



**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 Aviation Maintenance Officer, VMA-211, 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 Aviation Maintenance Officer, VMA-211, 3d MAW(FWD) on 20 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?**

**A: I was the VMA-211 Aircraft Maintenance Officer.**

**Q: When did you arrive in Afghanistan with VMA-211 and when did you depart?**

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

**Q: What were your specific responsibilities as the XO for VMA-211?**

**A: To ensure the maintenance disposition of the squadron, make sure we were able to meet the flight schedules, support the ground battle element and obviously keep the Commanding Officer abreast of any issues, problems we had there.**

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Q: Did this include any oversight of AT/FP for your squadron?

A: Not specifically

Q: Did you have an adequate RIP/TOA with your predecessors at the airfield?

A: We were the first Harrier squadron at Camp Bastion.

Q: Do you feel that you were adequately made aware of any AT/FP vulnerabilities which may have existed?

A: I know that the (b)(3), (b)(6) and CO identified some problems they were concerned with as far as shortcomings people told us about, but I'm not sure. That wouldn't necessarily come thru the AMO, but thru the Headquarters.

Q: Do you recall what, if any, vulnerabilities they specifically discussed with you?

A: One of our concerns was the proximity to the exterior, basically the fence line and our flight line, and the traffic that would go along this road and there was another road higher which had a lot more traffic. There was a pretty heavily trafficked road just outside the fence line that had a pretty decent vantage point of our line. The area to the east also offered a pretty good vantage point to our line. I know it was identified in the squadron, but I don't know if the command element pushed that higher.

Q: Can you identify any local security that you had there?

A: We had an identified QRF, but I'm not sure how much training we put into that. Then the base security measures of always have your weapon with you and ready, that sort of thing.

Q: Were you aware of any standing guidance to protect yourselves there, the internal security piece?

A: I'm not sure, Sir.

Q: Who was your AT/FP Officer?

A: I don't recall.

Q: Was there any routine security left there at night?

A: No Sir, our main focus would be the maintenance of the aircraft. We had no sentries or things like that. WE had 24-hour maintenance and ops, so there were always people on hand.

Q: So you pretty much relied on the British to keep you secured?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: What was your overall impression of them?

A: I never really had interaction with them. I'm not aware of any concerns.

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**Q: Did you have concerns about the insider threat posed by LN and TCN contractors on the BLS Complex? A: Yes sir we did, particularly as the MWSS started drawing down and I remember that we had to stop a couple of TCN's who would drive fuel trucks onto the line. Our primary concern was FOD, not sure if you are aware of the Harriers and its susceptibility to FOD. That was a constant battle that we fought, as we transitioned MWSS to the contractors, it was a daily fight to slow guys down and check their badges and make sure they were supposed to be on our flight line.**

**Q: Please describe any conversations you had with 3d MAW (FWD) or RC(SW) regarding your concerns.**

**A: Yes sir, I recall constant dialog with the Wing on "hey we got to slow these guys down we got to make sure they understand our concerns and that they are actually stopping and doing the FOD checks," and that was a daily dialogue.**

**Q: Did anybody do anything?**

**A: Yes sir, we got the authority to stop them, not necessarily detain them, but to prevent them from coming onto our flight line, if we weren't comfortable with them there. There was also dialogue with the contractors and the TCNs to make them aware they had restrictions before they could come onto our flight lines.**

**Q: Were there any gates, fences, etc put in place?**

**A: We put barriers to keep trucks from cutting corners. The Wing and MEF gave us support to get barriers to keep people from cutting corners and prevent FOD.**

**Q: You were thinking more on FOD rather than force protection, and when you were checking badges, you weren't concerned they were third country nationals who shouldn't be there, you didn't want the wrong people on your flight line screwing up your aircraft?**

**A: From an AMO perspective that was my take, however we did discuss the threat of these guys and the potential damage one of those fuel trucks could do to the aircraft.**

**Q: Are you aware of any changes to the FP posture on Camp Bastion prior to the attack?**

**A: Not that I am aware of.**

**Q: Do you recall your leadership going to higher headquarters to discuss your proximity to the fence line and your feeling of the outside having good vantage points on your line?**

**A: I'm not sure if the command team took it higher, but we discussed it internally. We would sometimes see a herd of sheep with a few shepherds inside. They would stop and be looking our way, and it didn't look like they were trying to herd**

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their sheep. It just looked like they were watching the flight line for a bit. Or we would see a motorcycle stop out there.

Q: Did 3d MAW (FWD) or any subordinate Marine units such as VMA-211 who were present on the airfield have AT/FP responsibilities on the flight line?

A: I'm not sure sir.

Q: What measures did you employ for internal security?

A: We didn't have a set course of action, in the event of an attack. We had the IDF drill, which is a safety drill

Q: Did you conduct patrolling?

A: No sir

Q: Man ECPs?

A: No sir.

Q: In your opinion did 3d MAW (FWD) and subordinate units have enough personnel to conduct its assigned mission and execute force protection responsibilities?

A: I believe so, just based on our capacity after the attack and the upgraded security we took at that time, we were able to accomplish the mission, we were still able to accomplish the maintenance on 8 aircraft. We were able to fly missions, conduct maintenance, and have an increase in security after the attack, so we probably did have enough people to do both before.

Q: Did you ever raise concerns about insufficient security forces to RC(SW)? If so, what was their response?

A: Not that I can think of right now

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?

A: There was a guard tower along the road that possibly could have seen it, but that was about the extent of what I saw.

Q: Do you know whether 3d MAW shared your concerns about vulnerabilities with the proximity to the perimeter?

A: I was under the impression that they were, but I was not privy to those conversations.

Q: Were you aware of any process to seek improvements for AT/FP?

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A: I know there was a process, but we leaned heavily on our (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)(C) for that. There was an AT/FP Officer at the Wing or the MEF. I'm not familiar with the process.

Q: All reports indicate that Camp Bastion manned approximately 50% of their towers. Do you know why manning roughly 50% of the towers was deemed sufficient?

A: No sir.

Q: Were you aware of the results of the JSIVA?

A: No, sir.

Q: There were photos from the JSIVA that showed unimpeded access to the flight line. It mentioned that personnel and equipment were exposed? Did you feel exposed?

A: At times, yes Sir. Depending on where you were on the flight line. The northernmost sun shades didn't have the cover of the maintenance building, so that area felt a little more exposed.

Q: Do you know when the flight line expansion was complete? Were there deliberations about pushing the perimeter further east to account for the new runway? If so, describe those deliberations and the decision not to expand the perimeter. Was the flight line within small arms range of the eastern perimeter fence?

A: I know that our area was built up with the high power ramp built May /June timeframe, but I was not aware of any other extensions to the flight line.

Q: Was there any other discussion at all extending the perimeter out to give you more stand-off?

A: I know that there was, but I am not sure if it happened before or after the attack.

Q: Did you sense a lack of senior leader emphasis on AT/FP prior to the attack?

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?

A: I am not sure. It wasn't brought overtly to my attention. Again, my focus, and perhaps myopically at times, was on maintenance and how do we get aircraft in the air to support the GCE.

Q: So realizing prior to deployment that you were going into Bastion, I assumed you knew that right?

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A: It was discussed, but they didn't drop the hammer on it till late May, "you will go to Bastion 1 July."

Q: Were you still CONUS or where you at Kandahar?

A: Kandahar

Q: Did you guys go and look at the area where you would be moving into and have any discussions about security, safety, AT/FP?

A: Yes sir. I think our main focus was less on security though, and more on logistics and where we were going to put everything, how we were going to have a functional squadron.

Q: Do you have any opinion on why the focus was the way it was – logistics more than security?

A: I think we were all under the impression the idea was focus to consolidate the Wing in one central location. Our mission as the VMA was to provide tactical air support to the GCE, and I think there might have been an assumption that security was sort of outside our scope. It was more of a higher headquarters and base responsibility.

Q: What other airfields in Afghanistan or Iraq have you been at besides Kandahar and Bastion?

A: Iraq – Al Assad, Habanniyah, and TQ.

Q: Did the security at Bastion strike you as being more exposed then those other locations?

A: Comparing this to Al Assad, I'd say, no. I remember at Al Assad seeing the guard towers manned by silhouette targets particularly on the south side. At Bastion it seems like the guard towers are little bit further away, but our building was closer to the perimeter then it was at Al Assad, but I didn't necessarily feel more exposed or vulnerable there at Bastion then I did at Al Assad.

Q: The internal security measures that the squadron took or didn't take, was that different then other deployments or about the same?

A: About the same.

Q: Did you live in the LSA at Camp Bastion?

A: Yes sir.

Q: Any concerns there, you mentioned you were closer to the perimeter than before?

A: The proximity to the perimeter was the main concern because there was a TCN camp close by, but then again it's no different then what we had at Al Assad.

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Maybe we got conditioned to the norm for how the airfield should be defended. I remember that TQ was right between Fallujah and Ramadi, and the security posture was about the same at the gates and things like that. One thing we had at Al Assad was that it was really out in the middle of nowhere. At Bastion we had some small villages around it.

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



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Approved for Release