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of Defence

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[REDACTED]
E-mail address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

22 September 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Further to my letter of 17 August, I am now able to respond to your email of 25 July in which you requested the following information:

"Please provide me with an electronic copy of the Special Investigations Branch report one of your Royal Military Police officers compiled on the Alan Addis case when visiting the Falklands in 1981."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

Having completed a public interest test I have decided that the balance lies in releasing the Royal Military Police (Special Investigations Branch) reports into the disappearance of Marine Addis. These are enclosed. However, some information has been withheld under section 40 of the FOIA – personal information.

Section 40 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test. This relates to names of witnesses and information that could identify an individual if it were released.

The report dated 30 June 1981 is not legible in places due to the quality of the microfiche copies held on file, and further deterioration through printing and redacting the documents. I have, therefore, attached typed extracts of some of the document but even the "clean" copies held are not legible in places.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,



Disclosure and Litigation Leader

01201/1

Naval History 4780

CO

SIR RME WOLF

July 1961

MEDICAL INVESTIGATION
REPORT

1. On Mon 22 Jun 61, correspondence was received from [redacted] RVM, SC(A) HQ TRP RM, Eastney, Southsea, Hants enclosing the record of proceedings of a Board of Inquiry assembled at the Falkland Islands on 22 Sep 60 for the purpose of investigating the disappearance of PO77590E RME Addis A on or about 8 Aug 60, when it is reported that he died by drowning. No body was recovered and the Falkland Islands Coroner returned an Open Verdict.

2. RME Addis formed part of a three man training team who travelled by sea from Naval Party 8901 Headquarters, Port Stanley, enroute to Fitzroy Settlement. The ship docked overnight on Thu 7 Aug 60 at North Arm Settlement and RME Addis, together with five other Royal Marines, attended a social gathering hosted by the local inhabitants at their social club. It would appear that during the course of the evening many of those attending were heavily under the influence of alcohol. Consequently, when subsequently questioned by members of the Board of Inquiry in an attempt to elicit information regarding RME Addis' movements that evening, it is not surprising that their respective accounts appear vague and inconclusive.

3. Perusal of the Board of Inquiry's record of proceedings revealed strong indication that prior to his disappearance RME Addis was under the influence of alcohol to a marked degree. Certainly, he did not accompany his two training team colleagues when they departed the social club about midnight and returned aboard the MV Forrest. Although it is obvious that drinks continued to be served in the social club bar well into the early hours of Fri 8 Aug 60, timings as to closure of the bar and clearing the premises remain varied and uncertain. Similar conjecture surrounds attempts to establish RME Addis' final movements that night and no one has admitted seeing him outside the confines of the social club.

4. Shortly after MV Forrest sailed from North Arm Settlement about 0700 hrs, Fri 8 Aug 60, it was discovered that RME Addis was not aboard. At that juncture it was assumed that RME Addis had overlept having been accommodated overnight ashore, and so it was decided to leave him to make arrangements to travel overland that weekend. Contact from ship to shore was not made until mid-afternoon on Fri 8 Aug 60, following which RME Addis' disappearance became apparent. Organised land and sea searches were carried out during the period 8-11 Aug 60, but no trace of RME Addis was found. An inquest was subsequently held and in the absence of a body, the Coroner returned an Open Verdict. The Board of Inquiry findings are that RME Addis died accidentally in that he drowned or perished.

[redacted] through the auspices of Mr James Johnson, RM, with the then [redacted] Under Secretary of State (Royal Navy) [redacted] [redacted] was afforded [redacted]

[redacted] to travel to the Falkland Islands as public [redacted] visited the Islands during the period [redacted] 19 Mar 61, [redacted] to converse with various resident civilians and serving members of the Royal Marines. In consequence of these meetings and discussions, [redacted] duty as to the reported circumstances surrounding [redacted] disappearance.

STAFFORD COMMISSION

a. [redacted] left the [redacted] [redacted] but when subsequently questioned was reluctant to discuss the matter.

c. Clarification required of [redacted] movements during the night in question - see Board of Inquiry statements [redacted]

f. Confusion exists regarding MTE Addis' Y. D. Linnic Pacha. It is suggested that he was wearing it during evening of Thu 7 Aug 60, but it is also claimed by [redacted] that he found it aboard MV Fortross on Fri 8 Aug 60. (EM clearing records (C126 Register) retained in use by current Detachment in Falkland Islands).

g. A Chilean was seen logging in the peat fields of North Arm Settlement during night of 7/8 Aug 60.

h. A North Arm resident departed the Settlement the day following MTE Addis' disappearance and was seen driving inland on a motor-cycle.

j. On the day that members of the Board of Inquiry visited North Arm Settlement, an elderly resident, Mr Jimmy Biggs, apparently burned to death whilst occupying local transit accommodation. It is now understood that Mr Biggs had been present in the social club during the night of 7/8 Aug 60.

k. Both sub-aqua divers employed in the search for MTE Addis opine that had he drowned they would have recovered his body from the sea or on the surrounding shore line in the immediate vicinity of North Arm Settlement.

l. Neither sub-aqua diver was aware of the inland lake adjacent to North Arm Settlement. As far as can be determined, no underwater search of that particular stretch of water has been made.

9. On Mon 20 Jul 61, further correspondence was received from HQ TRF EM enclosing a copy of a letter by [redacted] EM who is currently stationed in the Falkland Islands. He outlines his concern about persistent rumours and under-currents circulating there which suggest that because of MTE Addis' [redacted] at North Arm his disappearance was more of design than accident.

10. A verbal briefing has already been given to the appropriate authorities at HQ TRF EM by the undersigned, and it was stressed that in order to pursue and finalise the enquiry as requested, it was considered necessary that authority be requested for the investigator reporting, together with a WO SIB RIF, to travel to the Falkland Islands.

11. Enquiries therefore remain in abeyance awaiting the outcome of a decision at higher level.

[redacted]
Captain
RIF

Typed copy of illegible sections of 30 July 1981 document:

Paras 1-3 are legible on the document provided.

4. Shortly after MV Forrest called from North Area Settlement about 0700 hrs, Fri 8 Aug 80, it was discovered that MNE Addis was not aboard. At that juncture it was assumed that MNE Addis had overslept having been accommodated overnight ashore, and so it was decided to leave him to make arrangements to travel over-land that weekend. Contact from ship to shore was not made until mid-afternoon on Fri 8 Aug, following which MNE Addis' disappearance became apparent. Organised land and sea searches were carried out during the period 8-11 Aug 80, but no trace of MNE Addis was found. An inquest was subsequently held and in the absence of a body, the Coroner returned an "Open Verdict". The Board of Inquiry findings are that MNE Addis died accidentally in that he drowned or perished.

5. [First sentence redacted]. Indeed, [redacted text] to make contact, through the auspices of Mr James Johnson, MP, with the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Royal Navy), Mr Keith Speed. Consequently, an opportunity was afforded [redacted text], to travel to the Falkland Island at public expense. [redacted text] visited the islands during the period 4-11 Mar 81, [redacted text] to converse with various resident civilians and serving members of the Royal Marines. In consequence of these meetings and discussions, [redacted text] dubiety to the reported circumstances surrounding [redacted text] disappearance became [illegible] interview with [redacted text], RM at HQ TRF RM on 10 Jun 81, [redacted text] had died as a result of "foul play". [redacted text] clearly based this [assumption (?)] [illegible] reported to [redacted text] in the Falkland Islands which it was implied that had MNE Addis died accidentally, his body would certainly have [been found (?)]. [redacted text] also voiced concern during this meeting regarding the [illegible] a thorough police investigation into the matter.

Paras 6 and 7 are legible in the document provided.

8. In addition to the matters outlined by [redacted text], various other factors pertinent to the investigation were introduced by the aforementioned witness. Obviously, much of what was learned is at present unsubstantiated hearsay, individuals' opinion and speculation, but the questions posed as a result are now considered to be crucial areas requiring follow-up action in the Falkland Islands. For [illegible] of reference the relevant points are summarised below:

- a. The general dissatisfaction expressed [illegible] RM personnel regarding the apparently inept enquiries made at the outset.
- b. Mooted by RM personnel that the Board of Inquiry findings do not reflect the true circumstances of MNE Addis' disappearance.

- c. That during the night in question, heated discussions took place in the social club between MNE Addis and [redacted text]
- d. The [*illegible*] that [redacted], left the [*social club (?)*] with MNE Addis, but when subsequently questioned was reluctant to discuss the matter.

The remainder of the document is legible

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HQ Western Region SIB RMP UKLF

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SIB RMP UKLF

27 November 1981

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

1. Further to this HQ interim report of even reference dated 30 Jul 81.
2. Following associated discussion involving RM MOD, Naval Law & Conditions Division, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the Governor of the Falkland Islands, concurrence was that enquiries should continue in an attempt to establish the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of PO37596K IONE Addis A on 8 Aug 80 at North Arm Settlement, Falkland Islands. However, to obviate any subsequent suggestion of 'cover-up' or 'whitewash' in the event that such enquiries failed to be conclusive, it was adjudged prudent that all further responsibility for investigations undertaken be independent of the military authorities. It was therefore requested that the relevant statements held by this Branch, together with the Board of Inquiry Proceedings, be made available to Mr R Lamb, Chief Police Officer, Falkland Islands Police Force, who has been tasked with concluding the investigation under report.
3. Arrangements were subsequently made, following approval by the Governor, for the undersigned to visit the Falkland Islands during the period 5 - 11 Nov 81 in order to fully acquaint Mr Lamb with all facets of the investigation as previously gleaned from interviews in UK.
4. At this juncture, however, it is proposed to offer a brief description of the Falkland Islands in an attempt to highlight the topography and conditions likely to be encountered on the islands. They are located deep in the South Atlantic some 400 miles from Cape Horn on the tip of South America. The Falklands comprise a mass of islands covering a total area of approximately 4,700 square miles. The terrain is akin in parts to Dartmouth and the Western Isles of Scotland, consisting of vast areas of grassland with peat bogs, tussock and rocky outcrops. As there is only 16 miles of metalled road, this in the capital, Port Stanley, overland travel between the settlements is via a track system by horse or landrover. High winds and extreme cold are inescapable features of life on the Falkland Islands. Temperatures range from about 36°F (2°C) in July to 49°F (9°C) in January. The population per the 1980 Census was 1,813, the majority of whom reside in Port Stanley. North Arm Settlement is owned freehold by the Falklands Islands Company and forms part of Lafonia on the main island of East Falkland, some forty minutes from Port Stanley by 'Islander' aircraft. The Settlement's lands cover 270,000 acres, including 840 miles of coastline and over 300 miles of fence line. Company activity during the year is geared to providing good pasture for the sole source of revenue - 68,000 wool bearing sheep.
5. During the relatively short stay in Port Stanley advantage was taken of the opportunity to interview RM personnel of the current Naval Party 8901 in an attempt to elicit any information pertinent to the enquiry in hand. Similar enquiries, in conjunction with the Chief Police Officer were made of civilian residents, including [REDACTED] and crew members of MV Forrest.
6. During the period 5 Nov - 9 Nov 81 extensive enquiries were conducted at North Arm Settlement in close liaison with the Chief Police Officer. Every possible assistance was afforded the investigators by both management and employees of the Falkland Islands Company resulting in witnesses being readily made available as


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requested. Searches were conducted both in and outwith the immediate Settlement area during efforts to find trace of MNE Addis, necessitating on occasions the employment of local labour on toilsome tasks connected with draining disused sheep dips and moving mounds of peat.

7. It is understood that on completion of enquiries within the Falkland Islands a comprehensive dossier, including respective witness accounts, will be produced by Mr Lamb, Chief Police Officer. To avoid pre-empting the outcome of these enquiries, it is not intended to summarise individuals statements in this report or suggest any personal opinions concerning MNE Addis' disappearance. Suffice it to say that, during the limited period allowed at North Arm Settlement no trace was found of MNE Addis and nothing came to light following conversation with the local populace to suggest either the cause of his presumed demise or support the theory that he was subjected to foul play.

8. It is now appreciated that because of local difficulties, peculiar to the mode of life on the Falkland Islands, the numerous avenues of enquiry still to be explored by Mr Lamb may be rather protracted. However, when the final report is made available to this HQ, the results will be distributed to all addressees in the form of an addendum report. Copies of all relevant statements, together with the Board of Inquiry proceedings, are held at this HQ for production on request.


Captain
RMP

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