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

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CJTF-82 19 November 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

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

1. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) USA, served as the Night Battle Captain for 1-32 Infantry Regiment, Task Force Chosin on the day of the subject operation. His duty hours started at (b)(2)High the night preceding the operation and ended at approximately (b)(2)High during the operation.

2. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was located at Fort Drum during this interview. It was initially conducted via video-teleconference (VTC). Because of the poor quality of the video connection, the interview was concluded telephonically.

3. The substance of CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) 17 November 2009 statement is summarized below:

a. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) reported the only communications he had with the ground elements was through the Scout element relaying radio transmissions from the hill over-watching the Ganjgal valley.

b. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) explained the contact described to him by the Scout element did not merit aviation assets as initially reported. He insisted he took the contact seriously and did not ignore the fight in the Ganjgal Valley.

c. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) explained his understanding of how to properly request aviation support. He knew that the proper procedure required him to call the Brigade Current Operations to make his request. He also believed he could contact the aviation battalion directly to get aviation assets and stated this was not an uncommon practice and they had done it before.

d. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) remembered the TF Chosin fires cell contacting the (b)(2)High Operations Center (TOC) and asking them for aviation assets. He remembered the (b)(2)High TOC telling him that aviation assets were granted and would be directed to Ganjgal to support the contact. The TF Chosin TOC passed along to the ground element they could expect air support in (b)(2)High The TF Chosin TOC also sent a (b)(2)High to the pilots telling them (b)(2)High had directed them to divert to the Ganjgal Valley. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) remembered the (b)(2)High TOC telling TF Chosin they could not re-task aircraft directly and that it took brigade approval and authorization to do so. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) did not know who at the (b)(2)High TOC he was in contact with or made the various representations.

EXHIBIT III – 1 C.1

e. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) admitted the TF Chosin TOC did not have very good situational awareness of what was going on in the Ganjgal Valley. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was unable to gauge the seriousness of the contact .

f. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) remembered telling the TF Chosin Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) not to open an (b)(2)High. He was aware of a larger named operation (b)(2)High taking place at the same time and did not believe the contact at Ganjgal warranted taking away from that mission's aviation assets. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) now acknowledges that he should not have made that decision and someone at a higher echelon should make that decision and it should have been passed to them to consider. He also would have opened an (b)(2)High immediately if put in the same situation again.

g. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) questioned whether the radio transmission operators (RTOs) at the TF Chosin TOC had or would be interviewed.

h. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was unsure why SSG (b)(3), (b)(6) thought the situation was so dire, he did not see it the same way. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) did not know what more he could have done.

i. After the initial report from the Scout element, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) continued to monitor the event, updated his battle log, began creating a storyboard for the event and had his RTOs continuously update him. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) acknowledges messages may have been poorly communicated as they were sent from the ground element to the scout element through the RTOs to him.

j. At 0625 CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) realized how serious the enemy contact was and realized he needed to move additional assets into the valley for additional support. The report that triggered the understanding was when the scout element reported fire coming from three directions.

k. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) said LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) was initially involved in decision making because he had to be awoken to approve the initial fire missions. From that point on LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) was in and out of the TOC, but did not remain in the TOC until much later in the morning.

l. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) agreed with COL (b)(3), (b)(6) that dynamically re-tasking the Scout Weapons Team (b)(2)High that were in the area would have been faster than tasking the (b)(2)High quick reaction force SWT that was stationed (b)(2)High away in FOB Fenty. He agreed had he directly contacted the TF Mountain Warrior TOC, (b)(2)High might have reacted more quickly and sent assets earlier that morning.

m. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) maintained he generated several reports and sent them to the Brigade and continued to monitor his (b)(2)High chats and logs. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) expected LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) to call the Brigade and expected them to monitor Battalion reports, but the Brigade did not appear to be monitoring the reports. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) said he updated LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) each and every time he

entered the TOC. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) does not recall when LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) came to stay in the TOC, but believed it was around 0700.

n. At the shift change brief (b)(2)High CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) said he relayed the information that the ground unit was being fired on from three positions to his replacement, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6)

o. The information he received from the scout element was not specific; he did not know the position, numbers, or strength of the enemy.

p. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) had little understanding of this mission. He was not involved in the planning nor was the mission briefed the night prior. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) did not know of the mission until 0200 on the day of execution.

q. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) had served as the TF Chosin Night Battle CPT since 22 July 2009. He stated he was given about three days of training. His training consisted of orientation to the Command Post of the Future (CPOF), familiarization with required reports, and contact information for the Brigade. His training completed when the other Battle CPT thought he was ready.

r. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that TF Chosin had an SOP/checklist for the Battle CPT as a reference. He was not trained from the battle book and he did not know it existed until three weeks into his duties when he discovered it on his own. He had read the battle book prior to 8 September 2009 but did not have it open on that day nor was he following it step by step. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) acknowledged this was a mistake and that he would not make the same mistake in the future.

s. When asked to comment about why the fire support had stopped, he cited negative communications with an (b)(2)High in the area. He also stated that he was not the approval authority for fires and was not privy to those decisions. He knew that, based on his close physical proximity to LTC (b)(3), (b)(6) at least one fire mission was denied for collateral damage considerations. CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) was unsure why any other fires mission were denied.

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

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

COL, USA

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

(b)(3), (b)(6) 1LT, USMC