as ongoing improvements to your fighting position. I'm not aware of any specific concerns where we needed to do something else because of any disapproval or delay.

Q: So you did not turn off a request from a squadron or from somebody on your staff to execute this very large and substantial plan?

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

A: No, Sir. I wouldn't have had the authority to turn off a request for any improvement.

Q: Along those lines, from your perspective, was the process for requesting AT/FP resources responsive to your needs at 3d MAW forward?

A: My belief prior to 14 September was yes, other than the fence line being denied. I could see improvements every time I went down there. There were visual changes all the time, the force protection and the channelization. I was not aware of any concern. Nobody said that this is not satisfactory progress to improve our fighting position. Nor did I have the impression that the progress was unsatisfactory.

Q: Were you comfortable with the counter-intelligence efforts aboard Camp Bastion?

A: My concern was actually less for the intelligence itself, the CI effort. I was more concerned with the atmospherics and culture that we generated, whether or not it created a receptive audience for insider attack. My assessment was that the squadrons were evolved, mature, restrained and positive in their interactions with anybody who could possibly be part of that insider threat. I was satisfied with that. I had little visibility on the actual CI efforts that were going on if they were conducted by the RC.

Q: Were you aware of any counter-intelligence shortfalls with your UK counterparts?

A: No, I'm not.

Q: Were you aware of the intelligence collection gap that existed outside the perimeter in the UK part of AOBW, particularly Nawabad and Sheikabad, the pop-up villages encroaching on the base?

A: No.

Q: Do you feel that the 14 September 2012 attack on Camp Bastion displayed the characteristics of insider intelligence collection?

A: No. I would attribute the precision and timing of that attack to knowledge obtained outside the wire. The lunar calendar is pretty well established. The towers I think were easily viewed from the outside. I know a lot of people immediately went to that assumption; as close as they were able to come to the wire from the outside before they were chased off by Belleau Wood. It would be very easy to either take pictures or simply just scroll down on a piece of paper the general layout of the area. It's real easy to look at any airfield diagram and get a sense of how aircraft were parked and with one look over there, if you can get visual on an airfield, you'll have a sense of dispersion of aircraft.

(b)(1)1.4g

(b)(1)1.4g

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

(b)(1)1.4g

In fact, there's nothing there that indicated any kind of insider ability with the exception potentially of the fact that they were wearing uniforms. Those I would guess didn't come from inside Leatherneck. They came from a trash bin maybe somewhere else. That probably covers it. I can't think of anything that you mentioned and the nature of the attack, the path that they took, that wouldn't have been gained from the outside of the fence line.

Q: CO TFBW mentioned that he felt the BLS Complex was increasingly being probed. The RC(SW) C-3 also mentioned that the BLS Complex was always being probed. Did you share this concern? Was it brought to your attention?

A: Yes. Again, the daily Ops and Intel would cover the activities of Task Force Belleau Wood. I wouldn't say that I had the perception that it was increasing unexpectedly. As we went into the fighting season from the spring I think there was general expectation that activity would increase. So I don't recall there being any particular alarm at the sense of increase in probes along the wire. There was constantly a question, and I think the enemy did an excellent job of ensuring that we couldn't tell if whether it was a legitimate probe of the wire or a scrapper. I know in one incident at one of the outlying FOBs they did what a good enemy does, they paid kids to go up there and try to pull stakes out of the ground and leave us with the dilemma of what to do about it. So I was aware that there were probes or scrapping going along the wire and that was increasing but I don't believe that there was an overall increasing concern that I could perceive from the RC.

Q: Are you aware of an incident where an individual breached the wire, moved through and actually inspected one of the towers? It was caught on video, are you aware of that.

A: I'm not aware of that.

Q: Did you get briefed on the JSIVA's results?

A: I did not get briefed on the results, I did not see it. I know that it was discussed at the ESG although the ESG was not the forum that would resolve any issues with that. That would have been in the Force Protection chain specifically at the RC level. I was aware that it had occurred and that there were issues that were being addressed.

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 get briefed on the vulnerability of the flight line and of Camp Bastion's East Gate?

A: I was never briefed on the vulnerability of the flight line. Again, I was privy to discussions about the vulnerabilities to include the fact that we did not have a fence line all the way around the airfield.

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

Q: Did you receive any guidance from General Sturdevant after the JSIVA came out in June, after it was briefed to the leadership. Did you receive guidance or are you aware of any guidance that was issued to fix the critical vulnerabilities that were identified?

A: I'm not aware of any specific direction to address anything subsequent to the JSIVA that wasn't already in the works. Any of the Force Protection enhancements that were being developed, I am not aware of any deviation that needed to be made from those plans.

Q: So just as an example, there was no guidance that suddenly came out saying, move some vehicles, block these entries, do something to prevent the unimpeded access, none of that?

A: Not that I recall. If such a guidance had been given, it could have been given directly to the G-3, but I'm not aware of that.

Q: The JSIVA report describes the flight line access at BLS Complex as an "exploitable" vulnerability and "thus, personnel and equipment are largely exposed." The primary AT/FP improvement recommended after the "burning man incident," namely the airfield perimeter fence, was denied. Did you feel that your Squadrons were exposed?

A: The squadrons were exposed; there's no question about that. They had always been exposed.

Q: Following the JSIVA, again getting after some of these issues, was there any evidence of additional resources being applied to support more ECPs, guards, sentries, patrols, lighting, any of that; after the JSIVA not after the attack?

A: I'd say the improvements were constant, they were incremental. I don't recall any huge change in the natural increase in fixing one's fighting position.

Q: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c your ATFPO at the time of the attack, informed us that when he tried to get all of the Squadrons to man ECPs and guards prior to the attack, they pushed back that they didn't have enough personnel. Were you aware of (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c efforts? Did you feel that the Squadrons had enough personnel to both (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c complete their mission and provide their own local security?

A: He would have taken that concern to the G-3 who would have brought it to me. I don't recall the G-3 bringing that concern to me. Had he brought that concern to me I would have understood this to be a natural tension between the use of resources for fixing and flying airplanes or executing a security mission, vice an ATFPO mission, which would have caused some concern that I would have taken to the RC because that would have been an RC mission to provide security.

AFDC

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

Q: Were you aware of any conversations (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c had with the leadership of VMA-211 warning them that they were exposed and that they should emplace barriers and local security?

A: I would not have been privy to those conversations although (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did have a direct line to each of the squadron Force Protection Officers. He would have had that access.

Q: Did you ever see the RC(SW) AT/FP Officer, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c come down to assist your ATFPO, (b)(3), (b)(6) or others, was he ever down there?

A: No. Not that I'm aware of. Although, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c would have had a direct relationship with him for Force Protection.

Q: Did you have any reason to believe that TFBW did not have enough personnel to conduct its assigned mission both inside the perimeter and outside in AO Belleau Wood?

A: I was aware that manpower and the decisions on the use of it were always a hotly contested item. I was never aware that security on the outside of the airfield in terms of patrolling was ever eroded to the point that it was unacceptable. I never was of the impression that we had taken away security ops from the area outside of the wire.

Q: Would it surprise you to know that on the night of the attack you had one patrol and it was down monitoring the rocket zone?

A: Yes, I did not know that and I am surprised.

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

A: When the attack commenced at 2208, I was at my can. I had just stepped inside there after having cigars with General Sturdevant and the Staff NCO leadership. A Sergeant Major came and banged on my door and told me that we were under attack.

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

A: My initial thoughts were to simply move to the headquarters, determine what facts were available about the nature of the attack, make sure that we recalled essential staff based on that assessment of what kind of attack it was being mindful of the fact that obviously something unknown was happening that was not expected and that I be sensitive to the extent of how much I might not know. To be more specific, at that point I had little confidence that the other areas of the base had not been penetrated as well. So I asked that only a few essential staff report to the headquarters. Then I asked General Sturdevant to please remain in place because his initial inclination was to move to the flight line. I suggested that would not be helpful and he immediately agreed after a few seconds of

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

breathing. Then someone came in, I can't recall who, and brought up the ISR feed, the whole night kind of blurs together of course, but we brought up the ISR feed so we could see from overhead what we could look across the airfield and see and hear. So my initial thought was that this was a tactical fight. From about the time that I could see some explosions going on I got a call from a couple of the squadrons to give me an update on what was going on but I had at that point absolute confidence that the fight was going to reach a conclusion by morning and that we would kill who ever the bad guys were and I was left with a nagging head scratch of how is it that we're fighting them inside our spaces? So those were my thoughts kind of intermingled in the first couple of hours.

Q: Tied to that, did you (3d MAW) receive any indications or warnings prior to the attack?

A: No, we did not have any intelligence warnings that there was anything being planned on Bastion. I think our greater concern at the time was Dwyer. I know that it was routine that insurgents would have the chatter picked up that they were interested in attacking coalition facilities and forces. But if I recall there was something specific that gave us concern that it would be at Dwyer vice Bastion.

Q: You mentioned in an AAR to MajGen Sturdevant that you did not receive a sensitive Afghan Intelligence Report until after the attack had begun. Can you discuss that report at the SECRET level? If so, please describe what was in the intelligence report.

A: That is correct, there was an (b)(1)1.4c, I don't recall the number of it, that my G-2 obtained in the days following the attack. Again, the time is kind of a blur. I made General Sturdevant aware of that fact, that we did not have this information prior to the attack. I sent that report in response to the first JRB draft. When (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c forwarded the draft out for review I took great exception to some aspects of it but one of the parts being that there was no warning prior to the attack. My only point was that while there was warning we just didn't have it. I understand that the (b)(1)1.4c is far and outside of my chain of command but I only became aware of that after the 14th.

Q: In your post-attack analysis, did you discover other failures in dissemination of I&W? Did you identify a collection gap that led to a lack of I&W?

A: I'm kind of bore-sighted on the one failure which is that I was at a loss for how they--We could have fought and killed these fuckers at the wire so easily. That would have been really easy to do. If somebody would have sent up a flare, if somebody would have fired one round. Then within the first 24 hours after this I had somebody tell me that the towers couldn't respond because they were suppressed and that story continued to circulate all the way up to General Allen. I was pretty pissed about that I have to say, forgive my frankness here but had

AFDC

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

there been one round fired at the wire this thing would have ended very differently.

Q: You pointed to a collection gap there in terms of approach and infiltration.

A: So I did see vulnerabilities in the post-attack assessment; absolutely. Again, my perspective looking at our posture on the flight line prior was, we were a tenant command on this vast exposed airfield. While I think we continually improved our fighting position, obviously in retrospect it was insufficient for the type of attack that we were faced with, it was inconceivable to me that we would be faced with that type of attack.

Q: Inconceivable that you would be faced with a breach of the wire?

A: An undetected breach of the wire; I could see somebody busting through the wire. I envisioned folks driving a truck with explosives, taking out one tower maybe or suppressing a tower and trying to fight their way through. We would have killed all of those guys. That would not have been an issue. It was inconceivable to me that somebody would move through that completely undetected and we would have absolutely no warning until they were on the flight line.

Q: But you still don't feel that there was insider knowledge?

A: I could be wrong. I agree that they had a really accurate picture of how everything was laid out. I watched their video which was well-staged propaganda. If I were a bad guy I could have gotten all of that from outside of the wire. If they did have insider intelligence and if we tracked it down to an individual then our bad in the MAW and everybody else on base for not setting the kind of environment that these guys would have--they should have refused to work with the outsiders; if that was the case I'm surprised.

Q: As you put it, we kind of underestimated the threat. What do you attribute that to, was it a lack of focus, or just an issue of prioritizing threats? The RC had assessed VBIEDs and IDF as the top two threats.

A: I don't agree a hundred percent with the assessment of likelihood. To me it was a capabilities-based look. I had a greater concern that one of the contract fuel truck drivers would take his truck and drive down the road of every aircraft clipping the tail. In ten minutes without a single explosive he could wipe out every aircraft on the flight line. So to me, I looked at it from capabilities. My assumption was that our flank was covered. Let me digress for just a second and give you one of the first conversations I had with the MEF Chief of Staff the day after when we knew that everything was handled. I said, "right now I have six fucking battalions facing east from the flight line, you let me know when I can turn them back into squadrons again; do you have the wire?" In fairness to

(b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c he's a Chief of Staff too, he's not the C-3; he did come back to me a

AFDC

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

couple of hours later and said have your guys look out there. We have a patrol outside the wire now, they're establishing physical presence. What I needed was to get confidence back in the squadron because every one of my guys, 1,846 people as a trigger puller if they have to be, but then we're not fixing and flying airplanes. I can probably pull up the readiness data for the week after the attack and show what it does to the RC's capability to fight if we're not fixing and flying airplanes. But that was my thinking; if you want six battalions, I'll give them to you. Just tell me that's what you want them to do because I'm not going to fix and fly airplanes anymore. Again, I digress on that for a second to say that I looked at this from capability and risk rather than a prioritized list of threats. Yeah, the prevailing wisdom was that IDF was going to be the most likely attack. I didn't find that assessment particularly helpful as a Chief of Staff. I was more interested in, what can they do to us. Probably the biggest one was making sure that the people that were authorized to have a 20-ton truck filled with gasoline was a hell of a lot bigger capability than anything else, assuming that the security operations were being done, than anything else out there.

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 oversight on AT/FP prior to the attack?

A: I seek your guidance on the scope of what I'm supposed to answer here; I'll try to stay in my lane. I can't make any guess as to why higher headquarters made whatever emphasis at what time. I don't know what intelligence might have changed. Obviously we had a fact-based situation to respond to. The magnitude of that attack I think warranted a higher level of scrutiny. But, beyond that I can't speculate.

Q: A week after the attack, 3d MAW (FWD) published a Force Protection/Incident Response Plan that included a barrier plan and an integrated defense of the flight line. Should this plan have been in place prior to the attack? Do you think this would have been unreasonable prior to the attack?

A: I think it would have been unreasonable; in retrospect, absolutely. We should have provided our own perimeter security. I think it would have been unreasonable to expect that the MAW should provide that level of its own defense perimeter. Again in retrospect, I wish I had the foresight to have directed that.

Q: After the attack in December, RC(SW) released a FRAGO unifying the C2 structure and making your CO the Camp BLS CO. Did the UK agree with this change? Had the attack changed the environment such that this change was now tenable, or did MajGen Gurganus simply decide that it had to be done regardless? What were your thoughts on 3d MAW (FWD)'s new responsibilities?

A: All I know is that it was directed. I'm not aware; it would be speculation on my part to say whether or not the UK was onboard with that change; it was directed

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?

A: No.

Q: By UK personnel? If so, what do you attribute this to?

A: I would not have had visibility on that.

A: 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? Do you believe that TFBW personnel displayed this attitude? Did your UK or Afghan counterparts?

A: It would be speculation on my part I could only speak to the MAW personnel. I can tell you, they took their tenant responsibilities seriously. I can add that had we been tasked with additional security again, I can give you six battalions facing east.

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

A: I appreciate what you're doing. Quite frankly I'm personally thankful that this is being done. I think the guys out there deserve it. I think Otis and SGT Atwell deserve it; as well as all the folks who took the fight that night. You've probably been regaled with their stories. You've probably read some incredible and true things about them. What I'm amazed with is that as an ACE Chief of Staff and a guy who started off going through as an Infantry Officer when I joined the Marine Corps in IOC to see the things come together there, where 15 dudes wander into our lines without any warning and we bring pistols, small arms, and aviation to bear inside our own spaces. We kill all of them minus one who was taken prisoner obviously, and no fratricide. So I will always call into question whether I did everything I could have prior to that; whether my suspicions should have been heightened, whether I drove them hard enough, not just on the aviation side but in terms of hardening their positions. I never called into question the integrity of the outer perimeter until the night of the 14th. I always took that perimeter security as, not necessarily a given in terms of not being able to be penetrated, but at least not being able to be penetrated without warning. It's outside my scope to how that happened, had I had any sense that could have occurred, then I certainly would have acted differently. I'll forever question whether or not I should have come to that conclusion because the guys deserved really good leadership from the ACE. That was certainly General Sturdevant's direction to me and to all of the principle staff. He was an incredible CG and supporter of his squadrons and they kicked ass out there because of it. If anybody failed within the ACE, within the scope of what we're assigned, that certainly falls on me. I was not just his Chief of Staff, I was his Assistant Wing Commander and I was his most trusted advisor. He had one other colonel, the G-3. As the number two guy

AFDC

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

in there, it would have been my responsibility to tell the General, hey sir, I don't have confidence in the situation around us and we need to bolster our security. That falls on me. Obviously I wish Otis were here to speak on behalf of his folks. I would add that that guy was a war fighter, he really was; so he would hold himself personally accountable just like I do at the MAW level for any failings we did have. I'm sure Otis would feel the same way.

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



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Approved for Release