DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HEADQUARTERS, COMBINED/JOINT TASK FORCE (CJTF)-82
BAGRAM AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN
APO AE 09354

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CJTF-82 20 November 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Interview with MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) USA, Regarding Operations in the Ganjgal Valley on 8 September 2009

1. Major (b)(3), (b)(6) USA, serves in the Fires and Effects Coordination Cell, for Task Force Warrior (4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division). During the planning and execution of the subject operation, served as the acting Battalion (b)(2)High (b)(2)High

2. The substance of MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) statement is summarized below:

a. On 8 September 2009 (b)(2)High actual was forward deployed to Barge Matal. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) arrived at (b)(2)High at the end of August and had been at (b)(2)High for two weeks as of 8 September. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) had never performed duties as a Battalion (b)(2)High or executive officer prior to this duty. The current deployment is his first tour in Afghanistan; he has done two tours in Iraq.

b. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) was not present during mission planning for the subject operation, but knew that elements would be placed on the high ground surrounding Ganjgal Valley, and there would be a blocking position at the mouth of the valley.

c. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) stated he learned the subject operation would not have dedicated (b)(2)High (b)(2)High He knew the original plan, which was to be executed on 7 September, included dedicated (b)(2)High but on 8 September (b)(2)High had been committed to a larger operation in the Shuryak Valley for (b)(2)High MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) said (b)(2)High wanted to put the mission on hold, but the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan Border Police (ABP) insisted it be conducted on 8 September 2009.

d. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) knew that (b)(2)High would be available to support the operation into the Ganjgal Valley. He also knew that for (b)(2)High only (b)(2)High would be available, although he was unsure if the Embedded Training Team (ETT) knew of this fact. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) believes that (b)(2)High (b)(2)High

e. Maj (b)(3), (b)(6) stated TF Chosin fire support personnel were initially involved in mission planning, but they did not participate further once it was known (b)(2)High forces would not directly participate in the operation. He stated he thought the mission would be postponed when (b)(2)High was available as a dedicated asset.

EXHIBIT III – 1 B.1

f. Maj (b)(3), (b)(6) stated (b)(2)High remained part of the plan, despite playing a diminished role in the operation and would continue to provide support. (b)(2)High was also focused on (b)(2)High and ongoing operations in (b)(2)High

g. Regarding the execution of the operation, MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) said reports from the scout element relayed to the (b)(2)High indicated they did not have a clear picture of where coalition forces were on the battlefield. For this reason, fire missions were denied. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) recommended that the requested fire missions not be cleared because the friendly forces' locations were not clear.

h. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) entered the (b)(2)High once it was learned that there were significant casualties. LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) was already in the (b)(2)High when MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) entered. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) assumed his duties that morning at 0700. Shortly after he reported to work the first casualties from the subject operation were reported.

i. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) told the (b)(2)High Battle Captain to contact (b)(2)High and alert them as a quick reaction force (b)(2)High and also told the Battle Captain to call the Brigade and ask for additional assets. He directed the Battle Captain to take these actions as soon as the report was relayed to the (b)(2)High that there were six ANA soldiers killed in action and 15 ANA soldiers wounded in action.

j. Maj (b)(3), (b)(6) stated (b)(2)High mission was to provide a (b)(2)High on the back side of the hill west of Ganjgal Village to provide blocking and over-watch because units had taken fire from the vicinity of that hill in previous missions. They were told to be prepared for an on-call mission to act as the (b)(2)High for the Ganjgal operation. (b)(2)High was directed to take all directions from the (b)(2)High

k. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) said the brief for the subject mission consisted of a one page power point slide which included the task and purpose of the mission. There were no verbal orders or sand table to his knowledge regarding the mission into the Ganjgal Valley.

l. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) reported that CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was the informal TF Chosin representative with the ANA and ABP and that CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) works very well with (b)(3), (b)(6) the ABP Mentor.

m. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) coordinated and talked much more to (b)(3), (b)(6) that he did with (b)(3), (b)(6) (b)(3), (b)(6) in regards to the operation into the Ganjgal Valley.

n. There were no direct communications with the ground elements in the Ganjgal village and all communications were made through the Scout relay team. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) knew that line of sight communications would be a problem and that the Scout relay team was planned for exactly that event. They had used the relay system in the past, had success with it, and thought it would be adequate for the subject operation.

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o. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)said the (b)(2)High to control the battle and support it by gaining situational control in the(b)(2)High He believes that they may not have believed the situation to be that bad based on the poor communications they were receiving.

p. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)said that things went from "not too bad" to "horrible" in an instant and everything went wrong at the same time.

q. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)said that the (b)(2)High did not communicate the seriousness of the situation on the ground when he talked to them from the (b)(2)High He stated a SWT had appropriately and decisively responded in these situations previously.

r. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)said he thought about pushing additional(b)(2)High type assets out from(b)(2)High (b)(2)High He said it would have taken one to two hours to get such a force together and ready to support.

s. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6) said that if he could talk to the ground commander who requested a "questionable fires mission" he would fire for him. However, he stated that on 8 September he did not have good enough communications with the ground element to support their fires missions.

t. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)acknowledged that there were no (b)(2)High on the ground and no formally trained forward observers.

u. This is MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) first time working with Afghans, but he has worked before with mentors and advisors in Iraq.

v. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) understanding of the relationship between (b)(2)High the ETT is that the ANA are our partnered unit and their advisors are the ETT. The ANA would talk to the ETTs after missions like with Observer/Controllers. He was not sure what the doctrinal relationship is with the ETT.

w. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)remembers that the night before the operation the (b)(2)High that was to support the operation into Ganjgal was replaced with a sister platoon.

x. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6)acknowledged that he told the platoon (b)(2)High that had moved into the valley to stand fast and hold their positions. He said the platoon repeatedly asked to enter the valley. He and LTC(b)(3), (b)(6) continued to tell the platoon to secure their position and block the mouth of the valley. MAJ(b)(3), (b)(6) said the decision to hold at this position was due to the importance of holding the mouth of the valley to prevent Coalition Forces from being blocked.

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y. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) agreed that (b)(2)High ; are capable of approaching if not entering the base of the valley. Later that day, (b)(2)High The platoon was equipped with (b)(2)High vehicles which are not capable of (b)(2)High before encountering terrain that is impassable.

z. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that had it been four dead TF Chosin Soldiers, as opposed to members of the ETT, TF Chosin would have given the same order to 3rd Platoon to hold their positions and block the valley.

aa. MAJ (b)(3), (b)(6) stated TF Chosin requested (b)(2)High assets to gain situational awareness of the battle, aviation assets, and sent additional forces forward.

3. The points of contact for this memorandum are the undersigned.

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

COL, USA

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

(b)(3), (b)(6) COL, USMC