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 (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c 3d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) [3d MAW(FWD)]

1. The investigation team conducted a recorded interview with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c 3d MAW(FWD) on 19 June 2013 at Camp Pendleton, CA 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: 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?

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

Q: When did you arrive and depart Afghanistan as (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c of 3d MAW (FWD)?

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

Approved for Release

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

Q: What was 3d MAW (FWD)'s mission?
A: One of the things obviously as far as the mission for a Marine Fwd (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c working with the general was to provide air support for the infantrymen on the ground and the support for the MEF FWD.

Q: What did you feel were your primary responsibilities as (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c of 3d MAW (FWD)?
A: Personally for me it was to provide development and supervision for the Staff NCOs, NCOs, and enlisted Marines and Sailors, and to report directly to MajGen Sturdevant.

Q: Were you headquartered at the Camp Bastion airfield the entire time?
A: The MAW Compound was on Leatherneck; Camp Bastion was a couple of miles away. But our Squadrons were on the Bastion airfield.

Q: How was your relationship with CO 3d MAW (FWD)? How often did you interact? On what matters did you typically interact?
A: MajGen Sturdevant and I had a great relationship. I actually got to meet MajGen Sturdevant when I had MAG 11 as a (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c I had MAG-11 and I turned over that post in order for me to deploy with MajGen Sturdevant. That must have been in October of 2011 when I first met MajGen Sturdevant, and we went for the PDSS in October 2011 to Afghanistan for about nine days. My relationship with him was through the entire deployment and post-deployment as well.

Q: How often did you interact with (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c at RC(SW)? On what matters did you generally interact?
A: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c, as far as being the I MEF(FWD) (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c was obviously for any boards; NCO of the Quarter Boards, Meritorious Boards. He would also call periodic meetings with all the MSC (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c sometimes it was at his office space, or at a luncheon or a dinner, so I would say, a couple times a month.

Q: Where were you during the attack on 14-15 September 2012?
A: That evening we had a Staff NCO cigar social within the MAW Compound. There were quite a few staff NCOs, with approximately 20-25 that were actually in the MAW CP area when the attack occurred. We had actually already broken from there and the Marines were heading back to their cans and me and MajGen Sturdevant went back to his office space and we just sat in his office and then we got word that the attack had started.

Q: Based on your experience of living and working on the BLS Complex, what were your initial thoughts?
A: I was surprised by the attack. I used to go to the flight line not only with MajGen Sturdevant but either by myself or with the Command Master Chief quite

Approved for Release

often to visit the Marines out on the flight line. Personally I felt as far as security, at that time, that it was a good secured area. I can honestly say that I was very surprised that we got attacked.

Q: What actions did you take during the attack?
A: The first thing I did was, I went to the Det can area and made sure that those that were in the racks, I believe it was a little after 2200, I can't remember the exact time, to make sure that everybody whether it was FWD Medical Officer, the Chief of Staff, anyone that was in the compound area obviously needed to start making coordination with the flight line; the more the better as far as what we had on deck right there in the CP. I was actually going back and forth making sure people were up and about. Of course our own security there, we had some of the civilians from Triple Canopy, they were alerted because they didn't have radio communication with the flight line at that time, so they were put on alert as well because we had no idea who was in the wire at that time. I basically was to just trying to assist in getting people moving.

Q: Prior to the attack, what was your assessment of Force Protection on the BLS Complex? Did you ever express any concerns to (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c regarding AT/FP on the BLS Complex? If so, what were those concerns? What was the response?
A: Actually Sir, (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c, the AT/FP Officer, and there was a lieutenant before him who was the AT/FP Officer and if not every staff meeting, the OPS&INTEL, or at least every other meeting FP was always talked about. I believe as far as listening to the chief warrant officer and the lieutenant prior to him, there were always battle field improvements in the compound, not only in the BLS side but throughout the entire installation of Leatherneck and working with the Brits our counterparts. Anytime that anyone saw something that might be a weak point, I believe that Marines were always bringing those topics up.

Q: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c was new to the game, he came in August?
A: Yes sir he came with 12.2.

Q: Was he effective in his role?
A: Yes sir, he took it very seriously on the FP piece as far as any recommendations he made. Even though they had the staff meetings in the conference rooms behind closed doors, after the fact, I would actually see him out there in the area whenever I would go out for a run. He was constantly out and about looking for ways to improve the installation.

Q: Did you ever express any concerns to your Commander or (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c about AT/FP?

Approved for Release

A: It's not like I drove around the installation on BLS in fear. Obviously we tell Marines to make sure that they are aware, that they maintain situational awareness at all times. I don't think I drove around that area or even when I went on runs by myself in the compound that there was any kind of fear when I was out and about. I always felt we were a "hard target."

Q: Considering that the flight line was on the Camp Bastion side of the BLS Complex, how did you integrate with the UK personnel who were overall responsible for AT/FP on Camp Bastion? Describe that relationship:
A: We had what was called an (b)(6), (b)(7)c There were a few of them that rotated about every 4 months, the reason I say that is because the (b)(6), (b)(7)c was kind of like my counterpart on the Brit side. Even though we only saw them at the meetings, he would maybe attend every other meeting as far as what we had in the compound. I might also see him on the Bastion side if we were going to see some of the aircraft or one of the briefs they were giving out that MajGen Sturdevant would attend; that was about the extent of me working hand-in-hand with the Brits.

Q: Were you a participant in any AT/FP related Working Groups or other Boards? If so, please explain.
A: No Sir as far as just whatever was briefed by the chief warrant officer or if anyone else was to make any kind of brief and I happened to be in the room when there was a conference going on or a briefing. That was probably about the extent of it.

Q: What was your relationship with the other (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c in RC(SW)? Did they come to you regarding AT/FP concerns? If so, please describe in detail any concerns raised. What was the mechanism to fix these concerns if they existed?
A: (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c, before he went back to the US, and myself had actually talked about it several times with the MEF FWD (b)(6), (b)(7)c It was a real good group, we felt as far as what was put together for the MEF FWD Division. The relationship was a real good relationship.

Q: Did you have concerns about the insider threat posed by LN and TCN contractors? If so, please describe any actions you took regarding your concerns.
A: I would always say, "There is always a threat", even though I said I would go through the compound knowing that I was not constantly looking over my shoulder, but one of the things obviously again is situational awareness at all times to include just the regular shitter truck that would come in, that civilian whatever TCN he might be from, we actually noticed that he is not the normal one that we see coming through here. We were always telling the Marines to be

Approved for Release

aware; whether they're just doing their duties on the compound, just to be aware of their surroundings at all time. Throughout the compound I think that there were many times whether it was Triple Canopy or we had Marines manning our ECPs, they were constantly just on them the entire time while they were working on our compound.

Q: Was TFBW responsible for vetting and security of all contractors, or was it split among the various Camps? If the latter, how did they coordinate vetting and security with your UK and Afghan counterparts?
A: No Sir, I did not have any part of vetting, any kind of interviews, or ID cards. As long as we knew the different badges, I can't remember the exact types of badges but they determined whether they had to be with or without escorts, what they were and were not allowed to do, were they are were they not allowed a cell phone. I think Task Force Belleau Wood would have done all of that, but not the MAW.

Q. Any concern about the security measures that were in place for contractors once they got on the compound; did they have free reign or was the badging thing checked?
A: No. Actually, what me and BrigGen Sturdevant, and I'm sure other personnel as well, we made it a personal thing to where we would speak to the Triple Canopy guards. I knew that most of them were prior military, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, whichever it was. We knew their background whether it was infantry or motor transport.

Q: Did you have concerns about the AT/FP posture on the Camp Bastion side of the BLS Complex, including the flight line?
A: Prior to the attack, no Sir. Afterwards obviously, would I ever think that there would be a same attack, same direction, same location? I would guess not, but that's just my personal guess. I would never go near the wire at certain times of the day because it's just not a smart thing to do; but as far as concerns prior to the attack, "No". I think everything was in motion, whatever steps that were being taken.

Q: Did you have any specific concerns about the Tongan soldiers manning guard towers on Camp Bastion?
A: I really did not; there was an ECP that went from Leatherneck to Bastion. It's kind of like "you're now entering the Leatherneck side from Bastion side." I think just driving through there and sometimes when you would drive up the Tongan guards would ask for your ID card and they just kind of say "come on through" without looking at the ID very closely, because they see the same vehicles all the time. Could they have taken it a bit more seriously? Sure. Here's an example. If it was a Marine, I would have said, "Hey Marine, I know you didn't see my ID card

Approved for Release

from back there", so in other words I would have interacted a little more with that Marine then with that Tongan. My interaction with the Tongan soldiers was only going through ECPs.

Q. What was your impression of them?
A: I would say, "Adequate" and could they have been more professional, observant, and situationally aware of their own surroundings? I would say, "Absolutely".

Q: Did 3d MAW (FWD) or any subordinate Marine units present on the airfield have AT/FP responsibilities on the flight line?
A: Yes, Sir, I know that under (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c every squadron had an AT/FP Officer or Staff NCOIC. How often they would have their briefs or meetings on AT/FP, I can't answer that piece. Every squadron, as far as I know, had someone assigned every a rotation that went through. All they did was kind of like a handoff, as far as "now you have the terrain there," letting them know what their sectors were and their responsibilities were because the LSAs were directly to the west I think it was.

Q. Were the AT/FP procedures the same amongst all the squadrons?
A: Not sure Sir because when we got on deck there was still 2nd MAW FWD squadrons from the east coast. When MajGen Sturdevant got on deck with the 3d MAW, I'm not sure exactly were the squadrons bringing the same SOPs from the rear; obviously different terrain, different features that are out there, so I can't tell you as far as were there SOPs the same back in the rear as back in Afghanistan.

Q. Did the 3d MAW(FWD) impose any standardized AT/FP measures for the squadrons?
A: I am trying to think back to our RSO&I briefs, because MajGen Sturdevant and I would go, and the General opened it up for every squadron that went through. I know that (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and the lieutenant prior to him, were in the audience at every single brief because they had to give an AT/FP brief to every unit that went through there. I know that happened, but as far as individual SOPs and all that, I'm not exactly sure sir.

Q: In your opinion did 3d MAW (FWD) have enough personnel to conduct its assigned mission and execute force protection responsibilities?
A: I think so Sir. When 12.2 came around, then obviously our numbers went down. I don't remember our exact numbers count. Then Triple Canopy came on deck. Initially, I'll be the first to admit, there was some concern. When there are Marines, I can run Marines, I can manage them, I can do what needs to be done with them. But as far as Triple Canopy, they're civilian contractors. But once we got to know them, we found out that they took their job seriously. But with the

Approved for Release

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

Q: Please describe your relationship with your UK counterparts on Camp Bastion. Did you discuss AT/FP concerns? Please describe the nature of those conversations and any outcomes or solutions, if applicable.
A: If there was ever anything that I needed assistance with, I could get with their (b)(6), (b)(7)c f I ever saw any of the Brits not doing their jobs, but there was not a point where I had to interact with them about security concerns.

Q: Considering that you had Marine personnel and aircraft on the flight line away from Camp Leatherneck, did you feel exposed as a part of 3d MAW?
A: The only concern would be the ECP because it was maybe (b)(1)1.4g (b)(1)1.4g that was usually manned by two civilians. I never received any calls of concern until after the attack.

Q: How much do you know about the local national interpreter's incursion onto the flight line in March 2012 while Secretary Panetta was present on BLS (aka the "burning man incident)?
A: We were actually headed towards the building area on the Leathernecks side where we brief the Marines. I was nowhere near that area. I just know that he ran over a Brit soldier, and a PMO vehicle chased him down, the vehicle crashed into a ditch area, a gentleman got out and was on fire.

Q: Did you have any conversations with CO, 3d MAW (FWD) after that incident? If so, please describe.
A: It was mentioned, but as far as "what we could have done differently", not much at all. I did realize it was close to the aircraft.

Q: Were you aware of the Joint Staff Integrated Vulnerability Assessment (JSIVA), which reviewed the BLS AT/FP Program 10-14 June? Are you aware of the results of that JSIVA? Were the results shared throughout the leadership of RC(SW)? If so, how were they shared and in what manner?
A: Again sir, MajGen Sturdevant was always thinking AT/FP, safety, security, more so even after the attack. He did mention before and after the attack "why is this ECP here and not located here?" The ECPs were established way before we were even on deck

Q: Did you take any actions after the JSIVA?
A: Individual squadrons improving their postures, weapons and hardening their positions. Behind the LSA to the NW there was a small tower out there, which used to manned by 2-4 personnel. Every squadron on the flight line, their posture was hardened.

Q: Did you or anyone in 3d MAW (FWD) seek assistance from RC(SW) as a result of the JSIVA? If so, what assistance did you seek and what was the result?

Approved for Release

A: As for resources, a lot went up quickly, but as for the T-walls, I don't think any one of the squadrons built it over night.

Q: What was your assessment of the threat of attack to the BLS Complex prior to 14 September 2012?
A: No major concerns, Sir.

Q: Did you ever observe complacency on the part of US personnel providing Force Protection for the BLS Complex? If so, what do you attribute this to?
A: No sir.

Q: One interviewee informed us that the attitude of personnel on the BLS Complex might have been that it was "too big to fail." Do you agree?
No, sir.

Q: Did you have adequate manpower to conduct your mission in 3d MAW (FWD), including force protection? Yes Sir.

Q: Did you have any conversations with CO, 3d MAW (FWD) after the attack regarding the vulnerabilities previously identified during the "burning man incident" and the JSIVA, and whether 3d MAW (FWD) had addressed the vulnerabilities appropriately prior to the attack?
We did talk, and we discussed about where the ECPs were located while we were out driving around. The general would state that is makes no sense why this ECP is here and I can go right thru it and have access to anything. MajGen Sturdevant was always about security.

Q: Earlier you said, "I had no reason to go out and to look in those towers." Did you consider that to be someone else's responsibility even though that was the closest security from the outside world to your Marines and the aircraft?
A: Yes Sir, that is how I felt at the time. You could see movement in the backs of the towers out there. My feeling is that there was security always out there. But to say to MajGen Sturdevant "maybe we should go walk the terrain out there," I never did.

Q: So you felt that was someone else's responsibility?
A: Yes Sir. If I would have been in charge of security I would have done more.

Q: You also said that "if we would have taken more Marines to beef up security, it would have cut down on production." What you think now after losing 6 jets and how that worked out for production?
A: On a security side, we were not part of the towers, but we were being asked to provide more personnel to guard DFACs and things like that. There would have

Approved for Release

been squadron (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c out there saying "if we are required to do that, we will do that," but once again on the aviation side there would have been some pushback. If we were told that we had to provide X amount of personnel to man towers with rotations, do I believe the squadrons couldn't handle the rotation because of the day shift and night, and that they wouldn't have also been able to have aircraft available? I do believe that.

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

WILLIAM B. GARRETT III
LTG, USA
Investigating Officer

Approved for Release