



MOD-83-0000453-A

RESTRICTED

Number: [REDACTED] Rank/Status: Spr Surname: SO72
Forenames: SO72
Unit: 32 Engineer Regiment
Trade/Occupation RE ('X' box) Male: X Female:
DOB: [REDACTED]

I am being investigated for an offence of Manslaughter, allegedly committed against a Mr Sa'eed Shabram on the 23rd May 2003.

I deny this offence in the strongest possible terms and state the following:

On the 23rd May 2003 I was in Iraq.

The 23rd May 2003 was a maintenance day for 26 Armoured Engineer Squadron. On this day we had to attend to the weekly servicing and washing of the vehicles.

I was the driver of vehicle call sign 40D, in command of that vehicle was [REDACTED] LCpl SO71

On the morning of the 23rd May 2003 myself and LCpl SO71 got a water pump and loaded it onto our vehicle.

We then left the camp to go to the dock, approx 200m away, in order to clean our vehicle. We followed Lt SO70 ([REDACTED]) and [REDACTED] Spr SO75 who were in another vehicle, Spr SO75 was the driver.

When we arrived, we all got out, Spr SO75 remained on his vehicle.

There were a number of children already present that were swimming and jumping off the side.

Myself and LCpl SO71 unloaded the equipment to wash the vehicles. We then realised that we had brought the wrong pump.

Myself and LCpl SO71 returned to the camp to pick up the correct pump. Lt SO70 and Spr SO75 remained at the dock.

After a short period we returned set up the equipment and began washing the vehicle down. We placed our weapons in the vehicle.

RESTRICTED

Lt **SO70** informed us that a tanker was on fire and to keep an eye on it. He told us that he was going to try and find a fire extinguisher.

Spr **SO75** remained on his vehicle. Whilst we were cleaning the vehicles we were swarmed by children who were trying to help us. After about 20 minutes I was aware that Lt **SO70** had returned, although I didn't actually see him arrive.

I noticed that there was a group of Iraqi's with him.

I didn't take a great deal of notice as I couldn't hear what was being said over the noise of the pump. A crowd of people gathering was just an everyday thing.

There were a large number of children and adults present which was normal, I was more conscious of the children near me.

I was in the process of shutting the pump down when I saw, out of the corner of my vision, somebody go into the water. I could not see who it was or why they went into the water.

As I watched I saw this person pull himself out of the water by climbing up a rope hanging off an anti aircraft gun. As he was doing this I then saw another lad run to the edge of the dock and jump into the water.

I walked to the edge of the dock to see what was going on. The surface of the water was approximately 6ft below the dock edge. I could see no sign of the lad that had jumped in. I waited for a few seconds then took off my boots and trousers and jumped in.

I made a guess as to where he would have gone in and tried to find him by diving down and feeling my way. I couldn't see anything, there was zero visibility in the water.

I'm not sure when but I saw Lt **SO70** also dive into the water. I looked up to see children pointing, I dived to where they were pointing. I dived deep enough to touch the bottom. I have no idea how long I was doing this for but I was so exhausted I got out, as did Lt **SO70**.

I rested for a short time then I went back in so did Lt **SO70**.

I think Lt **SO70** had spoken to either LCpl **SO71** or Spr **SO75**, but I am not sure who.

I was becoming more and more exhausted, we could do no more and were told we had been ordered out of the water.

When I got out the crowd had grown and were agitated, they were pushing and shoving me. I was aware that some women had turned up and were screaming.

RESTRICTED

I put my boots and trousers back on, it was clear that the atmosphere was now hostile. The crowd wanted me to go back in. As I was dressing I saw LCpl SO71 push away a man who was attempting to take his rifle. I was aware that SSgt SO77 was now present, I saw that he was also being pulled by the crowd towards the edge of the dock.

A decision was made to extract and return to camp, which we did.

At no time that day did I see any animals in the dock complex.

At no time did I see either of the lads pushed or thrown into the water.

At no stage did I see any person restrained, struck or abused by either myself or any other soldier.

At no stage did any of the locals attempt to assist the lads.

At no stage did I hear the lads swimming ability discussed or mentioned.

At no stage was I crying or did I see any of the other soldiers cry.

At no stage did I hear the question of compensation discussed or raised.

I don't know why the man jumped in my only involvement was to try and save him from drowning.

It is on this basis that I categorically deny this offence.

Signed:



SO72

Spr
RE

Date: 23-06-04