

SWORN STATEMENT

My name is Colonel [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6), Iron]. I am currently the Executive Officer to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, Washington, D.C., Army Pentagon, and my occupation field is Aviation Officer.

In July 2008, I was the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, Task Force Destiny, Bagram, Afghanistan. As the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade Commander, I had five battalion task forces within my brigade. Two of these battalions were located at Bagram, one of my battalion task forces, 2-17 CAV, was in direct support of the 173rd in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. I had a battalion task force, 1-101, in direct support of 4th Brigade of the 101st, and an Aviation Task Force in RC South. My Brigade consisted of roughly 171 aircraft.

Aircraft were composed of Kiowa Warriors, AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Blackhawks both for assault and medevac, CH-47s, fixed-wing aircraft: UC-35 for VIPs, C-12, and special mission aircraft (MI). We also had Warrior A UAVs.

I had a general support aviation battalion, 6-101st, in Bagram which predominately carried out VIP missions and the resupply throughout the entire country. The battalion task forces that were in direct support of each infantry brigade had UH-60s and CH-47's who also conducted resupply in that infantry brigade's sector.

2-17 CAV was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6) Chestnut], whose task force was composed of an attack company "(-)", four aircraft (that was beefed up to six AH-64s), a medevac section with three UH-60 medevac aircraft, a lift section with four CH-47's, and about six to eight Blackhawks. He also had a troop (+) or two troop (-) of approximately 17 Kiowa Warriors, which due to altitude were restricted to 6,000 ft unless the Commanding General approved them flying higher.

All tasking for general support aircraft in Bagram came through my brigade S3, but for logistics resupply there was a daily board at the division level, run primarily by the sustainment brigade, and all the different brigades and organizations throughout Afghanistan would submit their request up to the
INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT [redacted (b)(3), (b)(6), Iron] Page 1 of 5

Enclosure (12b) PAGE 1 OF 5

Division, of what they wanted to move that day. The board would meet and prioritize what supplies would get moved and then they would issue a tasking order a day or two before the day of the move. They would then task us for a certain number of aircraft and what FOB's we were going to, like a ring route. I was not part of that process. That was done primarily by staff officers at the Division level working with the Brigades and captains within my Brigade S-3 shop, along with the general support battalion S-3 section. We would tell them based on maintenance how many CH-47s we could put in the air that day.

The day before, I would approve every mission. As the medium risk approval authority, I specifically looked at the mission, as well as the crews assigned in order to mitigate the risk.

Depending who was the priority of effort in the Division and where assaults were going, the Division would come to me. I would task the Battalion Task Force that was in direct support of that infantry Brigade. That battalion commander would work with that infantry battalion commander to plan the operation. If he needed additional aircraft, the infantry brigade commander would then go to the Commanding General or DCG (MG Milley) and request additional assets to support the operation. They would come to me and based on all the missions given me and the priority of effort, I would give them aircraft depending on availability.

In 90 percent of the cases, we had aircraft available to support deliberate operations. The air assets would normally come out of Bagrahm to support that Brigade or sometimes from another Task Force in 4th Brigade or 173rd. I usually relied on Bagrahm because they knew the local area better. Each battalion in support of each infantry brigade had a QRF that they maintained. In addition, we maintained a general support aviation QRF; if needed, I would push assets down to them to reinforce whatever was going on.

For any type of deliberate aviation operation, the infantry Brigade S-3 in my battalion would get on the net and brief a CONOP brief usually to MG Milley. I had input into the mission and would approve the air piece and he would approve the mission. Again, the day before I would approve the crews that

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT (b)(3), (b)(6), Iron

Page 2 of 5

were flying at the medium risk level. While the battalion commanders had approval authority for lower risk levels, I had to seek approval from Division for high risk authority.

Prior to Wanat, we had conducted an operation to close down Bella. This was a mission that we had deliberate planning for, and then pushed down assets underneath the squadron commander, Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) to support the operation. Wanat was not a deliberate operation from an aviation perspective that I would have been briefed on. It was a normal Pesch resupply mission. In Wanat, we were not conducting an air assault and we were not conducting an extraction. The CONOP brief for Wanat must have taken place between the infantry brigade and General Milley. The first time I was aware of Wanat was the morning of the attack. I immediately went to the TOC to get a situational update from my squadron commander to see what he needed. He stated he had already launched his QRF and medevac aircraft. I then reinforced him with additional AH-64s, CH-47s, and medevac because we had listened to the casualties that were coming in. I knew he was going to need support. I took the aircraft from 6th battalion, my general support aviation battalion and pushed them under the control of Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) Chestnut

Afghanistan is very dark at night, unlike Iraq or the United States. With the lunar cycle there, we had times called Red Illum. This is when the illumination is below 23 percent and less than 30 degrees above the horizon. When these conditions existed, missions were considered high risk. In order to mitigate risk during Red Illum periods, we would need to elevate the risk level for flights. This would require the use of night vision goggles, and the Commanding General's approval for the mission, unless you were on a designated, recon'd resupply route that had pre-plotted obstacles along the route. This would allow the pilots to maintain a certain heading and altitude above the highest obstacle. For safety, we allowed our crews to fly within 10 nautical miles of the airfields. We allowed our Apaches to fly, because they were flying on FLIR, so Red Illum did not pertain to them. We normally conducted our deliberate type night operations during Green Illum.

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

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

Page 3 of 5

A RIP/TOA has a huge impact on aviation. Aviation is how you get around in Afghanistan, unlike Iraq where you drive everywhere. We help the unit that is conducting the RIP in getting out all their equipment and getting all the new people and equipment in. This would be accomplished by taking 2-17 CAV aircraft to cycle equipment and people back and forth within their sector from Jalalabad out to a FOB, bring the equipment back, and then we would put the equipment on a C-130 or a Chinook from Bagram, and then bring it back up to Bagram. During a RIP you would have to manage your aircraft and maintenance. With that said, I have observed units conduct operations during a RIP because we are constantly RIP'ing during a deployment. My battalions have conducted limited operations during a RIP. For example, if you are RIP'ing the 173rd, I've got my Battalion TF supporting 4th Brigade. There Ops are normal so I am focused with my assets up at Bagram working with that Brigade to do the deliberate OP while he is Rip'ing. Ultimately we prioritized our deliberate Ops depending on the Division's needs.

In my opinion, one aviation brigade for all of Afghanistan is not enough, which is what we had when we were there. I had a battalion task Force in RC-South, so I lost a Battalion Task Force to support RC-East. As of now, there are two aviation brigades there. We had the Air Force there with their C-130's to assist us with resupplies and also had a Warrior Alpha that I controlled. Division would set the priorities on where they flew. The day before, we would get the mission of where Warrior Alpha was supposed to focus. I would get briefed on the mission, and would look in on the area of operations that they were working in, the weather and terrain, and then the crews who were flying them.

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

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

Page 4 of 5

AFFIDAVIT

I (b)(3), (b)(6), Iron HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1 AND ENDS ON PAGE 4. 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

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

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 23rd day of December, 2009 at The Pentagon

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

PMJ5672

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

USMC

(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

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

USMC HQMC

36558
ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

10 U.S.C.
(Authority To Administer Oaths)

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

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