

1 [The investigation opened at 1440, 20 October 2009.]

**Cobalt** 2 **LtGen Natonski:** Chief Warrant Officer 4 (b)(3), (b)(6), I am  
3 Lieutenant General Richard Natonski, United States  
4 Marine Corps. I have been appointed by the Commander  
5 of the U.S. Central Command to conduct an  
6 investigation into the facts and circumstances  
7 surrounding the combat action at Wanat, Afghanistan  
8 during July 2008. Major General David Perkins, United  
9 States Army, has been assigned as the deputy  
**Beta** 10 investigating officer. Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6)  
**Sigma** 11 and Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) are the judge  
12 advocates assigned to this investigation team.

13 The testimony you provide today will be recorded,  
14 transcribed, and included in our report of the  
15 investigation. Based on your testimony, we may also  
16 prepare a separate written statement for your review  
17 and signature.

18 Prior to coming on the record today, you signed a  
19 Privacy Act, I believe; is that correct?

**Cobalt** 20 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir.

21 **LtGen Natonski:** Your testimony will be made under oath and  
22 at this time, we will now be----

**Beta** 23 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) He was previously sworn, sir.

**Beta** 24 **LtGen Natonski:** And you have already been sworn.

**Beta** 25 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) For the record, would you please state your full  
26 name, spelling your last.

**Cobalt** 27 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Sure, sir, my name is CW4 (b)(3), (b)(6) **Canuck**  
**Cobalt** 28 (b)(3), (b)(6)

**Beta** 29 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) What is your current unit and that unit's  
30 location?

**Cobalt** 31 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : My current unit is United States Central  
32 Command. The unit location is Tampa, Florida.

**Beta** 1 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) You're currently a chief warrant officer four in  
2 the United States Army?

**Cobalt** 3 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir.

**Beta** 4 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): In July of 2008, what was your unit and the  
5 unit's location?

**Cobalt** 6 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : The unit was the same.

**Beta** 7 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And where was the unit located?

**Cobalt** 8 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : In Tampa, Florida.

**Beta** 9 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Anytime in 2008, were you forward deployed?

**Cobalt** 10 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir, I was in Pakistan.

**Beta** 11 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Was that in the July 2008 timeframe?

**Cobalt** 12 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : The end of July 2008, I was a deployed to  
13 Pakistan through early February of 2009.

**Beta** 14 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) And what are your current duties at Central  
15 Command?

**Cobalt** 16 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I'm the senior all source analysts for ACPAC,  
17 Center of Excellence, for the insurgency and  
18 counterterrorist team.

**Beta** 19 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And are you familiar with intelligence products  
20 related to a battle that took place at Wanat,  
21 Afghanistan, last July?

**Cobalt** 22 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir, my team was responsible for briefing  
23 the command.

**Beta** 24 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Please proceed with your presentation.

**Cobalt** 25 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir.

26 And sir, just for a quick review, on some of the  
27 slides, of course are the ones that we presented to  
28 you about a month and a half ago and some of them we  
29 added based on some of the questions that came out of

1 that specific review dealing with the ISR coverage and  
2 that is what we will kind of dwell on here today, sir.

3 **LtGen Natonski:** And we will be able to speak at the secret-  
4 level, so that is----

**Cobalt** 5 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : This briefing is at SECRET NOFORN, sir,  
6 absolutely.

7 **LtGen Natonski:** And stop us if we take it beyond that so  
8 that we will not record it for the----

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I understand. I don't think that we will go  
10 there at all.

11 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay.

**Cobalt** 12 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Sir, the first slide that we have, of course, is  
13 the general overview of the area. Giving you a  
14 comparison with where the actual engagement took place  
15 at COP Wanat, just to orientate you to the South would  
16 have been COP Blessing, Asadabad, and then straight on  
17 to the Korengal Valley to Jalalabad that is in  
18 Naghard. The current weather condition--well, the  
19 weather condition at the time of the TIC, in the exact  
20 location is not necessarily obtainable by us, but  
21 general observations from the weather team in  
22 Asadabad, they were calling for showers--showers were  
23 observed in the area, lightning was observed just  
24 south of that particular FOB, so there were still  
25 thunderstorms in the area. Weather forecast for the  
26 entire region at the time of flight were yellow from  
27 11 to 14 July for air and ground operations, which  
28 meant marginal impact to those operations.

29 **LtGen Natonski:** Is this slide from that period of July  
30 2008?

**Cobalt** 31 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : This slide was a slide that was created the day  
32 after the TIC as a CENTCOM SIGINT slide and was  
33 briefed to the commander the morning of--after the  
34 attack.

35 **LtGen Natonski:** I only ask that because it reflects 13 U.S.  
36 wounded and there were 27 total.

**Cobalt** 1 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : And you are right, and that is why we pulled  
2 this up because this shows--this came exactly out of  
3 the CENTCOM Commander's update brief after we got our  
4 first initial reports of the TIC and then status-on.  
5 This is--that is what this reflects.

6 **MG Perkins:** If that had, in fact, been the weather, would  
7 that weather had allowed predator to fly and get  
8 there?

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Sir, we will cover the predator. Predator did fly  
10 and so did Red Ridge and Wolves. I have a whole--and  
11 those questions, sir, is what General Oates actually  
12 got to during our initial meeting and we came back  
13 with some due outs and you are going to find those in  
14 there, we will definitely cover that.

15 So; a general overview on the next slide, real  
16 quick. Again, sir, a drill down into the area. Of  
17 course, north is actually the bottom of the map--the  
18 same two images that you are going to see here are the  
19 ones that we showed about a month and a half ago, of  
20 course this is where the COP was, in fact, located in  
21 relationship to the bizarre and two bridges that you  
22 had noted from your time. Okay, so next slide,  
23 please.

24 Okay, close up view of the area where exactly the  
25 base was located and a schematic of the base.

**Beta** 26 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Chief, where did that schematic come from?

**Cobalt** 27 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : You know, sir, I really do not know. It was on  
28 multiple briefs at different command levels from the  
29 101st on up to even CENTCOM, I saw this on J3 story  
30 boards and we added it to this chart--slide just  
31 because again, we thought that it had a little more  
32 detail to the COP.

**Beta** 33 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): And this slide was put together on 13 July?

**Cobalt** 34 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Umm, I do not know when this slide was initially  
35 put together, but I would say, on or about the 13th,  
36 it was done forwarded to add on at the JIOC.

1 **MG Perkins:** And again, was that a diagram of the proposed COP  
2 or is that as it was on the 13th?

**Cobalt** 3 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): I will say, sir that it was presented as what was  
4 going to be built into because I know that they just  
5 recently moved there, so I can't say as to what the  
6 actual status of the ground situation was--I can't  
7 confirm the schematic, is what I am saying.

8 **MG Perkins:** Okay.

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : It is just what was presented as the schematic.

10 **LtGen Natonski:** And this is not reflect OP Topside----

**Cobalt** 11 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Right.

12 **LtGen Natonski:** I think this is what they were building  
13 towards----

**Cobalt** 14 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Building towards; right, sir.

**Beta** 15 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Because it has the towers and all that.

**Cobalt** 16 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Right. And they just moved there, prior to.

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

Pages 6 through 17 redacted for the following reasons:

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(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

Cobalt

**Cobalt** 1 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : So, 120 is what we believe of which at least in  
2 SIGINT, we have counted for them accounting for 20 to  
3 30 individual, either wounded or killed casualties,  
4 you should say. In those, you have to consider a  
5 degree of double taps. So, again, you want to divide  
6 by half and maybe you killed about 15.

7 **MG Perkins:** And still this assessment here is the corrected  
8 there is probably 2 to 5 man groups?

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I would say that that assessment and that is kind  
10 of a base line assessment for all of Afghanistan,  
11 especially an attack against a FOB, that this kind of  
12 how they move.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** Can you put it back to one.

**Cobalt** 14 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : And what I think it highlights, is that when the  
15  
16 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
17 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c , it seems to be the gap that  
18 we were missing to show that this attack was coming.

19 **LtGen Natonski:** Here it says that the population is culpable  
20 in allowing the attack to happen.

**Cobalt** 21 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I think that that-- looking at this, but that the  
22 population probably had full warning of this attack.

23 **LtGen Natonski:** And then Governor Waheeni had already been  
24 notified and doing his own press release, does that  
25 mean that he is with the bad guys?

**Cobalt** 26 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : No, it doesn't. It doesn't mean that. It just  
27 means something that they could be hearing. Maybe it  
28 was an aide and they come and they intercepted, they  
29 just did not identify who it was, it was identified.

30 **LtGen Natonski:** What about the thought that for every  
31 fighter or shooter there is 3 to 6 guys behind him  
32 providing support----

**Cobalt** 33 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : You know, I don't think that model applies--they  
34 are their own logistic network as well. The guys who  
35 move the stuff are also the guys who fight and shoot  
36 the stuff. There is a dedicated network responsible

1 for positioning resources but that is all done, like I  
2 said, to the left of the attack. To give you a pretty  
3 good example, an individual reconcile-- a commander  
4 reconciled in 2005 from this very area, the way that  
5 he said that they conduct attacks, specifically  
6 ambushes, not so much a FOB planned attack, was that  
7 they would see an element on the road, they knew that  
8 it would have to come back the same way, when a solid,  
9 they would run to their cache, they would pick up  
10 their weapons and come back and wait for it. So a lot  
11 of the stuff is prepositioned when it comes down to  
12 it.

13 **LtGen Natonski:** Said they did not necessarily have to move a  
14 lot of the arms into the general area of Wanat, they  
15 were----

**Cobalt** 16 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : It was already there, sir.

17 **LtGen Natonski:** (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
18  
19 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
20 (b)(1) 1.4 a if not up to (b)(1) 1.4 a in the area (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
21  
22  
23 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
24

**Cobalt** 25 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Again, it was mix-match, sir, but they -- what  
26 you saw was to some degree of OPSEC that I would not  
27 say was out of the ordinary, but there is some there.

28 **MG Perkins:** They have a level of situational awareness that  
29 they know that we can listen in on things.

**Cobalt** 30 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, they know. And then I would say that it  
31 becomes a necessity, it just means that they don't  
32 care right now.

33 **MG Perkins:** Right, because it's imminent and they're going to  
34 go ahead with it.

**Cobalt** 35 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : They are there anyway, right.

36 (b)(1) 1.4 a, c  
37

Pages 20 through 24 redacted for the following reasons:

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(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

Beta

Cobalt

Cobalt

Sigma

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Sigma

Cobalt

Sigma

Cobalt

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

Cobalt

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

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

32 **LtGen Natonski:** In that high terrain, can they hear the  
33 predator?

Cobalt 34 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : You can hear the predator.

35 **LtGen Natonski:** So they can go to ground----

Cobalt 36 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Absolutely. Especially on a night where there is  
37 no noise, assuming that there is nothing else  
38 distracting you. It will tell you "no", but I will  
39 tell you that you can hear predator, sir.

Pages 26 through 30 redacted for the following reasons:

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(b)(1)1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

Cobalt

Cobalt

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

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

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

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

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

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

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

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

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

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

Beta 7 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): Chief, you offered your opinion that Full Motion  
28 Video would not have helped, why is that?

Cobalt 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Because you will get to see clusters of  
30 individuals moving but again, you see clusters of  
31 individuals moving with guns often in Afghanistan.  
32 And you would not have certainly seen a 100, it goes  
33 back to the 2 to 5 assessment that we have. It would  
34 have been difficult for FMV with 1 asset which is all  
35 that you habitually see dedicated anywhere to pick up  
36 an attack of such--even of this magnitude--I will give

1 you an example. It is--for all of the attacks that  
2 happen on the border, we do not--we are very  
3 unsuccessful in interdicting those attacks. There  
4 have been cases where FMV has picked up elements  
5 coming across the border. They get interdicted with  
6 artillery; they break off the military contact. But  
7 if you go and take a look at Afghanistan's SIGACTs,  
8 they are few and far between that we get that. And  
9 that terrain is actually easier than this terrain  
10 especially when you got the mountains and the local  
11 populace already staging and not walking far, where  
12 they're in Pakistan to say Afghanistan, they are all  
13 local, so what is normal traffic is normal traffic.  
14 If you are lucky, you pick up a few guys on the road  
15 with a weapon. That is all that you see.

**Beta** 6 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6): How about time of day, would that impact that at  
17 all?

**Cobalt** 8 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Not at all.

19 **LtGen Natonski:** You talk about the insurgents that conducted  
20 this attack as being locals.

**Cobalt** 1 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes.

22 **LtGen Natonski:** This was a pretty well coordinated attack,  
23 there were a couple machine guns down range and then  
24 all hell broke loose from---

**Cobalt** 25 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : RPGs, yes.

26 **LtGen Natonski:** I mean 360 degrees literally. Are they  
27 sophisticated enough--I mean there had been fights for  
28 all of their lives--so locals could still do----

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Can we go back up to the first--I think my very  
30 first map, and we kind of talked about this briefly,  
31 sir, we will do this in more detail--one more--to the  
32 very first slide. Stop--please--thank you. Locals in  
33 this area, COP Wanat, there could have been a company  
34 there and it would not have mattered.

35 **LtGen Natonski:** A U.S. Company?

**Cobalt** 1 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : You bet. Insurgents in this area have done  
2 frontal attacks at Camp Blessing, as early as 2003. To  
3 a point where if you were to talk to General Higgins,  
4 who was the CSOTF Commander at the time, he would tell  
5 you a story of when he was at Blessing where he had to  
6 actually man a .50 cal because it was such a  
7 significant attack.

8 **LtGen Natonski:** At Blessing?

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : At Blessing. It is not uncommon in this region  
10 for them--they do not shy away from an attack. It just  
11 does not happen in this region. Now, these are down to  
12 the P2K they tend to pick some light-- some lighter  
13 targets such as a VPB OP, stuff that's a little more  
14 accessible where they can just fire the rockets and go  
15 away. Up here, I will tell you that you can go back  
16 to Afghanistan and you can probably write a pretty  
17 good lesson learned on frontal attacks at COPs. It is  
18 the terrain that helps, you take a look at, like,  
19 Blessing is right here. You have-- you're in the  
20 smack down middle of a valley, these peaks offer great  
21 line of sight and where do you go----

22 **LtGen Natonski:** And so based on what you are saying and your  
23 knowledge of the area, what would had been the most  
24 likely course of action by the enemy and what would  
25 have been the most dangerous course of action by the  
26 enemy as you are assessing the establishment of this  
27 COP?

**Cobalt** 28 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Well, I would have seen--I would have seen  
29 movement from Camp Bella or COP Bella. I would have  
30 seen that easy, even if I was not told by the locals  
31 who worked there, I would have been told they were  
32 moving the COP long before.

33 **MG Perkins:** You would've been told about the US movement  
34 which would have been common knowledge.

35 **LtGen Natonski:** Well they have been negotiating since May or  
36 March----

**Cobalt** 37 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : And if I don't hear it from the locals, there is  
38 potential that I even hear it from the ANA or ANP. I

1 don't try to bad mouth, but there is so much potential  
2 there for OPSEC issues. I would have watched them  
3 pull out, I would have watched them move in, I would  
4 have watched them establish what their defenses would  
5 have looked like because again, I am at a couple  
6 thousand feet above them. So, I am watching during  
7 daylight everything that they are doing. At night, I  
8 cannot see as well because I don't have the same NVG  
9 capability. So I would have made a decision point  
10 once they moved to conduct the attack. But okay, I  
11 will do my reconnaissance of it, I will watch, and you  
12 know, I will attack before it becomes fully  
13 established. Before it gets to that monstrosity that  
14 you saw the slide, I am going to get it when it is  
15 weak. So the most dangerous is exactly what they did,  
16 they took it out before a larger force structure got  
17 there and before defensive positions are really  
18 established and they know what really established is  
19 because Camp Blessing since 2004 or 2003. They did  
20 not want that to happen, this is a key LOC that runs  
21 up to the North. So it is something that has to be  
22 dealt with very quickly; especially if you want to  
23 continue your illicit trade of timber and gems, which  
24 happened in this area. So it had to go.

25 But you dedicate what you can. Most likely, sir, it  
26 establishes and you fire rockets like you do some of  
27 the other more established FOBs.

28 **LtGen Natonski:** And that is exactly what they said, pretty much,  
29 in their----

**Cobalt** 30 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): And all of the intelligence that led up to this,  
31 what I--again, not knowing again, in hindsight, I would  
32 have said, you know what, the chances are this attack  
33 that they are planning of a 100 folks will probably  
34 end up being a rocket attack because that is what 90  
35 percent of them end up being.

36 **MG Perkins:** So that is most likely.

**Cobalt** 37 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): That would be most likely.

1 **MG Perkins:** If you are the Intel guy, you would say most  
2 likely you are going to get a rocket attack.

**Cobalt** 3 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Most likely we are about to see a rocket attack.

4 **MG Perkins:** With that as well, as you sort of put the  
5 insurgent hat back on, again we know that we are  
6 leaving Bella and going to Wanat. They don't like  
7 that because it is right in the middle of what we are  
8 doing. It is a big problem.

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Right.

10 **MG Perkins:** What is it that the U. S. could have done to  
11 convince you not to attack? What could they have done  
12 to stop it?

**Cobalt** 13 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): The most dangerous attack? Quickly build the  
14 capacity. The most likely that probably would have  
15 happened, no matter what.

16 **MG Perkins:** In other words, there is nothing that they could  
17 have done to stop it. They can be mitigated but----

**Cobalt** 18 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Again----

19 **MG Perkins:** They are just going to persuade you to change----

**Cobalt** 20 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Right, insurgents have been----

21 **MG Perkins:** Your mind.

**Cobalt** 22 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Attacking U. S. Forces on the road, U. S. Forces  
23 at FOBs since, like I said, 2003. You know, it----

24 **MG Perkins:** They could have built another Camp Blessing and  
25 it would still be attacked.

**Cobalt** 26 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): It would still get attacked, right. It would  
27 just would probably had been more likely course of  
28 action would have become much more likely.

1 **LtGen Natonski:** I understand.

**Cobalt** 2 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Don't get me wrong, I am not saying that the  
3 frontal assault on Camp Blessing were a daily  
4 occurrence, they were mostly rocket attacks.

5 **LtGen Natonski:** No, I understand.

**Cobalt** 6 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): But again that is why I would say that whether  
7 there was a platoon there at Wanat or a company at  
8 Wanat, I am not sure that would have necessarily----

9 **MG Perkins:** No, you get a lot of would have, should have,  
10 could have and you get people who are very  
11 definitive, like if I had predator this would not have  
12 happened. If I had this it would not had happened, if  
13 we had this-- you know they were very definitive about  
14 reengineering what happened.

**Cobalt** 15 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Absolutely, again, opinion, Full Motion Video  
16 might have helped but I think your odds are that it  
17 would not have given you any more I and W than you  
18 already had, what you needed was SIGINT. And then as  
19 the attack goes, yeah, an increase force presence on  
20 the base might have helped with some deterrence  
21 because they would have seen that, I am not sure that  
22 it would've definitely held off the attack.

23 **LtGen Natonski:** Well, they were-- the numbers were all dedicated  
24 to force protection. If they had more maybe they would  
25 have pushed more patrols out----

**Cobalt** 26 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Sure.

27 **LtGen Natonski:** And OP's but they did not have that and it is the  
28 same thing with what if all of that intel they had at  
29 the platoon base had been pushed up and gotten the  
30 attention that ----

**Cobalt** 31 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Maybe they would've gotten----

Cobalt

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

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

Cobalt

14 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : No, sir, Blessing had been frontal assaulted for  
15 years. And that gets me back to, again, it is attacks  
16 in this region are not uncommon in any way, shape, or  
17 form. It is the fact that it got overrun. Another  
18 open--a different avenue for you to consider, but just  
19 recently the Keating issue almost exactly as----

20 **MG Perkins:** Well, they will tell you that it didn't get  
21 overrun----

Cobalt

22 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Right.

23 **MG Perkins:** They took a lot of casualties.

Cobalt

24 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : They took a lot of casualties; they never took the  
25 COP, the same with Keating. I mean, you drop an awful  
26 lot of ordinance to stop it, that is our capability,  
27 but you are absolutely right, sir. I don't disagree.

Sigma

28 **LTC** (b)(3), (b)(6)

29  
30

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

Cobalt

31 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I would say---

Page 38 redacted for the following reason:

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(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

Sigma

Cobalt

Cobalt

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Cobalt

1  
2

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

**Cobalt** 3 CW4 : I just don't want them to get down at Vicenza, we  
4 talked about that and he said that it was pushed off.  
5 I guess we can ask Pry----

**Cobalt** 6 CW4 : Even if it was, I am not sure what a ground-based  
7 sensor could have done in that terrain. You need line  
8 of sight.

9 **MG Perkins:** Well, right in the town though.

**Cobalt** 10 CW4 : Yes. So, that is the SIGINT as it was, sir.

11 Please go forward, go back to the I and W HUMINT  
12 slide.

13 So, again, is very much a historical look, being  
14 able to sit back in Tampa and decide, oh, let me pick  
15 and chose what I want, and we did. Next Slide.

16 And this is really what we came up with as a line  
17 of block goes, for what we think was behind the  
18 attack. Again, you got the AQ apparatus, supporting  
19 the local Taliban command, the local Taliban command  
20 using locals for the fight. So that is why when I say  
21 that this was a local flight, you do not see these  
22 individuals sitting in Pakistan pushing fighters in,  
23 what you saw was them giving directions and resourcing  
24 local commanders and local commanders using their  
25 local fighters. That is what it comes down to with  
26 this. A known entity, Commander (b)(6),  
27 both of them well known in the region for conducting  
28 attacks, they are on the CENTCOM target list and like  
29 I said, (b)(6) was, in fact, killed this spring  
30 in Pakistan. So, again, that is kind of our end state  
31 of where we are at again. We say about 100 to 120----

32 **LtGen Natonski:** And they are willing to take 20 to 30 KIA?

**Cobalt** 1 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Yes, sir.

2 **LtGen Natonski**: I mean these guys are locals, they are also  
3 farmers, or----

**Cobalt** 4 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) Yes, sir. And how are they willing--allocated  
5 this by no means is a high number. Now I have seen  
6 reports of 3 to 500 sometimes going against some of  
7 the BCPs along the border. In reality it is probably  
8 150 to 200 but final assaults on FOBs and BCP's,  
9 smaller elements, not uncommon and unfortunately  
10 nowadays, we are even seeing it against some larger  
11 ones. The Brits down in Helman have to deal with some  
12 of their FOBs getting frontal attacks, some of the  
13 ones that we have up in Zabul and Resgun get attacked,  
14 too. Heck, Calst, Chapman, and Surreno have had  
15 pretty complex attacks against them.

16 Okay, I believe, that is all that I have as  
17 formal slides go; other than those backups that you  
18 have already seen. I got some terrain shots to give  
19 you an idea what the FOB--the COP looked like in the  
20 Valley.

21 Will you go down--two more, I am sorry. Just to  
22 give you an idea again, like I am saying this was not  
23 a hard operation if you are an enemy. It is not  
24 necessary a hard thing to pull off based on the  
25 terrain alone. You are watching it, you can see it,  
26 it is compartmentalized in the valley.

27 **LtGen Natonski**: I'm just curious, after you're done some more  
28 analysis of SIGINT things like that, 20 to 30 KIA, is  
29 that more, do you think, than they thought they were  
30 going to lose?

**Cobalt** 31 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : No, I did not get any indication of that. They  
32 are normally not obsessed about casualty counts, only  
33 in the extent where the local commanders, after the

1 fact, we'll tell people not to talk about it because  
2 it discourages recruitment.

3 **MG Perkins:** It is bad IO again.

**Cobalt** 4 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Right. But during the attack, no, success is not  
5 necessarily gained by how many guys survived----

6 **MG Perkins:** No, I mean, it is more information Ops more than  
7 a tactical ops.

8 **LtGen Natonski:** Did you get any SIGINT after Wanat was abandoned?

**Cobalt** 9 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): I did look for a few days after. I did see some  
10 SIGINT talking about the American's leaving and that  
11 it was a good thing along those lines----

12 **LtGen Natonski:** What about IO?

**Cobalt** 13 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): Nothing large. We did see--there was here  
14 recently a video released on Alshabad that did use  
15 what they said was footage of the Wanat attack. Now  
16 we could not confirm that because one mountain looks  
17 the same as others, but Alshabad is an AQ media outlet  
18 that we know of and they use battlefield footage  
19 often. So, you really don't know what they are taking  
20 a picture of but it specifically said that that was  
21 use of--and it doesn't really matter if it was the  
22 FOB--COP or not.

23 **LtGen Natonski:** It does not sound like they could see anything  
24 anyway.

**Cobalt** 25 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6): It used the name, so they were well aware of what  
26 they did caused a kink in our chain.

27 Next slide. Sir, I mentioned that something that  
28 was very close. This is the TIC that happened the  
29 year prior. Again----

1 **MG Perkins:** Oh, a year prior, we are familiar with that. I  
2 thought you said one that happened the week----

**Cobalt** 3 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Well, there were other attacks----

4 **MG Perkins:** Okay.

**Cobalt** (b)(3), (b)(6)

**Cobalt** (b)(3), (b)(6) (b)(1) 1.4 a, c

Pages 43 through 45 redacted for the following reasons:

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(b)(1) 1.4 a, c, (b)(3), (b)(6)

1  
2  
3  
4

(b)(1) 1.4 a, c

**Beta** 5 **LtCol** (b)(3), (b)(6) Thank you.

**Cobalt** 6 **LtGen Natonski:** Okay, Chief Warrant Officer Four (b)(3), (b)(6) , you are  
7 ordered not to discuss the testimony that you provided  
8 today with anyone other than members of the  
9 investigation team. You will not allow any witness in  
10 this investigation to talk to you about the testimony  
11 he has given or which he intends to give. If anyone  
12 should try to influence their testimony or attempt to  
13 discuss the testimony, you are instructed to notify  
14 Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) or Lieutenant Colonel (b)(3), (b)(6) **Sigma**  
15 Do you understand that?

**Cobalt** 16 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : I understand, sir.

17 **LtGen Natonski:** I just want to thank you for your service to our  
18 country, to the Army, to CENTCOM, thank you for what  
19 you're doing and good luck in the future.

**Cobalt** 20 **CW4** (b)(3), (b)(6) : Thank you, sir.

21 [The investigation closed at 1601, 20 October 2009.]

CERTIFICATION OF VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Cobalt

Subj: TESTIMONY OF CW4 (b)(3), (b)(6), USA, GIVEN ON  
20 OCTOBER 2009, AT NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

In accordance with section 0214 of JAGINST 5800.7E, I certify  
that the subject transcript is an accurate verbatim transcript.

Sigma

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army  
Judge Advocate

17 Nov 09  
DATE