

**Executive Summary (EXSUM)**  
**19 June 2006**

ICW: N/A

**SUBJECT:** Executive Summary of AR 15-6 Investigation of Incident at FOB ROBINSON  
 282146ZMAR06

**DISCUSSION:** I commenced my investigation on 31 March 2006, and concluded 19 April 2006. The primary investigative team consisted of me, COL (b)(7) (USASOC SME), LTC (b)(7) (NCE XO), and MAJ (b)(7)

Based on my investigation, I have made the following findings by a preponderance of the evidence. During an intense firefight under complex conditions and no illumination, friendly fire killed Private (Pte) Costall (Canadian Army) and SFC John Stone (US Army). Friendly fire also injured CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) (US Army), Warrant Officer (WO) (b)(6) (Canadian Army), and Corporal (Cpl) (b)(6) (Canadian Army). ANA Soldier (b)(6) and Pte (b)(6) were wounded by enemy fire. The friendly fire casualties were caused by M-240 fire from the NE corner of the SF compound at BP 2 which either simultaneously or near simultaneously engaged US and Canadian forces at their respective locations. The Canadians had moved into a position outside the SF compound and into the sector of fire of this gun without sufficient coordination, and a gunner at that position fired without knowing they were there. Inaccurate target identification by a gunner at this same corner led him to engage the ETT rooftop in the belief that it was an enemy position. Several other factors contributed to the incident, including C2 issues, poor planning, leadership failures, and fatigue.

I have made the following recommendations: I found insufficient evidence that the fratricides amounted to an offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice; instead, they were the sorts of acts that, while regrettable, are understandable in context of the conditions of this firefight. Next, that better C2 arrangements evolve in order to support future expansion of ANA operations and their concomitant synchronization with US forces. Finally, that Soldiers on the ground, regardless of organization, have and are trained on appropriate state-of-the-art common fielding equipment, especially night vision devices, thermal imaging devices, and laser aiming devices.

**WAY AHEAD:** This concludes my investigation, subject to any reinvestigation that you direct. The Army Safety Center Investigating Team and CID continue their respective investigations. The Canadian Board of Inquiry has completed its inquiry. The ballistics tests by CID are not complete.

**APPROVED BY:** COL (3), (b)(6)

b(6);  
 b(7)(c)

UNCLASSIFIED



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
US NATIONAL COMMAND ELEMENT  
REGIONAL COMMAND - SOUTH  
KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09354

NCE

18 June 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, CJTF-76, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, APO AE 09354

SUBJECT: Findings and Recommendations - Collateral Fratricide Investigation, Forward Operating Base (FOB) Robinson (formerly FOB Wolf), 28-29 MAR 2006

1. **Introduction.** On 30 MAR 2006, I was appointed as the AR 15-6 Investigating Officer (IO) to examine whether friendly fire caused the deaths and injuries of coalition forces at FOB Robinson on 28-29 March 2006.

2. **Summary.** The investigation reveals the following findings:

- a. U.S. fire killed SFC John Stone (US Army) and Private (Pte) Costall (Canadian Army).
- b. U.S. fire wounded CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) (US Army), Warrant Officer (WO) (b)(6) (Canadian Army), and Corporal (Cpl) (b)(6) (Canadian Army).
- c. Afghan National Army (ANA) Soldier (b)(6) and Canadian Corporal (Cpl) (b)(6) (b)(6) were wounded by enemy fire.
- d. U.S. friendly fire originated from elements of Operational Detachment Alfa (ODA) Team 2062, Charlie Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> BN, 20th SFG (US) located in the NE corner of the SF compound on FOB Robinson.
- e. The proximate cause of the fratricide was inaccurate target identification, shooting out of assigned sectors, and Canadian troops moving into those sectors of fire without coordination with US forces. Shooting out of sector was a possibility exacerbated by a lack of physical control measures for the sectors of fire and a deficient base defense plan.
- f. Secondary factors include command and control (C2) issues, planning and fatigue.
- g. There is insufficient evidence to support offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

3. **Background.**

- a. At approximately 2146Z on 28 MAR 2006, FOB Robinson was attacked by Taliban forces. An intense firefight ensued. This coordinated attack was conducted under complex circumstances and limited illumination.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET/REL 12AF~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

b. Baseline FOB physical conditions. (See Exhibit 54) FOB Robinson is an austere FOB located in the Sangin district of the Helmand Providence in southern Afghanistan. It occupies an area approximately 900 meters north-to-south by 350 meters west-to-east. The Helmand River runs generally from the northeast to the southwest adjacent to Highway 611 West of the FOB. The draw that comes off this river to the east is a known enemy infiltration route. (See Exhibit 62) The overall compound had a (b)(2)H strand of concertina wire as a perimeter fence. A three-foot mud-brick wall ran parallel to the northern fence. This wall was being reinforced with (b)(2)H (b)(2)High Hesco barriers along the northern perimeter wall. The FOB is on a western spur splintering from a generally north-to-south running ridge complex which provides, from the SOF compound, over watch to much of the area, except the south beyond approximately 800 meters. Locations to the east have better overwatch of the entire area. The FOB contains 4 separate inner compounds:

(1) The "old Mosque" ANA Compound: A small, one-story, mud-walled compound near the northwest corner of the complex. It was (b)(2)High (b)(2)High

(2) The "new" ANA Compound: This compound was under construction and was located as a small mud-walled compound near the southern, center wall of the FOB.

(3) The US Embedded Training Team (ETT) Compound: The 207th Corps ETT Reserve Component Advisory Group (RCAG) controlled this small, one story mud-wall complex. It had good over watch to the (b)(2)High but limited overwatch from the (b)(2)High

(b)(2)High Plunging fire could have occurred from south of the SF compound, although none was indicated. (b)(2)High Hesco barriers existed (b)(2)High north of the ETT compound.

(4) "The SF Compound": Team 2062, Charlie Company, 2d Battalion, 20th SFG (US), OPCON to FOB 73, occupied this double height Hesco barrier compound on the southeast corner of the FOB complex. Overwatch from this position dominated the entire area with the exception of the (b)(2)Hic beyond (b)(2)H meters where the ridgeline tapers off, and the east due to dead space between (b)(2)Hic meters. Beyond (b)(2)H meters to the east the view was good. During normal conditions, there is clear visibility and line of sight from the NE corner of the SF compound to the ETT compound and to the location where the Canadian casualties occurred. The SF compound had an unprotected wooden tower near its center that had the best overwatch view of the entire area. The center-to-center distance from the SF compound to the ETT compound is approximately (b)(2)H meters.

c. Baseline FOB manning. The SF compound was normally manned by the (b)(2)H person ODA, a (b)(2)H man SOT-A Team (US), a (b)(2)H man CCC Team (US) and (b)(2)H interpreters. The ETT compound was manned by approximately (b)(2)H personnel from the 207<sup>th</sup> Reserve Component

~~SECRET/REL 12AF~~

2

b(2)

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

Advisory Group (RCAG), TF Phoenix, 53<sup>rd</sup> Enhanced Separate Brigade, Florida National Guard, whose mission it is to train the Afghan National Army. Approximately 21 ANA Soldiers occupied the ANA area of the FOB complex. A (b)(2)High Afghanistan Security Guard (ASG) element was on the site occupying a tent on the outside of the SF compound to the Southwest.

d. Baseline FOB defense plan and fire coordination measures.

(1) The ODA commander, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was the FOB commander. The senior weapons sergeant, SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) was responsible for base defense planning and coordination. Much work had already been done to improve the level of force protection at the ETT and SF compounds and on the ANA towers prior to the attack, but it was not complete. (See Exhibits 26, 27)

(2) Prior to 28 MAR 2006, the base defense plan was loosely coordinated and based on verbal coordination between the respective elements that normally existed on the FOB. This consisted of general guidance for the orientation of fires in the case of an attack. It included some discussion with leaders of the respective elements at the different compounds inside the FOB complex to deconflict their fires during an attack.

(3) There was no overall written fire plan or integrated sector sketches for the FOB complex. No physical sector markings existed for fire control for day or night, although features on the ground had been verbally identified and briefed to SF Soldiers. (See Exhibits 49, 50)

(4) The SF compound was defended with direct fire from 3 crew-served weapon battle positions (BP). Each BP had a mounted HMMWV, and the vehicles were backed onto ramps 21 (b)(2)High of the camp: (b)(2)High

(b)(2)High (b)(2)High  
(2)Hi Each position was verbally issued sectors of fire and interlocking left and right limits covering an arc from approximately 21 degrees to 21 degrees magnetic. (See Exhibits 49, 64) These sectors were integrated with the ANA sectors, which covered (2)Hi of the base cluster, and the ETT camp which covered (b)(2)High. The left and right limits of the sectors were clearly visible only by day. Each member of the ODA knew his assigned battle position and rehearsed the battle drill to occupy it numerous times due to recent and numerous low level attacks on the camp.

(5) BP 2 consisted of two mounted M-240Bs. One gun was located in the turret with a 360 degree field of fire; the second gun on the rear of the vehicle had a narrower arc of fire dictated by its position on the rear of the vehicle. The arc of this gun can be described as generally from 90 to 270 degrees of the direction of travel, or the rear 180 degree arc. Neither gun had any optics or night vision mounted; instead iron sights were used. (See Exhibit 50) Neither gun had either traversing or elevation devices. (See Exhibits 26) The fields of fire were inexact and unmarked by stakes or defined sector sketches.

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006



Mounted M-240B

Battle Position 2

e. Base-line FOB Analysis. (See Exhibits 49, 50)

(1) FOB Robinson had no doctrinal fire plan or base cluster defensive scheme, nor were there any physical limits on sectors of fire. There was an absence of sector sketches which would have shown exact sectors of fire, prominent terrain landmarks for the gunner's orientation, locations of dead space, location of friendly observation positions, or civilian structures.

(2) The lack of sector sketches extended to the ETT BPs as well, which were even less well defined in terms of their specific location. The lack of crew-served weapons-mounted NVDs was another problem. Crews at the BPs operated under NVGs, and were at possible risk of muzzle flash "white out" from their own guns and disorientation as they turned about to answer radio calls, reload ammo, or other tasks that took their eyes temporarily off the target, and might lengthen the time it would take to reacquire the target once they returned fire.

4. Facts.

a. SFC Stone. A preponderance of the evidence reveals that SFC Stone was killed by US fire from a 7.62mm weapons system. (See Exhibits 7, 18) He was on the roof of the ETT compound in the position shown in Exhibit 63, and was crouched behind a low sandbag wall, rising periodically to fire at the enemy. He was located immediately to CPT (3), (b) (right, and slightly forward. (See Exhibits 19, 58) His back was to the SF compound. SFC Stone's fatal wound entered his back as he crouched behind the wall on the roof of the ETT compound, traveled up his torso and came to rest beneath the skin in the back of his skull. The round was recovered and the Criminal Investigation Detachment determined it has the characteristics of a 7.62 round. SFC Stone was not wearing his individual body armor. (See Exhibit 23)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006



b. CPT (3), (b) CPT (3), (b) wounds were caused by US 7.62 fires. CPT (3), (b) was on the roof of the ETT compound. He was slightly crouched behind the mud brick wall, engaging the enemy fire coming from the castle. His back was generally to the SF compound. The hip wound entered from the rear, exited, and embedded in the wall. Near-simultaneously, a second round hit the back of his individual body armor (IBA) on the neck protector, began to slow and tumble, abrading his neck and then tearing along his left cheek. (See Exhibit 58) When he was hit, CPT (3), (b) stumbled and fell backwards. Both wounds entered from the rear and at very nearly the same time. The direction of entry on both wounds is consistent with fire coming from the SF compound. The bullet that went through his hip was recovered and appears to be a US 7.62 round. (See Exhibit 57)

c. Pte (b)(6) WO (b)(6) and Cpl (b)(6) Canadian personnel were located on or near a berm at the north gate of the compound. Pte Costall, WO (b)(6) and Cpl (b)(6) were in a prone fighting position facing N-NE in the direction of incoming enemy fire. This investigation has not had access to the report of Pte Costall's autopsy. From the initial medical assessment, Pte Costall died as the result of gunfire wounds to his head and torso. WO (b)(6) sustained superficial wounds to his left hip and calf. Cpl (b)(6); (b)(7)(c) suffered a superficial thigh wound. Witnesses reported observing fires from the N, NE, and south.

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

~~SECRET//REL//NAE~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006



d. Weather. While weather conditions were generally favorable, visibility on the night of 28 MAR 06 was poor with 0% illumination. Target identification was problematic at best, and targeting was done by firing back at the POO of enemy tracer fire. Visibility, even through NVDs, was very poor. Both 81mm mortar and 40mm M-203 illumination rounds were used, but to uncertain effect. (See Exhibits 14, 50)

e. Additional Forces.

(1) At 1802Z on 28 MAR 2006, an ETT convoy consisting of roughly 80 jinga trucks (contracted trucks operated by local nationals) and 14 gun trucks containing approximately 42 additional ETT personnel arrived at the FOB. (See Exhibit 61) The convoy fought through IEDs and ambushes enroute. (See Exhibit 61) The FOB had no notice that this convoy was arriving on the 28<sup>th</sup>. The convoy was an ad hoc collection of two ETT teams. ETT personnel were tired, but established priorities of work upon arrival and were positioned in the FOB and integrated into the base defense plan. The jinga trucks were placed in the center of the FOB; ETT gun trucks lined the north side of the ETT compound. (See Exhibit 54)

(2) The TF Aegis ground Quick Reaction Force (QRF) sortied ISO FOB Robinson that night. The QRF was not requested by FOB Robinson and the ODA conducted no prior planning for their RSOI. The QRF arrived at 1602Z on 28 MAR 2006 as reinforcement to the FOB. (See Exhibit 61) They were briefed and emplaced by SFC 3, (b) the senior weapons sergeant. (See Exhibits 26) The arrival and emplacement was executed on what was largely unfamiliar ground for the QRF.

(3) Elements of the 207<sup>th</sup> Corps, ANA, had been at FOB Robinson since FEB 2006; they were reinforced with a unit from the 205<sup>th</sup> Corps, ANA, on 28 MAR 2006. ANA units were integrated into the FOB Robinson defensive plan. ANA assets remained positioned in the area of the 'mosque,' and received enemy fires from the direction of a prominent hill commonly referred to as 'the castle'.

~~SECRET//REL//NAE~~

6

b(6)

b(7)(c)

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

f. Time. The attack on FOB Robinson occurred at approximately 2146Z on 28 MAR 2006. The QRF arrived at 1602Z on 29 MAR 2006. The ETT convoy began arriving at the same time and completed the movement by 1802Z. By approximately 2000Z the FOB executed RSOI to the extent that it could, despite the challenges. Security was deployed and at least a skeleton base defense plan employed.

g. Base defense plan.

(1) When the additional ETT forces arrived, they fell in on their habitual firing positions along the perimeter wire on the east side of the FOB overwatching the valley to the east. (See Exhibit 20) They were positioned between the north and east gates and again between the east and south gates, between the respective Canadian teams, oriented generally to the E, NE and SE. (See Exhibit 20) Like the Canadians at the gate ditches, these trucks were positioned within the firing sector of the NE and SE SF compound gun positions. The other ETT trucks were positioned to the north of the ETT compound by ETT personnel. (See Exhibit 20)

(2) The QRF provided gate defense on the north, south, and east gates and had elements outside the SF compound and within the pre-existing sectors of fire. The extent to which those positions forward of the crew served weapons were briefed to the SF members who would man the three gun positions is not clear. (See Exhibits 26, 27)

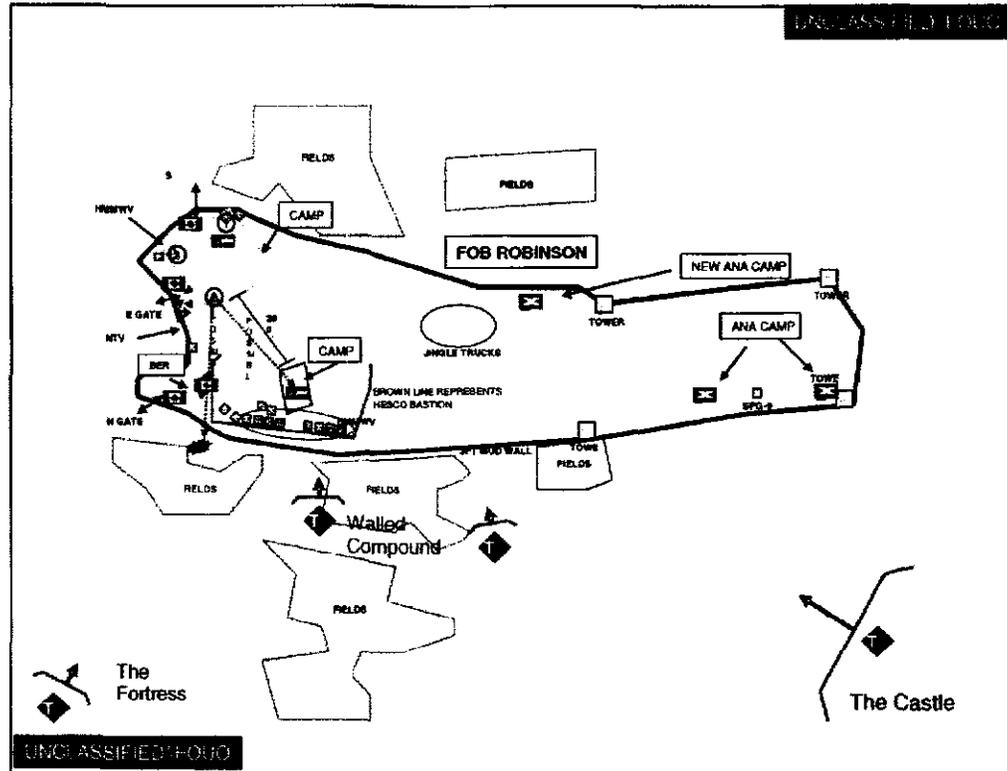
(3) On the night of the attack, FOB Robinson did not have a detailed schematic or comprehensive base cluster fire plan. Individual fighting positions did not have sector sketches to identify sectors of fire, friendly positions, terrain landmarks, etc.

h. Enemy attack. Enemy forces commenced a coordinated attack-by-fire from three locations to the north and northeast at 2146Z on 28 MAR 2006. (See Exhibit 49) The enemy attack consisted primarily of RPG and small arms direct fire from multiple locations, supported by limited mortar fire before and during the attack. The volume of enemy fire is assessed as medium. There is no indication of supporting enemy maneuver other than positioning of the attacking forces. The exact composition of the attack cannot be determined, but is believed to be comprised of approximately 6 mortar rounds, 10 RPG rounds, and a fairly high volume of small arms fire. Enemy fires came from the following locations: (See Exhibit 67)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006



(1) "The Castle": Most of the small arms fire came from a prominent hill commonly referred to as "the Castle" located approximately 200 meters to the northwest of the center of the FOB complex. An enemy mortar was located to the northwest of this position.

(2) Walled complexes to the north: Limited small arms and RPG fire came from small enemy elements located in a few mud-walled complexes north of the FOB. These are approximately 200 meters from the center of the FOB and are about 200 meters from the perimeter wire on the north side of the FOB, and are located on a spur offering them higher terrain. The waddi system to the north of these compounds could have provided the enemy easy movement routes to these locations.

(3) "The Fortress": Small arms fire was received from a prominent hill approximately 200 meters to the northeast of the center of the FOB, which sits on higher ground than the FOB. The hill was surmounted with a large mud-walled complex commonly referred to as "the Fortress."

i. Sequence of events - SF compound.

(1) General response. SF personnel executed the defend-by-fire battle drill. They manned mortars, which primarily fired illumination. (See Exhibit 50) All 3 BPs were manned. CPT 3), (b) and the JTAC mounted the observation tower in the center of the SF compound to

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

b(2)  
b(6)  
b(7)(c)

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

control the fight and direct CAS. (See Exhibits 28, 53) BP2 was initially manned by SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) (rear gun) with SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) (rear gun) arriving a few minutes later.

(2) BPs 1 and 3 never engaged any enemy forces. (See Exhibits 29, 31) The team sergeant circulated to the BPs and other positions, conducting Ammunition, Casualty and Equipment (ACE) assessments. (See Exhibit 31)

(3) At BP 2, the SF team manned their two M-240B machine guns. (See Exhibits 24, 25) SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) observed a heavy volume of fire from the castle, and states that he shifted his position to the east and attempted to engage, but his gun jammed after one burst. SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) arrived at the position after SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) and took up the rear gun. (See Exhibit 25) He states that he had good target identification and did not fire in the direction of either the Canadians or the ETT compound. With the exception of their general location on the night of the attack, I find that both SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) and SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) statements lack credibility.

j. Sequence of events - ETT compound. ETT Soldiers who were not on security rushed to man positions at the start of attack. While ordinarily the resident ETT Soldiers would deploy their gun trucks outside of the ETT compound, on this evening they did not due to the large number of other gun trucks in position. Therefore, several additional ETT Soldiers went to the roof of the ETT compound. (See Exhibit 63) This was the highest point in the ETT compound. SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) and CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) were among the Soldiers who went to the roof. The other ETT Soldiers manned their gun trucks.

k. Sequence of events - Canadian Soldiers on the berm.

(1) When the Canadian QRF force arrived, their leaders were briefed on the overall security situation, provided a leader walking tour, and given instruction on where to position and place sectors of fires. (See Exhibits 26, 47) These actions were done at night. The modified plan replaced the ASG at the gates with teams from the Canadian force at the ditch located at north gate, the east gate, and the south gate respectively. The Canadians were oriented outward, and within the sectors of fire of the SF BPs. The Canadians had an element of their platoon in the SF compound awaiting a patrol order for an ambush patrol outside the FOB while the QRF leadership conducted planning inside a CONEX. (See Exhibits 42, 47)

(2) When the attack began, the Canadian Platoon Leader, Capt (b)(3), (b)(6) directed Sgt (b)(3), (b)(6) to reinforce the north gate with his section, and subsequently moved them to the berm west of the gate. Capt (b)(3), (b)(6) and WO (b)(3), (b)(6) also decided to redirect the Canadian patrol as an additional reinforcement for the north gate. (See Exhibits 42, 47) The SF personnel were never notified of this move. There is no evidence that the Canadians coordinated with or informed the ODA in advance of this move, and there is no evidence of dissemination to other members of the ODA. Neither WO (b)(3), (b)(6) nor Capt (b)(3), (b)(6) mentions any coordination or information with the ODA on this point. SFC (b)(3), (b)(6) and CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) were both unaware of the move. The Canadian element moved out and occupied positions at the berm next to the north gate by 2148Z. (See

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

Exhibit 70) This position was on the left limit of the sector of fire of BP 2. By 2150Z, the Canadians on the berm were engaging to their northwest.

(3) Visibility of the Canadian troops at the berm by other elements was problematic for SF personnel. A lack of illumination and NVG muzzle flash white out may have reduced visibility of the Canadians, making their exact location difficult to identify. It is possible that the only indicia of their presence were their muzzle flashes.

I. Sequence of events - ANA compound.

(1) At the time of the attack the ANA towers were each manned with a night watch. (See Exhibits 52, 53) The newly arrived soldiers from the Kandahar-based 205th ANA Corps were billeted in the 'mosque' compound. Because they had not yet been assigned defensive positions, their instructions from the ANA commander and deputy were to remain in the compound during any contacts.

(2) The northeast ANA tower responded with minimal AK-47 fire on the 'castle' ruins. The northwest ANA tower contained the only operational PK (medium machine gun), which was the main response from the ANA. The southwest and southeast ANA towers did not engage, because there was no enemy activity in their sectors. The ANA also fired one round of SPG-9 and approximately three RPG rounds in the direction of the enemy on the west side of the castle. The ANA was short of ammunition, which may explain the lack of small arms response from the ANA with the exception of the PK machine gun.

5. Conclusions.

a. Friendly fire killed Pte Costall and wounded WO (3), (b) and Cpl (3), (b)

(1) The physical evidence indicates the Canadians received fire from the NE corner of SF compound - the source of fire that struck and killed Pte Costall. These fires resulted in Pte Costall suffering two immediately fatal wounds to the head and torso. The evidence includes a series of bullet strikes from the direction of BP 2 in the Hesco barrier to front of the Canadian location on the berm, as well as bullet strikes on the south side of the mud wall immediately to their northeast in the same line of fire. Physical and testimonial evidence indicates several entry and exit wounds suffered by WO (3), (b) and Cpl (3), (b) came from the left—the direction of the SF FOB. (See Exhibits 42, 43, 58) Cpl (3), (b) was shot by enemy fire from the direction of "the fortress." Therefore, I find that the Canadian troops on the berm were caught in a crossfire between enemy forces located in the fortress firing at the FOB and SF forces returning that fire.

(2) At the time of the shooting, the Canadian Soldiers were located on a berm approximately 150m from the corner of the SF compound, oriented generally NW and closely parallel to the gun target line from the SF compound to the fortress. (See Exhibit 66) Numerous bullet strikes were noted in the Hesco barrier to the front of the berm and all strikes came from the direction of BP 2. (See Exhibit 49) In addition, the mud wall to the northeast of the berm

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

b (6)  
b (7)(c)

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

had what appears to be 7.62 bullet strikes in it. This indicates that the fire came from the SW to the NE. Based on the Canadians' position on the berm, which was oriented on the 'castle', the Canadian Soldiers were masked from observing fire from the fortress by the walled compound to their NE. Due to the long range, enemy fire from 'the fortress' would have had to be plunging fire, beyond tracer burnout range to engage this position. (See Exhibit 49) Therefore, the Canadians may never have noticed fire from 'the fortress.' Cpl (3), (b) wounds came from fire in this direction. (See Exhibit 58)

(3) The gun target line between BP 2 and the southern edge of the fortress, from the direction of the incoming enemy fire, is directly in line with and parallel to the berm where the Canadian troops were located. Further, the berm was barely depressed in elevation from where the incoming fire was observed; less than an inch of muzzle depression would have struck the berm as opposed to the fortress. (See Exhibit 50) Not only would it have been very easy to mistake muzzle flashes on the berm for those coming from the fortress, but the point of aim would have been nearly the same. The predator video from that night shows a short segment of action at the FOB where fire is coming from BP 2 in the SF compound towards the berm where the Canadians were located at the time they are firing.

(4) Both Canadian and US Soldiers observed machine gun fire from the NE corner of the SF compound towards the Canadians at the berm. (See Exhibits 8, 39, 42-44) US and Canadian Soldiers also observed fire coming from 'the fortress' towards the FOB. Canadian Soldiers on the berm observed fire that they believed was coming from their left, which is the direction of the SF compound. The amount of fire is described as two to four bursts. (See Exhibits 39, 42-44) US Soldiers located in the vehicle between the north and east gate also noticed fire coming from the NE corner of the SF compound and striking in the Canadian position. They reported this as friendly fire at the time. (See Exhibits 8, 13)

(5) Pte Costall's head wound was instantly fatal. The torso wound was also instantly fatal, entering his left side and traveling laterally, going through his torso, severing his spine, and exiting to his right. The wound traveled through his torso at very nearly a perpendicular angle.

(6) WO (3), (b) was wounded twice, in the back and left calf, and both wounds came from the NE corner of the SF compound. His location on the berm is depicted in exhibit 62. His back wound was caused by a low velocity bullet fragment, most likely a ricochet, which entered his left front and traveled toward his upper back. (See Exhibit 58) His left calf suffered a grazing injury.

(7) Cpl (3), (b) Cpl (3), (b) wound is a grazing wound to his right thigh that was caused by fire from the NE corner of the SF compound. He was a M-203 gunner, lying on his left side so as to have access to his M-203 rounds. This placed his right side as the highest point on his body. (See Exhibit 43) He then scampered over the berm to the west, between the berm and Hesco bastion. He observed 1-3 additional bursts of fire from the SF compound. His wound was caused by a bullet that grazed his thigh. He believes that the shot came from his rear (as he was lying on his left side), from the direction of the SF compound. (See Exhibit 58)

b (6)

b (7)(c)

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

NCE

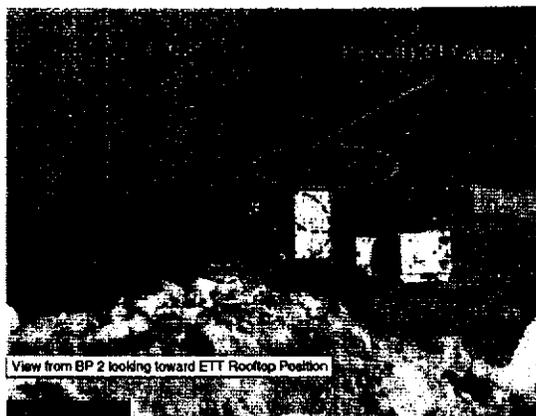
SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

(8) Cpl (3), (b) was wounded by enemy fire from the fortress. He was hit, and slid down the berm, seeking more cover. (See Exhibit 44) He observed at least one more burst of fire coming from his left. His wound was caused by a round which entered his right calf from his right at very nearly a 90 degree angle, penetrated without hitting bone, exited, hit the ground, came apart, and a fragment ricocheted into his left calf from the right, barely penetrating. (See Exhibit 58) The angle of entry and reduced depth of penetration in his left calf indicate that Canadian forces on the berm received fire perpendicular from the right, and that Cpl (3), (b) was hit by enemy fire from the "fortress" rather than the SF compound.

b. Friendly fire killed SFC Stone and wounded CPT (3), (b)

(1) From the physical evidence, time sequence of events, and close proximity of CPT (3), (b) and SFC Stone, I find that a preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that both SFC Stone and CPT (3), (b) were hit by rounds from the same burst of M-240 fire.

(2) Physical evidence establishes that the rounds that struck the two US Soldiers were fired from BP 2 of the SF compound. Inspection revealed a line of fire from BP 2 leading to the ETT rooftop position: a line of bullet holes runs from BP 2 to the generator, three CONEXs, a GP Medium storage tent, and the mud-brick wall of the ETT compound behind the tent. (See Exhibits 5, 63, 71) There were also two holes in the mud-brick wall on top of the roof where CPT (b)(6); b(7)(c) was standing at the height of his two wounds. What appears to be a 7.62 round was recovered from the lower hole, which likely passed through CPT (3), (b) flap. (See Exhibit 57)



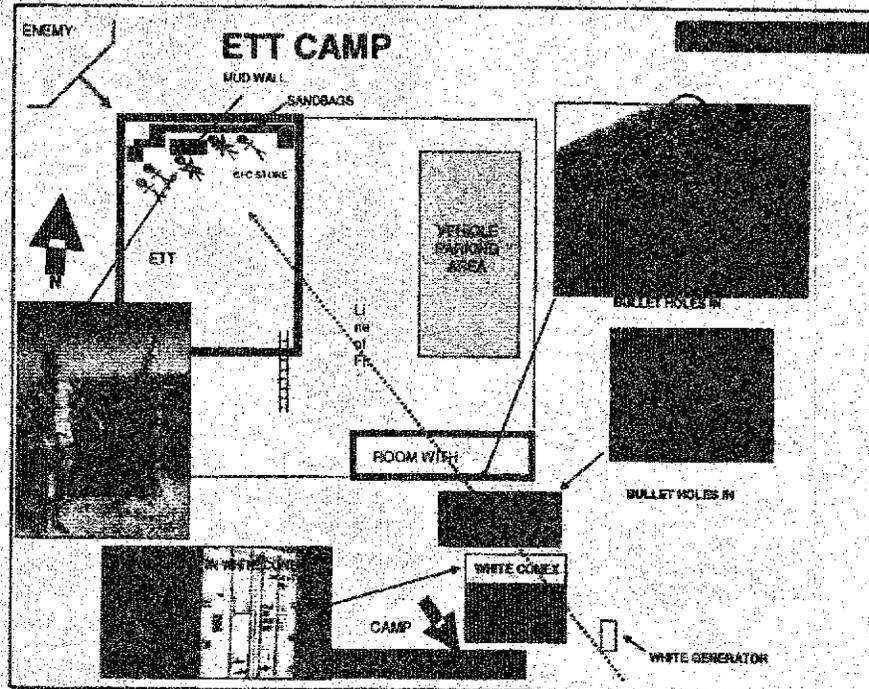
(3) The bullet recovered from SFC Stone is a U.S. 7.62 round. The round is currently undergoing ballistics evaluation by CID, Fort Gillem, GA. Several bullets were recovered from the strikes in the mud-brick wall of the ETT compound behind the tent which were also identified as U.S. 7.62. (See Exhibit 57) The angle of entry on the holes in the generator and CONEXs point directly back to the NE corner of the SF compound. From BP 2, the ETT rooftop position and the castle are only 20 degrees offset. There are visible bullet strikes in the CONEXs

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~b(6)  
b(7)(c)

NCF

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

further towards the left in line with the castle. At least 30 rounds left visible strike marks. None of these holes could have been made by enemy fire. (See Exhibit 50) There was no effective enemy direct fire placed on the ETT compound.



(4) The gun target line from the NE corner of the SF compound to the castle was approximately 20 degrees to the roof of the ETT compound where CPT (b)(6) and SFC Stone were shot. This variance translates to approximately 6 inches of muzzle traverse at the gun position. Additionally, since the ETT compound was out of the sector of fire for this position, the gunner would have had to traverse across the ETT compound in order to engage enemy fire from the castle. Thus the gun would not be very far offset from the castle to fire into the ETT compound, and the view of the gunner would have placed both features close together, and they could have been easily confused. It is highly unlikely that the fire that hit the ETT compound from the rear originated from either BP 1 or BP 3. The predator video appears to show bullet strikes in the vicinity of the generator. (See Exhibit 70) Based on the foregoing facts and circumstances, I conclude the fire came from BP2.

c. ANA Soldier (b)(6) was wounded by enemy fire. (b)(6) sought cover in the 'mosque' compound, and suffered his injury while en route. CPT (b)(6) the ANA second-in-command, stated that there were multiple RPGs impacting on the ANA end of the FOB and overshooting the FOB, landing outside the compound to the south. It is highly likely that (b)(6) was injured by a fragment from one of these RPG bursts, or possibly a piece of a bullet

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

~~SECRET//REL//IAA~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

overshooting the FOB, landing outside the compound to the south. It is highly likely that (b)(6) was injured by a fragment from one of these RPG bursts, or possibly a piece of a bullet from a ricochet, as the fragment had lost enough velocity to only enter and remain lodged in his leg, rather than pass completely through. Medical evidence indicates that he was struck by a bullet fragment or RPG fragment. (See Exhibit 58) Given his position, I find that he was wounded by enemy fire. There is no evidence that the ANA position received fire from coalition forces.

## 6. Contributing factors.

### a. Command and Control (C2).

(1) Exercise of command: The FOB Robinson commander, CPT (3), (b) failed to properly supervise the base defense and fire plan, and should have established better controls to execute the battle. Many of the shortfalls to his plan are addressed within this report, including his positioning of friendly forces within friendly sectors of fire. His failure to enforce sectors of fire is a contributing factor in the death of SFC Stone and wounding of CPT (3), (b)

(2) Lack of control and coordination: The normal top-to-bottom dissemination and flow of information and crosswalk (a feature of unity of command, exercise of command and a means of control) did not occur during the execution of the battle. The Canadian force moved out from the SF compound to a position on the berm without notifying anyone. The lack of cross coordination on the radio led to poor situational awareness on the part of all the units.

b. Planning, Coordination and Synchronization: Planning and synchronization were lacking both on the FOB and at higher headquarters. The inadequate base defense plan made integrating and controlling additional elements more difficult that night. While the C2 plan and integration of additional elements present the night of the contact was insufficient and should have been recognized by CPT (b)(6); b(7)(c) the lack of communications and coordination from higher headquarters contributed materially to the lack of planning time available at the FOB.

(1) The site consisted of a mix of US Special Forces, US ETTs, Canadian Soldiers, ASG and ANA Soldiers. Although CPT (3), (b) was technically in command of the FOB, there was no clearly defined or mutually understood chain of command. Advanced planning prior to 28 MAR 2006 could have helped reconcile supply issues, common unit SOPs and communications challenges, and definitively established the relationship between SOF, ANA, and TF AEGIS. The lack of operational fusion between MoD and Coalition Forces by a unifying headquarters contributed to the lack of synchronization by ANA forces and the various elements supporting them, leaving the forces on the ground to work it out themselves. As it was, the FOB was established by the ANA which brought the ETT with it. The ETT, in turn, requested ODA to move there to support their efforts. TF AEGIS may have owned the battlespace, but it inherited an FOB which was occupied by elements that it had no command authority over.

~~SECRET//REL//IAA~~

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

planning, or clarify command relationships prior to the arrival and integration of the Canadian QRF and ETT convoy. What occurred was ad hoc stovepipe planning by the elements on the ground.

c. **Lack of Coordination.** Units in the TF AEGIS area of operation did not report their movements nor coordinate for entry into the area. The 3d Bde, 205th Corps ETTs from Herat entered the TF AEGIS area of operation without coordination. TF AEGIS learned of the ANA and ETTs for the first time during the enemy contact that occurred the previous day. The movement of the 205th Corps, and its associated supporting ETT element, was apparently requested by the sub-governor of Helmand through the Afghan Minister of Defense. Additionally, 1st Bde, 205th Corps and its supporting ETT element from the Kandahar area did not report or coordinate its movement with TF AEGIS. The decision by AEGIS to move the Canadian QRF to FOB Robinson, while monitored by the FOB 73 LNO to AEGIS, was not coordinated with nor communicated to the FOB commander until the QRF was 15 minutes from landing at the FOB.

d. **Abdication of Responsibility.** There were several ETT RCAG officers who arrived at the FOB that night who were considerably more senior in rank than CPT (3), (b) however, there is no indication that any meaningful effort was made by any of them to analyze, evaluate, or formally integrate themselves into the base defense scheme or question what it was, even though there was intelligence indicating a probable attack on the FOB that night. While CPT (3), (b) may have had overall responsibility for base defense planning, none of these senior officers showed interest in that plan other than where to assign their individual gun trucks.

e. **Lack of chain of command involvement.** Many of the base defense deficiencies noted in this investigation were immediately obvious. However, the ODA's chain of command never visited or inspected FOB Robinson, despite numerous factors that should have alerted them that the ODA could use assistance or in order to inspect FOB Robinson. In a short time span over five weeks, ODA 2062 was OPCON to a different battalion-level headquarters, moved by ground convoy to an undeveloped site where they began FOB construction, continued near-constant combat operations in the surrounding AO, had their team sergeant killed, had numerous logistical convoys interdicted, and continued having repeated enemy contacts. Yet their new chain of command never visited in order to get the kind of situational awareness that 'walking the ground' can provide in order to assist with problem resolution and the correction of obvious deficiencies in base defense planning. (See Exhibit 49)

f. **Fatigue.** The majority of SF and ETT personnel at FOB Robinson were working through a cumulative lack of sleep from weeks of continuous hard work. Regular enemy contacts, working to improve the level of force protection, conducting operations, and working through ANA support issues, all limited the opportunities for them to sleep. The ETT elements that arrived the night of the attack had fought a complex enemy contact that day en route to the FOB including an ambush and IED strike as well as experiencing an overturned vehicle.

7. **Recommendations.** Based on my findings, I make the following recommendations.

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

~~SECRET/REL ICAI~~

NCE

SUBJECT: Collateral Fratricide Investigation, FOB Robinson, 28-29 March 2006

a. That no UCMJ or adverse administrative action be taken against any Soldier involved in this incident. There was neither criminal intent nor a level of negligence that would warrant adverse administrative action. The contributing factors created a complex situation and culminated in reasonable confusion by SF gunners trying to acquire targets.

b. As the GoA, ANA, and Ministry of Defense continue to develop the capability to undertake independent and complex operations, coalition force command structures must mature and evolve concurrently to keep pace. The ad hoc assembly and C2 of forces present on FOB Robinson on 28 & 29 MAR 06 lacked operational fusion because the coalition command structure did not predict, plan, or react to decisions taken by the GoA regarding locations of their forces.

c. Responsibility for national level and below operational coordination should be assigned to the capstone coalition force headquarters in Afghanistan, HQ ISAF. CFC-A, or its successor, is the logical choice to fulfill the operational fusion function between ANA activities and the corresponding coalition force, movement, repositioning, re-stationing, and operations.

d. That FOB's emplace and enforce, and higher headquarters inspect for, accepted doctrinal base defense measures, such as those contained in FM 7-8, *Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*. The inadequacies in the base cluster and base defense plans, and the incomplete fire plan and fire control measures, are all addressed in Army doctrine. These TTP's exist, in part, to prevent what happened on FOB Robinson.

e. Soldiers, regardless of organization, should be trained on appropriate commonly-fielded equipment, particularly night vision devices, thermal imaging devices, and laser aiming devices. These items are available and should be fielded down to the user level. Night fighting and target identification at night are two areas that can be upgraded by having a full fill of this equipment where it is going to be used.

8. POC is the undersigned at DSN b)(2)High

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

Encls  
as

COL (IN) \_\_\_\_\_ leave in "IN"  
Commanding

b(6)  
b(7)(c)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED