SWORN STATEMENT

My name is Jeffrey J. Schloesser. I am currently the special assistant to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army with duty as the director Army Aviation - Pentagon. I am currently a Major General in the United States Army.

In July 2008, I was the Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division, Commanding General of Combined Joint Task Force 101 in Afghanistan and the National Command Element for all U.S. Forces in Afghanistan.

I arrived in Afghanistan on the first of April 2008, but had conducted previous site surveys in the spring and then fall of 2007. In the fall of 2008, I had the opportunity to fly with COL Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) to Blessing, Bella and Ranch House. There were significant reasons to be in the area, Bella was initially interdicting enemy movement and it was worth the cost at the time, however I believed both Bella and Ranch House were too far from our lines of communication and that our forces were not properly resourced for as far as they were from our lines of communication. They did not seem to have enough troops to accomplish the mission of enhancing governance and separating the people from the enemy.

As an example, Ranch House was a two-hour walk from the bottom of the valley floor where the villagers lived, and it was high enough to observe the approach to Bella. Additionally, both Bella and Ranch House were air-centric facilities. The number of troops at both locations did not allow them to do missions other than fighting, such as getting out into the villages to separate the people from the enemy. The conditions compelled the troops to both man the bases and defend themselves at the bases. Although I voiced my concern that the sites that far up north of the Pech river valley may not have been as effective as we thought, I didn't do a formal assessment of the suitability of the two FOBs until later when I assumed Command of Regional Command East/NCE.

We were an economy of force action compared to Iraq. I had two large Brigade sectors of about 46-48,000 sq/mi that included 119 platoon outposts by July 2008. Since we were lacking aviation

assets even with an aviation brigade, I brought in a squadron of Kiowa Warriors and task organized them to be able to provide aviation support to all of the BCTs. In all, we brought in 30 more Kiowa warriors, reconnaissance/armed recon helicopters, as well another complete aviation task force headquarters. We reapportioned the number of Chinooks and Apaches and left it to the BCT commanders and the aviation brigade to be flexible and pull aviation from the general support aviation battalion to augment for high priority missions or resupply.

Within our headquarters, we shared information from commanders through routine boards and meetings. I maintained a direct line of communication with brigade commanders, often using a Tandberg meeting almost every night with one or more commanders. I also used a formalized process of a 0800 stand-up meeting, 5-6 days a week with the DCGs, 2, 3, 5, PAO, IO, Coalition DCG, USAF 455 wing commander from the Air expeditionary wing, SGM and the POLAD. Within 20 minutes we could cover what happened over the previous evening.

I usually received a written ops/intel update current as of 0400 at the beginning of the day, which I read before 0530. The 0830 fusion meeting included all the key players, who were briefed by the CHOPs as well as the J-2 Ops on the last 24 hours and then the upcoming 72 hours. Fusion reps included members from the CIA, FBI, NSA, DEA, POLAD. Routinely I checked on the units by visiting various company and platoon COPs, which I considered the best way to get information on what was happening at small unit level. Three days a week, at 1630, there was a commander's update brief. I considered this the least useful means to obtain critical, time sensitive information because I tried to maintain a "rolling estimate" of information during the day. During our battlefield circulation, I stayed in contact with our JOC via SATCOM.

In the evening, there were two other meetings. The CONOPs were briefed to the DCG if it was a level one or two mission. There was also an ISR allocation meeting where they would set both the ISRs and TAC air for the next 72 hours. Finally from 2200-2359, I would check with the deputy CHOPs and officers in the JOC

where they would give me a short out-brief of what happened in the AI/AO.

From time to time commanders called to request or seek priority for logistics, supplies, or additional aircraft/ISR, however the brigade commanders did not ask for things that they knew the division did not have. They commonly asked for priority for Red Ridge, but usually not Predator because we only had one for all of RC-E. It flew from Kandahar and had a transit time of four and half hours. There was one Predator for RC-S and a "swingline" Predator for CJSOTF for their particular operations. I often required accurate information in CUBs because there were multiple times I would go to a platoon outpost and platoon members would report what they needed and I would note this to the Brigades if their reports did not reflect the shortages due to the delay in moving things.

If there was a supply or logistics shortage or need for ISR, the brigades didn't need to come to me for re-prioritization of air support. The CHOPs on the floor and the J-2 and maybe the DCG-O would reprioritize. Generally speaking due to the large number of troops in contact daily and nightly, they had the authority to react immediately. In my view, I tried not run a centralized headquarters - I knew I had to empower several of my team to make time sensitive critical decisions.

Regarding Operation Rock Move, the delay in the mission and the pending RIP caused us in the CJTF HQs to question whether it was sound judgment to do the mission. Conferring with the Brigade about this mission, COL (b)(3), (b)(6) noted that 2-503 was the most experienced unit I had in the area and they had been there for 14 mos. In Chosen Company, CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) knew the area better than any American alive and they were battle hardened. Balancing the fact that the incoming unit from 3-1 BCT was a smaller unit, I knew I had less soldiers on the ground with this incoming RIP then I would then. It was a calculated decision to do Rock Move, however I still believe that the battalion and the company were the best ones to do the mission and it would have taken months beyond the winter season for any other unit to have accomplished the move.

Delta

Oscar

As I mentioned, the plan to move out of Bella to Wanat had been discussed before the 101st arrived in Afghanistan. It was a logical consequence of watching how the enemy reacted to the establishment of Ranch House and Bella and how the people didn't. Both were too far North and we had to get nearer to the people.

Wanat was a good location as far as proximity to the people and I wish I could have landed there and actually surveyed the site. The location makes sense as long as the local people at the very least decide to sit on the fence or be supportive of coalition forces. If the people leave the village, then the FOB is vulnerable because it is physically co-located with a small village. The absolute requirement was to seize the high ground using OPs like we did at Bella. By moving into Wanat, you were trusting that enough rapport had been built through building the district center, through working with ANP, and the series of lengthy negotiations to work the leasing of the land from the land owners.

Throughout the sector, we purposely put OPs at very high locations that were only accessible by walking, helicopter, or mule. We had five to six troopers outfitted with LRAS and co-located and cross-cued by other systems such as the TOW and ITAS, to have visual systems in synch with signals intelligence. This enabled us to overcome the problem of just using the Predator and Warrior-A and the Hunter and the Shadow by themselves. The FMV on those systems was akin to looking for a bad guy through a soda straw. In mountainous terrain, you must be cross-cued by someone on the ground or in an OP, or by HUMINT or SIGINT.

In early July my concern regarding the enemy threat around COP Bella was when exactly the enemy would choose to attack COP Bella itself. My view differed somewhat from my intel guys, I believed that the force at Bella, after the 4 July Apache incident, was disrupted significantly and that that incident had precluded any deliberate attack on Bella. I was still concerned about Bella and Wanat, but I didn't think that the enemy force was going to pick up and walk down to Wanat and be a coherent fighting force.

With Wanat, I was always concerned about the first two to three days of establishing the COP because that is when you are extraordinarily vulnerable. We sometimes established Vehicle Patrol Bases when initially moving into an area. In a VPB, you use your vehicles for security since their weapons systems allow you to reach out with the 50 cal, the TOW or the MK-19s. If you don't have lengthy fields of fire, like Wanat, you can be vulnerable. You address this by providing the best security that you can and you attempt to reach out by regular patrolling beyond that area to determine your dead space not only 100 meters away but 700-800 meters away. You must also figure out where plunging fire can come from and register all your rounds in that area as well as put your OPs in these areas.

At Bella, we believed the enemy was massing to attack the COP. We already had an attack south in Paktika Province at Margah where the enemy had effectively massed to attack the COP. We had already seen they had the ability to go across the border 10-15 km in the Bermel area and use radio listening silence, bring in small groups of five-six fighters using a variety of different "rat lines" over the mountains and then mass for an attack. We knew they had the capability, but we had not seen that happen in Nuristan or Kunar up until that time. After 3-4 July, I didn't worry as much about a massing attack because there were 14 individuals including some key insurgents killed during the 3-4 July Bella incident. That is significant. I believed whatever was massing at Bella was disrupted. I didn't think they would walk down from Bella because I didn't believe they had the ability to set up weapons caches in preparation for an attack on Wanat.

If an attack was going to occur at Wanat, I believed the insurgents would follow the enemy TTP of probing our positions to check U.S. reaction. They would gauge our reaction with direct and indirect fire to gauge what our TTPs were going to be. 95% of the time, that is what we saw.

No one reported to me that there was a shortage of ISR or trouble with engineers or equipment at Wanat. On 12 July, I was told that we were nearor at 75% completion of Wanat. On the 12th the Warrior-A ISR platform never took off because of wind

conditions, but I did not believe that any of us at CJTF thought it was critical after four days of building the COP and no significant reports of enemy movement or massing.

Regarding the approval or JFUB process to establish a new position, the Division Chief of Staff did the signing, the DCG for Development and Governance ran a winterization board that met year round not only for winterization but reviewed the development of the COPs.

For the Wanat VPB to become a COP it would take a few days. Complete COP completions may take months. Security and force protection measures would have to be in place or else the position is a perpetual VPB. A VPB is usually an interim stop in the night in an area on the side of the road where Soldiers pull security to protect themselves. After the 9th, Wanat was no longer temporary in nature but a COP under construction.

The directive to call Wanat a VPB did not come from me. In the CONOP, the unit would start with a VPB and eventually establish COP Wanat. The intent was always to establish a COP. COL Delta (b)(3), (b)(6) comment regarding what Wanat should be called was made within the context that he believed we were not executing the IO properly at the strategic level in the wake of the battle. He was frustrated and he vented his frustration. I was also frustrated with our IO regarding Wanat since it was not consistent.

When planning for CONOPs, we used three CONOP levels in ISAF: levels 0,1,2. At level 2 I could not approve it. A level two is approved by ISAF HQ because of the assets required or the size of the unit. For battalion CONOPs, the Battalion Commander and his staff are intimately involved with the planning and execution. While the Battalion XO and staff deal with the logistical aspects of the CONOP, the BN commander should check and verify.

I was able to visit COPs and other sites regularly because I had two dedicated flight crews and I had Apaches for security. The amount of air assets available to me is different than what is

available to my battalion commanders. At times, it took 2-3 days to get from my HQ at Bagram to the southernmost of my sector by driving. I tried not to go to a COP during the first one or two weeks primarily for security reasons since I would often draw attention and sometimes that would lead to enemy attacks on the COP.

Wanat was a platoon "plus" sized operation (Infantry platoon augmented with TOW section and 120 MM mortar and Engineers, plus an USMC MTT-advised ANA platoon). By placing CPT (b)(3), (b)(6) on the scene along with the amount of assets that were chopped to Wanat we felt there were enough measures taken to mitigate the risks and to counter what we saw as the enemy's most likely course of action.

Oscar

The decision to withdraw was my decision based on the recommendation of my staff and the recommendations of the Brigade, Battalion, and Company commander. Their opinion was that we needed to leave. The situation had changed dramatically since we occupied the position. When the people abandoned the village of Wanat, either through intimidation or willfulness; that changed everything. With them not being there and the village partially destroyed by a major battle and given the evidence that the ANP and the local leadership supported or played a role in the actual battle itself, my belief was that Wanat was not a suitable place for an outpost. The resources it would have taken to stay in Wanat would have overwhelmed the battalion. Additionally, 3-1 BCT and COL (b)(3), (b)(6) did not believe he had the troops to stay in the area. I asked myself why are we there if we are not effective or are we are simply defending ourselves with little outreach to the people and no impact on the enemy and neither blocking or controlling a border.

Sunset

Afghanistan was a resource constrained environment. There were multiple ways to transport supplies, but to respond to supply problems, we needed to know there was an issue. We could fly aircraft by brigade and battalion and fly directly from Bagram as needed. It was up to subordinate commanders to say what they needed.

Regarding ISR support and the importance of cross-cueing, FMV should be used with another platform, unless you know what you

are looking for. You are essentially looking down thru a "soda straw." In the moutains you often won't ID what you are seeing or will pass right over it because innocent people also live in the area/valleys and the insurgents knew how to move undetected by making maximum use of the terrain.

There were limited ISR assets to cover 119 COPs and FOBs in the AO. To aggravate the shortage, everyday somewhere in RC-East there was at least one, and usually several TICs.

I am relatively sure nothing came to the CJTF and very sure that nothing came to us in the command group from soldiers on the ground, the staffs or anything spotted by the Predator and Red Ridge prior to the attack on the morning of 13 July. I did not receive verifiable indications or warnings.

On the 12th of July when ISR dropped off, it was pre-planned to drop, however on the 12th Wanat we still planned to have Warrior-A and Red Ridge available. Weather on the 12th kept the Warrior-A from flying, but they got Red Ridge for SIGINT.

I believed (and think this was shared by the CJTF command group and staff) that the unit at Wanat was conducting routine, focused security patrols or counter reconnaissance patrols, even as they built the COP and improved the defenses.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Jeffrey J. Schloesser, HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 9. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE STATEMENT MADE BY ME. THE STATEMENT IS TRUE. I HAVE INITIALED ALL CORRECTIONS AND HAVE INITIALED THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE CONTAINING THE STATEMENT. I HAVE MADE THIS STATEMENT FREELY WITHOUT HOPE OF BENEFIT OR REWARD, WITHOUT THREAT OF PUNISHMENT, AND WITHOUT COERCION, UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE, OR UNLAWFUL INDUCEMENT.

(Signature of Person Making Statement)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 30th day of November 2009 at Fort Bragg

WITNESSES:

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

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

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