

Witness Name: John Gordon Lorimer

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits: None

Dated:

**In the matter of an investigation into the death of  
Mr Nadheem Abdullah**

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**WITNESS STATEMENT OF  
JOHN GORDON LORIMER**

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I, John Gordon Lorimer, will say as follows:-

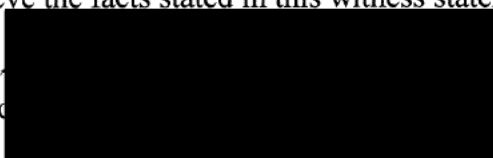
1. I am Lt Gen John Gordon Lorimer. I am currently between appointments; my last position was as Deputy Commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. My next position is Chief of Joint Operations (CJO) at the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), which I will start in October 2014.
2. I have been asked to provide a statement in relation to an incident that allegedly occurred on 11 May 2003 near Al Uzayr in Maysan Province, South East Iraq, resulting in the death of Mr Nadheem Abdullah.
3. As Commanding Officer (CO) of the Third Battalion, the Parachute Regiment (3 PARA), I had overall responsibility for 3 PARA's preparation for and conduct of operations in Kuwait and Iraq, from our initial deployment to Kuwait in February 2003 under 16 Air Assault Brigade (16 Air Asslt Bde) to when I handed over command in 18 April 2003 to Lt Col Matthew Lowe. At that time I held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.
4. The 3 PARA Battle Group was deployed to Maysan Province under the command of 16 Air Asslt Bde after we completed the 'war-fighting' phase of operations in Basra Province.

5. From memory, the situation when the Battalion first arrived in Maysan Province was confused. Once we arrived from Basrah Province, we set up our base locations . The Battalion had responsibility for an area south of the Provincial capital, al-Amarah. The 3 PARA companies were therefore dispersed to company locations so that it would be easier for them to travel to and operate in their areas of responsibility. We started to develop our understanding on the ground, by conducting familiarisation patrols and liaison visits, meeting with the local Iraqi leaders and elders. To the best of my recollection during the very short period that I was in command of 3 PARA in Maysan Province, I would describe the situation there as confused and complex, which given what had just taken place in the country, was not surprising. There was still a threat to our soldiers from various Iraqi factions, groups and entities
  
6. I cannot remember any specific training 3 PARA received in relation to carrying out vehicle check points (VCPs) before we left the United Kingdom, or whilst we were held in Kuwait before we deployed into Iraq. However, prior to deploying on Op TELIC 1, the Battalion had served on operations in Northern Ireland (from December 2001 to July 2002) and had conducted considerable training for such 'non-warfighting' activities. This would have included specific training for VCP drills.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true

Signed



Dated

6 September 2014