



Defence
Safety Authority

Service Inquiry

Death of a Royal Marine
Recruit following a Beach
Landing Exercise, Tregantle
Beach

21 January 2020

Defence Safety Authority

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PART 1.1 – COVERING NOTE

DSA/SI/01/20/TREGANTLE

16 March 2021

DG DSA

CONVENING ORDER FOR THE SERVICE INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF A ROYAL MARINE RECRUIT OF 282 TROOP, COMMANDO TRAINING CENTRE ROYAL MARINES ON 24 JAN 20 FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT DURING A BEACH LANDING EXERCISE AT TREGANTLE BEACH ON 21 JAN 20.

1.1.1 The Service Inquiry Panel assembled at the Defence Academy, Shrivenham, on the 3 February 2020 by order of the DG DSA for the purpose of investigation the incident that resulted in the death of Royal Marine Recruit Ethan Jones. His tragic death occurred on the 24 January 2020 following an accident when disembarking a landing craft at Tregantle Beach as part of the final exercise during recruit training. The aim of the service inquiry is to make recommendations in order to prevent a reoccurrence. The Panel has conducted its investigation and submits the Service Inquiry report for the Convening Authority's consideration.

1.1.2 The following inquiry papers are enclosed:

Part 1	REPORT	Part 2	RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS
Part 1.1	Convening Note and Glossary	Part 2.1	Diary of Events
Part 1.2	Convening Orders and TORs	Part 2.2	List of Witnesses
Part 1.3	Narrative of Events	Part 2.3	Witness Statements
Part 1.4	Findings	Part 2.4	List of Attendees
Part 1.5	Recommendations	Part 2.5	List of Exhibits
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		Part 2.10	Master Schedule

PRESIDENT

[Signature]

Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED]
Royal Logistic Corps
President Tregantle SI

MEMBER1

[Signature]

Flight Lieutenant [REDACTED]

Royal Air Force
Tregantle SI

MEMBER2

[Signature]

Warrant Officer Class Two [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Royal Marines
Tregantle SI

GLOSSARY

1AGRM	1 Assault Group Royal Marines
10 Trg Sqn	10 Training Squadron
47 Cdo (RG) RM	47 Commando (Raiding Group) Royal Marines
ALARP	As Low As Reasonably Practicable
ASPEC	Assessment Specification
AStrat	Assessment Strategy
ATLJ	Assault Troop Life Jacket
ATSB	Australian Transport Safety Bureau
BAMS	Booking and Allocation Management System
BFA	Battlefield Ambulance
BMI	Body Mass Index
BRd	Books of Reference digital (Navy Publications)
BST	Battle Swimming Test
Cdo	Commando
CGRM	Commandant General Royal Marines
CSM	Company Sergeant Major
CO	Commanding Officer
CoC	Chain of Command
Comdt	Commandant
COS	Chief of Staff
Coxn	Coxswain
Cpl	Corporal
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CTCRM	Commando Training Centre Royal Marines
CTW	Commando Training Wing
CWS	Cold Water Shock
DAIB	Defence Accident Investigation Branch
D and C Police	Devon and Cornwall Police
DH	Duty Holders
DDH	Delivery Duty Holder
DE&S	Defence Equipment and Support
DIO	Defence Infrastructure Organisation
DoC	Duty of Care
DSA	Defence Safety Authority
DSAT	Defence Systems Approach to Training
DTE	Defence Training Estate
DTCF	Defence Trainer Competency Framework
DTTT	Defence Train the Trainer
DTS	Defence Training Supervisor
EASP	Exercise Action Safety Plan
ECO	Exercise Conducting Officer
ES Tp	Equipment Support Troop
Ex	Exercise

FRV	Final Rendezvous
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GPMG	General Purpose Machine Gun
HF	Human Factors
HF	High Frequency
HFACS	Human Factors Analysis and Classification System
HMNVS	Head Mounted Night Vision System
HMNB	Her Majesty's Naval Base
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HSEP	Health, Safety and Environmental Protection
ICP	Incident Control Point
INM	Institute of Naval Medicine
IO	Investigating Officer
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRC	Inflatable Rafting Craft
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
JCU	Joystick Control Unit
JSP	Joint Service Publication
kW	Kilo Watt
kg	Kilogram
km	Kilometres
Kts	Knots
LC	Landing Craft
LCTO	Landing Craft Training Officer
LC1	Landing Craftsman Class One
LC2	Landing Craftsman Class Two
LC3	Landing Craftsman Class Three
LCLJ	Landing Craft Life Jacket
LCOQ	Landing Craft Officer Qualification
LCU	Landing Craft Utility
LCVP	Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel
LSPEC	Learning Specification
m	Metre
MA	Medical Assistant
MATTs	Military Annual Training Tests
mb	Millibars
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MEL	Main Events List
Met Office	Metrological Office
MFD	Multi-Function Display
mm	Milometer
MOB	Man Overboard
MOD	Ministry of Defence
ML1	Mountain Leader Class One
ML2	Mountain Leader Class Two

OFFICIAL—SENSITIVE

NC	Navy Command
NCHQ	Navy Command Headquarters
NLIMS	Navy Lessons and Information Management System
NM	Nautical Mile
NSC	Navy Safety Centre
NSD	Naval Safety Director
NVD	Night Vision Device
ODH	Operating Duty Holder
OSP	Operational Shooting Policy
ORC	Offshore Raiding Craft
PA	Party Assurance
PAM	Pamphlet
PCS	Personal Clothing System
PMO	Principal Medical Officer
PRC	Portable Radio Communications
PRR	Personnel Role Radio
QMS	Quality Management Standard
RA	Risk Assessment
RIT	Raiding Instructional Troop
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
RtL	Risk to Life
SAA	Skill at Arms
SAR	Search and Rescue
SC	Safety Case
SDH	Senior Duty Holder
Snr Coxn	Senior Coxswain
SEMS	Safety and Environmental Management System
Sgt	Sergeant
SI	Service Inquiry
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea Regulations
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SofS	Secretary of State
SPO	Senior Planning Officer
SST	Safe System of Training
SSoW	Safe System of Work
SSTC	Sea Survival Training Centre
SW	South West
SWAST	South West Ambulance Service Trust
TRiM	Trauma Risk Management
Tp	Troop
Tp Comd	Troop Commander
Tp Sgt	Troop Sergeant
TRA	Training Requirements Authority

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OFFICIAL—SENSITIVE

Trg Team	Training Team
UKHO	United Kingdom Hydrographic Office
UMMS	Unit Maintenance Management System
V	Volts
VHF	Very High Frequency

PART 1.2 – CONVENING ORDER



3 Feb 20

SI President	Hd DAIB	DAIB Mentor
SI Members	DSA HQ Legad	DAIB Office Manager

Copy to:

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PS/Min(DPV)	PSO/CAS	DDC-PR-Head
PS/Min(DP)	EA/Fleet Cdr	DDC-PR News (Navy)
PS/PUS	MA/COS UK StratCom	Navy Safety Director
DPSO/CDS	MA/CGRM	

DSA DG/SI/01/20 – CONVENING ORDER FOR THE SERVICE INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF A ROYAL MARINE RECRUIT OF 282 TROOP, COMMANDO TRAINING CENTRE ROYAL MARINES ON 24 JAN 20 FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT DURING A BEACH LANDING EXERCISE AT TREGANTLE BEACH ON 21 JAN 20.

- In accordance with Section 343 of Armed Forces Act 2006 and JSP 832 – Guide to Service Inquiries (Issue 1.0 Oct 08), the Director General, Defence Safety Authority (DG DSA) has elected to convene a Service Inquiry (SI).
- The purpose of this SI is to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident and to make recommendations in order to prevent recurrence.
- The SI Panel will commence administrative briefing at 1130 on Monday 3 February 2020 at CoAST Centre, Shrivenham, and will be formally convened by the DG at 1430.
- The SI Panel comprises:

President:	Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED]
Member:	Flight Lieutenant [REDACTED]
Member:	Warrant Officer Class 2 [REDACTED]
- The legal advisor to the SI is **Wg Cdr** [REDACTED] and technical investigation/inquiry support is to be provided by the Defence Accident Investigation Branch (DAIB). The nominated mentor for this SI is **Mr** [REDACTED].

6. The SI is to investigate and report on the facts relating to the matters specified in its Terms of Reference (TOR) and otherwise to comply with those TOR (at Annex A). It is to record all evidence and express opinions as directed in the TOR. An Initial Report on the commencement of the investigation is to be submitted on 3 Mar 2020.

7. Attendance at the SI by advisors/observers, unless extended by the Convening Authority, is limited to the following:

Head DAIB – Unrestricted Attendance.

DAIB investigators in their capacity as advisors to the SI Panel – Unrestricted Attendance.

Human Factors Advisors seconded to provide specialist advice to the Panel and DAIB – Attendance appropriate to the consultation service being afforded.

8. The SI Panel will initially undertake induction training at the DAIB facility at MOD Boscombe Down immediately after convening. Thereafter, permanent working accommodation, equipment and assistance suitable for the nature and duration of the SI will be requested at a location decided by the SI President in due course.

9. Reasonable costs will be borne by DG DSA under UIN D0456A.

Original Signed

S C Gray CB OBE FREng
Air Marshal
DG DSA – Convening Authority

Annex:

A. Terms of Reference for the Service Inquiry into the death of a Royal Marine Recruit of 282 Troop, Commando Training centre Royal Marines on 24 Jan 20, following an incident during a beach landing exercise at Tregantle Beach on 21 Jan 20.

**Annex A To
DSA DG/SI/01/20 Convening Order
Dated 3 Feb 20**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SERVICE INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF A
ROYAL MARINE RECRUIT OF 282 TROOP, COMMANDO TRAINING CENTRE
ROYAL MARINES ON 24 JAN 20 FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT DURING A BEACH
LANDING EXERCISE AT TREGANTLE BEACH ON 21 JAN 20.**

1. As the nominated Inquiry Panel for the subject SI, you are to:
 - a. Investigate and, if possible, determine the cause of the incident, together with any contributory, aggravating and other factors and observations. Highlight any common factors that are identified and thoroughly determine all circumstances that may appear to link the incidents.
 - b. Ascertain whether personnel involved were acting in the normal course of their duties and were suitably qualified to undertake those duties in terms of relevant qualifications, competencies, currency and levels of supervision.
 - c. Examine safety procedures and processes for this exercise, including orders, SOPs and instructions and any other relevant documents issued. Consider and comment on their applicability and relevance for this exercise and the level of compliance.
 - d. Determine the availability and serviceability of all relevant equipment and examine maintenance schedules for the equipment. Comment on whether these were appropriately maintained and report any defects or deficiencies identified.
 - e. Establish the level of training, including familiarity with equipment and procedures, competencies, qualifications and currency of students and directing staff involved in the activity.
 - f. Review the levels of authority and supervision covering the task when the incident occurred. Determine whether risk assessments were appropriate and considered at the correct level.
 - g. Examine the Duty Holding responsibilities during the multi-activity exercise, focussing on the transfer of responsibility between Delivery Duty Holders at the transition between activities.
 - h. Identify if the levels of planning and preparation were commensurate with the activity's objectives and subsequent execution.
 - i. Investigate and comment on relevant fatigue implications of individuals' activities prior to the matter under investigation and on any Human Factors that may have played a part in this incident.

- j. Examine the processes in place for dealing with medical incidents at Fort Tregantle starting from the planning of the activity through to the post incident reporting procedures.
 - i. Determine and comment on any broader organisational and/or resource factors.
 - j. Investigate whether there have been similar related incidents and comment on whether lessons identified from these previous incidents have been learned.
 - k. Report immediately to the DG DSA should you have cause to believe a criminal or Service Offence has occurred.
 - l. Report and make appropriate recommendations to DG DSA.
2. The investigation should not seek to attribute blame and you should use JSP 832 Guide to Service Inquiries and DSA 03.10 as guidance for the conduct of your inquiry. You are to report immediately to the DG DSA should you have cause to believe a criminal or Service Offence has been committed.
3. If at any stage the Panel discovers something that they perceive to be a continuing hazard presenting a risk to the safety of personnel or equipment, the President should alert DG DSA without delay to initiate remedial actions. Consideration should also be given to raising an Urgent Safety Advice note.
4. These Terms of Reference have been designed to be wide ranging in order to ensure that you have the freedom to investigate wherever the evidence leads.

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PART 1.3

Narrative of Events

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PART 1.3 – NARRATIVE OF EVENTS

All Times Local (GMT – ZULU).

Synopsis

1.3.1. At approximately 21:35 on 21 January 2020, a Recruit Troop (Tp) from the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM) was involved in an accident whilst disembarking from a Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel (LCVP) Mk 5B, (see Figure 1.3.1) provided by 47 Commando (Raiding Group) Royal Marines (47 Cdo (RG) RM). The accident occurred during a night beach landing on Tregantle Beach, Cornwall (see Figure 1.3.2) as part of Exercise (Ex) FINAL THRUST.



Figure 1.3.1 – Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel Mk5 (Library picture).

1.3.2. LCVP 0338, accompanied by LCVP 0354, left Weston Mill Jetty in Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Devonport at 19:45 and 19:50 respectively, to sail to Tregantle Beach (approximately 11 Nautical Miles (NM), see Figure 1.3.3). The LCVPs were each crewed by a coxswain from Boat Troop, 10 Training Sqn (10 Trg Sqn), a part of 47 Cdo (RG) RM and three students attending the Landing Craftsman Two course also delivered by 47 Cdo (RG) RM. Having arrived at the sea-based Final Rendezvous (FRV), approximately 1 NM from the Beach, 282 Tp were ordered to remove their Assault Troop Life Jackets (ATLJ). LCVP 0338 touched the seabed at the beach and, once the craft's ramp had been lowered into the water, the troops began to disembark off the port side (left hand side) of the ramp.



Figure 1.3.2 – Aerial view of Tregantle Beach and Fort.

1.3.3. During the disembarkation the depth of water increased from approximately 0.77 m and the last 8 of the 26 individuals to leave the craft found themselves in water above their heads (>1.85 m). Three recruits were recovered from the water to the craft including Recruit Ethan Jones, who was unconscious and unresponsive. First aid was given on the craft initially by the crew, some members of 282 Tp Training Team (282 Tp Trg Team), a Royal Navy (RN) Medic and then the South West Ambulance Service paramedics. Recruit Jones was transferred to the beach and then transported by air to Derriford Hospital, Plymouth where he subsequently died on 24 January 2020.



Figure 1.3.3 – Area of Interest.

Background

1.3.4. **CTCRM.** CTCRM was based in Lymington, Devon and was the principal training centre for the Royal Marines (RM). It delivered all recruit and officer basic training.

1.3.5. **282 Troop.** At the time of the accident, 282 Tp consisted of a CTCRM permanent training team staff, which included a Troop Commander (Tp Comd), a Troop Sergeant (Tp Sgt), 4 Corporals (Cpls), and 31 recruits¹.

1.3.6. **Ex FINAL THRUST.** Ex FINAL THRUST was a tactical Field Training Exercise (FTX) that occurred routinely every 2 to 4 weeks at CTCRM within weeks 28 and 29 of a 32 week recruit training programme. The exercise was conducted in four phases: Bodmin Moor, Dartmoor, Amphibious and Final Attack. 282 Tp's exercise occurred over the period 15 to 23 January 2020.

Exhibit 001

¹ Nomenclature of recruit troops at CTCRM was consecutive and a troop contained fluctuating numbers of recruits throughout the 32 week programme due to losses through injury and recruits who had to repeat phases of training, and gains through joiners who had recovered from injury or were back-trooped recruits from other troops.

1.3.7. **47 Cdo (RG) RM.** 47 Cdo (RG) RM was based in HMNB Devonport, Plymouth and was responsible for the delivery of the Amphibious Surface Manoeuvre Capability of the RN by providing the research, development and testing of landing craft, small boats, specialist vehicles and related equipment. It also delivered the specialist training and operational capability required to operate in the amphibious environment, including support to CTCRM exercises.

1.3.8. **Tregantle Beach.** Tregantle Beach is located South West of 47 Cdo (RG) RM's permanent location and approximately 11 NM via sea passage. It was regularly used by 47 Cdo (RG) RM for amphibious assault training, including support to Ex FINAL THRUST. It had direct access onto a military range complex and its geography presented both a shallow beach that typically generated surf and a cliff suitable for vertical assault.

1.3.9. **LCVP Mk5B.** The LCVP Mk 5B was principally employed to land troops and equipment from ship to shore and was designed for beaching on either rocky or sandy beaches with a minimum gradient of 1 in 120, leaving a maximum of 0.6 m of water at the bow. It was crewed by three RM personnel: a coxswain, who was a Landing Craftsman Class Two (LC2), in command of the craft, and two Landing Craftsman Class Three (LC3) crewmen.

Exhibit 002

1.3.10. **LC Courses.** An individual in the RM LC specialist qualification progressed through the specialisation by completing the LC3, LC2 and finally the LC1 course during their career. 47 Cdo (RG) RM delivered LC courses through 10 Trg Sqn. Qualification to coxswain a LCVP was given on successfully passing the LC2 course when an individual became known as an 'LC2'.

Key Persons Involved

1.3.11. **Introduction.** In this report the SI Panel will refer to several individuals who played a role before, during and after the accident on 21 January 2020. Except for the deceased, names have been ciphered to protect their identity.

1.3.12. **Recruit Jones.** Recruit Jones joined 282 Tp at CTCRM Lymptstone on 27 May 2019 and was an original member of that troop. He was 1.72 m tall and weighed 82 kg (BMI = 28.26) on 27 May 2019. The Panel noted that 'there was nothing in Recruit Jones's medical record to suggest that he had any illness or injury when he went on Ex FINAL THRUST'. Recruit Jones was a member of Section 2 for the Amphibious phase of Ex FINAL THRUST and the 20th individual to disembark the craft.

Exhibit 003
Exhibit 122

1.3.13. **Tp Comd.** The Tp Comd joined the RM in 2017. He had served in 42 Cdo RM before joining CTCRM in early January 2020. He was in command of 282 Tp for Ex FINAL THRUST and was the 13th individual to disembark the craft.

Witness 1

- 1.3.14. **Tp Sgt.** The Tp Sgt joined the RM in 2003 and had served in various appointments including previously at CTCRM. He had conducted maritime operations and had deployed on Op HERRICK. On promotion to Sgt, he was assigned back to a training team at CTCRM. The Tp Sgt was the Exercise Conducting Officer (ECO) for Ex FINAL THRUST and, at the time of the accident, was located at the top of the vertical assault. Witness 2
- 1.3.15. **Cpl 1.** Cpl 1 joined the RM in 2009 and had served in various Cdo units. Cpl 1 was the Commander of Section 1 for the Amphibious phase of Ex FINAL THRUST and was the 2nd individual to disembark the craft. Witness 3
- 1.3.16. **Cpl 2.** Cpl 2 joined the RM in 2007 and had served in various Cdo units. On promotion to Cpl he was assigned to the training team at CTCRM and had instructed two recruit troops prior to 282 Tp. Cpl 2 was the Commander of Section 2 for the Amphibious phase of Ex FINAL THRUST and was the 1st individual to disembark the craft. Witness 4
- 1.3.17. **Cpl 3.** Cpl 3 joined the RM in 2012 and had served in various Cdo units. He joined CTCRM in late 2019. Cpl 3 was the Commander of Section 3 for the Amphibious phase of Ex FINAL THRUST and did not disembark the craft. At the time of the accident he was located in the bow area of the craft. Witness 5
- 1.3.18. **Cpl 4.** Cpl 4 joined the RM in 2008 and had served in various Cdo units including CTCRM. He was assigned back to CTCRM in May 2019. Cpl 4 was the Exercise Assistant for the Amphibious Phase of Ex FINAL THRUST and, at the time of the accident, was located at the top of the vertical assault. Witness 6
Exhibit 004
- 1.3.19. **Mountain Leader 1 (ML1).** The ML1 joined the RM in 1998. He completed his ML2 course in 2008 and then ML1 course in 2011. He became head of the ML section at CTCRM in 2019. ML1 was responsible for the vertical assault activity for the Amphibious Phase of the Ex FINAL THRUST and, at the time of the accident, he was located at the top of the vertical assault. Witness 7
- 1.3.20. **Mountain Leader 2 (ML2).** The ML2 joined the RM in 2010. ML2 was assisting ML1 at the vertical assault for the Amphibious Phase of the Ex FINAL THRUST. At the time of the accident he was located at the base of the vertical assault. Witness 8
- 1.3.21. **Medical Assistant (MA).** The MA joined the RN in 2015. In 2016 he was assigned to CTCRM and employed within the unit medical centre. The MA was responsible for providing medical cover for the vertical assault in the Amphibious Phase of the Ex FINAL THRUST. At the time of the accident he was located at the top of the vertical assault in the Battlefield Ambulance (BFA). Witness 9
- 1.3.22. **Coxswain A (Coxn A).** Coxn A joined the RM in 2004 and had served in various Cdo units including at CTCRM. In early 2020 he was assigned Witness 10
Exhibit 005

to 47 Cdo (RG) RM. Coxn A was commanding LCVP 0338 whilst delivering the LC2 Course training to three students. At the time of the accident he was supervising one of the students who was at the helm of LCVP 0338 during the disembarkation of 282 Tp onto Tregantle Beach.

1.3.23. **Crewman 1.** Crewman 1 joined the RM in 2010 and had served in various Cdo and RN units. At the time of the accident he was a qualified LC3 crewman and a student on the LC2 Course and was performing the duties of Bowman on LCVP 0338 whilst disembarking 282 Tp onto Tregantle Beach.

Witness 11

1.3.24. **Crewman 2.** Crewman 2 joined the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps (RNLMC) in 2012 and the LC Branch in 2014. At the time of the accident he was a qualified LC3 crewman and a student on the LC2 Course and he was located on the starboard catwalk (right-hand side of the craft) whilst disembarking 282 Tp onto Tregantle Beach.

Witness 13

1.3.25. **Crewman 3.** Crewman 3 joined the RNLMC in 2013 and passed the basic LC Course in 2018. At the time of the accident he was a qualified LC3 crewman and a student on the LC2 Course and was at the helm of LCVP 0338, operating the craft as a trainee coxswain under the supervision of Coxn A, whilst disembarking 282 Tp onto Tregantle Beach.

Witness 12

1.3.26. **Coxn B.** Coxn B joined the RM in 2009 and had served with various Cdo and RN units. He was assigned to 47 Cdo (RG) RM in 2019. At the time of the accident Coxn B was commanding LCVP 0354 at sea in the vicinity of Tregantle Beach.

Witness 14

Pre-Accident Activity

1.3.27. **General.** Pre-accident activity is bounded by events on 20 January 2020 to approximately 21:35 on 21 January 2020 (the administrative and tactical activity in preparation for the Amphibious Phase, including the beach landing up until the first person disembarked LCVP 0338 onto Tregantle Beach).

1.3.28. **282 Tp Activity.** 282 Tp arrived at HMNB Devonport from RM Barracks Stonehouse, Plymouth via a LCVP commanded by Coxn B on 20 January 2020. Due to reduced troop numbers through injury on the previous two phases of Ex FINAL THRUST, 282 Tp was reorganised into three sections. After reorganisation, Sections 1, 2 and 3 contained 10,11 and 10 recruits respectively and were commanded by Cpl 1, Cpl 2 and Cpl 3 respectively. Cpl 4 and four recruits from Section 1 conducted a reconnaissance of Tregantle Fort between 20:00 on 20 January 2020 and 14:35 on 21 January 2020. Recruit Jones did not take part in that activity and conducted a period of rest that evening with the remaining recruits. Tp Orders took place in the Striker Building at 47 Cdo (RG) RM's base location between approximately 16:00 and 17:30 on 21 January 2020. All 31 recruits and the 6 members of the Tp Trg Team were in attendance at the orders. During the orders the Tp Comd briefed the troop that the decision

Witness 1
Witness 2
Witness 3
Witness 4
Witness 5
Witness 6
Witness 10
Witness 14
Witness 15
Witness 16

on when to remove life jackets would be made by the Coxn after the orders. As part of the Combat Service Support² element of the orders process, the Tp Sgt gave the seating plan for the craft. The Tp Sgt and Cpl 4 left straight after the orders to proceed to Tregantle Fort and did not attend the rehearsals. Rehearsals for the attack on the Fort then took place, concentrating on tactical section positions, room entrance and clearance procedures. No rehearsals were conducted for the craft loading, beach landing or disembarkation.

1.3.29. LC2 Course Activity. Coxn A and another LCVP coxn had been instructing LCVP drills with students from the LC2 Course on two craft on the morning of the 21 January 2020. Unconnected to the LC2 Course syllabus, Coxn B was due to conduct a single craft LCVP task that evening to deliver 282 Tp from HMNB Devonport to Tregantle Beach. Coxn A discussed the task with Coxn B and agreed to employ two craft (LCVP 0354 and 0338) to conduct the task which would also offer the LC2 students additional night time navigation and beaching experience. Whilst discussing the task, the decision to remove Assault Troop Life Jackets (ATLJ) prior to landing was also considered and approved by both Coxn A and Coxn B, due to the benign conditions that were forecast that evening. Coxn A asked permission to execute the revised plan with the LC2 Course Sgt who agreed. Coxn A decided with Coxn B that he would lead the task. Coxn A then tasked the LC2 Course students with producing the passage plan³ for that evening's task and once completed the LC2 Course was stood down for the afternoon. Crewman 1 was the first to arrive back in the evening and conducted pre-sailing checks on both LCVP 0338 and 0354 until other members of the LC2 Course arrived 30 to 45 minutes later. Once the other LC2 Course students arrived they continued with the pre-sail checks.

1.3.30. Craft Briefing and Loading. After rehearsals 282 Tp donned equipment, including climbing harnesses and ATLJs, then proceeded to the jetty where the LCVPs were berthed. An Infra-Red Cyalume® was also placed on each of the recruits' helmets so that the recruits could be observed through Night Vision Device (NVD) during the assault on Tregantle Fort. Coxn A met with the Trg Team on the jetty and informed them that ATLJs would be removed prior to the beach landing. 282 Tp recruits proceeded to LCVP 0338 and Coxn A delivered a brief to the gathered Tp on the jetty. Coxn A briefed from the elevated position of the catwalk of the craft. 282 Tp recruits embarked the craft over the side into the bow area and entered the canopy⁴ via the front doors. The 282 Tp recruits had embarked LCVP 0338 before Coxn B arrived on the jetty.

Exhibit 091
Witness 10
Witness 11
Witness 14
Witness 17

Witness 1
Witness 3
Witness 4
Witness 10
Witness 14
Witness 18

² The Army Field Manual (Sustainment) defines Combat Service Support (CSS) is the support provided to combat forces, primarily in the fields of administration and logistics.

³ Passage planning or voyage planning is a procedure to develop a complete description of a vessel's voyage from start to finish, (www.rya.org.uk accessed 23 Jul 20; BRd 6600 (Vol 1) Chapter 3 states that commanders and coxswains are to devote as much time as possible to careful planning).

⁴ Removable Arctic covers are provided to enclose much of the welldeck to provide some comfort to personnel in adverse weather conditions (BRd 7943 Principal Vessel Publication).

1.3.31. **Craft Passage.** LCVP 0338, with Crewman 2 at the helm, followed by LCVP 0354 departed HMNB Devonport. When both craft were south of Plymouth Breakwater, they slowed to allow the test firing of blank ammunition from the General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs). At this point Crewman 2 swapped with Crewman 3 on the helm of LCVP 0338.

Exhibit 006
Witness 10
Witness 11
Witness 13

1.3.32. **FRV and Beach Approach.** Both LCVPs arrived in the FRV at 20:50, approximately 1 NM from the beach. On board LCVP 0338, Coxn A told Crewman 1 that the latter would be the Bowman for the beach landing. On leaving the FRV, Coxn A told Crewman 1 to relay the order 'Prepare to Beach' to 282 Tp; the order that included the explicit action to remove their ATLJs. 282 Tp removed their ATLJs and stowed them under the benches. LCVP 0338 proceeded towards the beach.

Exhibit 006
Witness 1
Witness 4
Witness 5
Witness 10
Witness 11
Witness 14
Witness 19

1.3.33. **Landing.** LCVP 0338 landed on the beach at approximately 21:35. Coxn A gave the order 'ramp down' and Crewman 1 lowered the ramp until it touched the sand. Coxn A then gave the order 'out troops' to start the disembarkation process.

Exhibit 006
Witness 1
Witness 3
Witness 4
Witness 5
Witness 11

Accident Activity

1.3.34. **General.** The accident section is bounded by activity on 21 January 2020 between approximately 21:35 (the first person to disembark LCVP 0338) to the emergency beaching⁵ of the craft.

1.3.35. **Tp Disembarkation Process.** Crewman 1 and Cpl 3 were at the bow of LCVP 0338 when the disembarkation commenced. 282 Tp disembarked the craft in single file using only the port side of the ramp. The depth of the water for the first individual to disembark was approximately 0.77 m. The troops were initially observed through a NVD to be disembarking and progressing up the beach by ML1 and Cpl 4 at the top of the vertical assault. Then Cpl 4 observed LCVP 0338 move backwards from the white water towards deeper water and both ML1 and Cpl 4 observed Infra-Red Cyalumes® in random places in the white water around the front of LCVP 0338. The depth of water increased during the disembarkation and the last eight recruits (including Recruit Jones) of the 26 individuals to leave the craft were initially submerged.

Witness 1
Witness 4
Witness 5
Witness 6
Witness 7
Witness 11

1.3.36. **Recovery of Two Recruits.** Coxn A then came forward down the port catwalk of the LCVP to enquire why the disembarkation had been taking so long. At that point a recruit was seen in difficulty swimming in the water on the port side by Cpl 3. Crewman 1 then shouted back to the wheelhouse for the craft to go astern. The craft retracted to ensure the recruit in the water on the port

Witness 4
Witness 5
Witness 10
Witness 11
Witness 12

⁵ An emergency beaching is an unofficial term to describe the action of propelling the craft onto the beach with sufficient forward momentum to afford accessibility to the craft and/or provide a stable platform, often with disregard to the tactical situation and the timely retraction of the craft back into deep water.

side remained visible. Coxn A then ordered the craft to go forward again and noticed two recruits in the water on the starboard side of the craft. Simultaneously, the water depth was tested using a LCVP boat hook⁶ by Crewman 2 but no seabed was detected despite using the whole length of the boat hook. Crewman 2 then physically stopped the next recruit from disembarking the LCVP. Cpl 3 contacted the Tp Comd, Cpl 1 and Cpl 2 (at the base of the vertical assault) via military radio stating that they had recruits in difficulty in the water and to conduct a head count. Crewman 1 and Crewman 2 moved to the starboard side to recover the nearest recruit. Coxn A then informed the crew that he was going to jump in to the sea to rescue the recruit furthest from the starboard side of the craft. Coxn A entered the sea, in line with the front of the LCVP wheelhouse and his lifejacket⁷ automatically inflated. Crewman 1 and Crewman 2 recovered the recruit nearest to the LCVP onto the starboard side of the ramp. Coxn A and the recruit furthest from the starboard side of the craft were also recovered to the starboard side of the ramp. Coxn A then attempted to remove his own lifejacket as it was restricting his breathing and only did so with the help of Crewman 2.

Witness 13
Witness 20

1.3.37. **Recovery of Recruit Jones.** After the two recruits had been recovered back to the LCVP, Cpl 3 noticed a daysack floating in the water off the starboard bow. Coxn A jumped into the sea for a second time and swam over to the daysack and realised an individual was attached to it, face down in the water (Recruit Jones). Coxn A swam back to the craft with Recruit Jones and they were both recovered onto the craft with assistance of the powered ramp. Once Recruit Jones was on the ramp of the craft, Crewman 1 removed some of Recruit Jones's equipment and Coxn A began Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Coxn A also shouted the order to beach the craft. On receipt of the order, Crewman 3, still at the helm of LCVP 0338, emergency beached the LCVP.

Witness 5
Witness 10
Witness 11
Witness 13

Post-Accident Activity

1.3.38. **General.** The post-accident section is bounded by activity on 21 January 2020 from approximately 21:50 (the emergency beaching of the LCVP) to the completion of activity on Tregantle Beach on 22 January 2020.

1.3.39. **Reaction.** After the LCVP had emergency beached, the Tp Comd and Cpl 1, who were waiting at the water's edge, waded out to the craft. Following several head counts of the recruits at the bottom of the vertical assault by Cpl 2 and on board the craft by Cpl 3, the location of all of the recruits was established. The MA at the top of the vertical assault in the BFA was alerted to a potential incident by the ML1 and they proceeded to the beached LCVP. ML1, Cpl 4 and the Tp Sgt made 999 calls on their mobile phones at 22:01, 22:03 and

Witness 1
Witness 3
Witness 4
Witness 7
Witness 9

⁶ The LCVP carried two boat hooks of different lengths and although it could not be determined which length boat hook was used, the shortest boat hook was 1.85 m long and therefore concluded that the depth of water must have exceeded 1.85 m at that point.

⁷ Coxn A was wearing a Landing Craftsman's Life Jacket (LCLJ) that automatically inflates upon submersion in water.

22:06 respectively. Realising that the MA had only taken his medical bag, the ML2 ascended the vertical assault to the BFA to retrieve additional medical equipment (defibrillator, Entonox® and oxygen). On return to the base of the vertical assault, ML2 then instructed two recruits to assist him to carry the additional medical equipment to the LCVP. On arrival of the MA at the LCVP, CPR was being provided to Recruit Jones by Cpl 1, Cpl 2 and the Tp Comd. The MA assumed control of the medical care being administered to Recruit Jones.

Witness 2
Witness 5
Witness 6
Witness 8
Witness 28
Witness 29

1.3.40. **Casualty Treatment.** The ML1 returned to the base of the vertical assault from the LCVP and instructed two recruits to climb the vertical assault and guide the BFA to the beach exit. The South West Ambulance Service paramedics descended from the main road via the coastal path and arrived on board the LCVP at 22:16. The MA conducted a casualty handover with the paramedics and Recruit Jones was moved from the LCVP to the beach using the stretcher from the LCVP. During treatment by the paramedics Recruit Jones had to be moved further up the beach due to the rising tide.

Exhibit 007
Exhibit 008
Witness 1
Witness 3
Witness 4
Witness 6
Witness 7
Witness 9
Witness 28
Witness 30
Exhibit 006
Witness 1
Witness 10
Witness 14
Witness 31
Exhibit 009

1.3.41. **Craft Departure.** The LCVP 0338 retracted from the beach and Coxn A was transferred onto LCVP 0354. Both LCVPs departed the Tregantle beach area at 22:50 and returned to HMNB Devonport under the supervision of Coxn B with 11 recruits⁸.

1.3.42. **Casualty Evacuation.** The Maritime Coastguard Agency Search And Rescue (SAR) helicopter landed on the beach at 22:36 and evacuated Recruit Jones, accompanied by the Tp Sgt, to Derriford Hospital in Plymouth. It took off from the beach at 23:04 and arrived at Derriford Hospital at 23:11.

1.3.43. **Post-Casualty Evacuation.** The recruits on the beach and the Trg Team moved to Tregantle Fort to conduct administration. The recruits who had returned to HMNB Devonport on LCVP 0338 were subsequently collected by Cpl 1, Cpl 2 and Cpl 4 and taken back by road to Tregantle Fort. The Tp Sgt was replaced at Derriford Hospital in the early hours of the morning and returned to Tregantle Fort. At approximately 04:00 on the 22 January 2020, 282 Tp were joined by the Commanding Officer of Commando Training Wing (CO CTW) and the Padre from CTCRM to start the initial pastoral care process. At first light, a search was conducted to find Recruit Jones's Helmet and Helmet Mounted Night Vision System (HMNVS) that were lost during the accident.

Witness 1
Witness 3
Witness 7
Witness 8
Witness 9

Witness 36
Witness 37

1.3.44. **Defence Accident Investigation Branch (DAIB) activity.** At 07:45 on 22 January 2020, the DAIB was notified of an accident at Tregantle Beach by the Navy Safety Centre and later that day deployed an investigation team.

Exhibit 010

⁸ The eleven recruits were made up of eight recruits who had not disembarked LCVP 0338, two recruits who were recovered from the water and the recruit who had delivered the oxygen and subsequently remained on the craft.

Cause of Death

1.3.45. **Cause of Death.** Recruit Jones was subsequently pronounced dead on 24 January 2020 in Derriford Hospital, Plymouth. The cause of death offered by the Doctors at Derriford Hospital to the Plymouth, Torbay and South Devon Coroner was [REDACTED] from drowning.

Exhibit 011

ACCIDENT TIMELINE

Date	Time	Event
27 May 19	-	Rct Jones's first day in 282 Tp at CTCRM, Lympstone
06 Jan 20		Coxn A reported for duty at 47 Cdo (RG) RM
15 Jan 20		Start of EX FINAL THRUST
21 Jan 20	~16:00-19:45	Orders, Rehearsals and Battle Preparations took place
	19:45 & 19:50	LCVP 0338 and LCVP 0354 departed HMNB Devonport respectively
	20:50	LCVP 0338 and LCVP 0354 arrived in vicinity of FRV
		LCVP 0338 departed FRV
		Order given by Coxn A to Prepare to Beach
	21:27	Low Tide (1.7 m) at Plymouth
	~21:35	LCVP 0338 Beach Landing and troops started to disembark
		LCVP 0338 was observed moving astern out of white water
		Recruits were seen in difficulty in the sea and two recruits were rescued back onto LCVP 0338
		A daysack was observed in the sea
		Recruit Jones was recovered onto the ramp of LCVP 0338 and First Aid was administered
	22:01	1 st 999 phone call made
	22:03	2 nd 999 phone call made
	22:06	3 rd 999 phone call made
	22:16	SW Ambulance Service paramedics arrived on board LCVP 0338
		Rct Jones was transported to the beach by stretcher from LCVP 0338
		LCVP 0338 retracted from beach
	22:30	Coxn A was transferred from LCVP 0338 to LCVP 0354
	22:36	SAR Helicopter landed on the beach
	22:50	Both LCVPs departed Tregantle Beach area for HMNB Devonport
	23:04	SAR Helicopter departed Tregantle Beach with Recruit Jones and Tp Sgt
	23:11	SAR Helicopter arrived at Derriford Hospital with Recruit Jones and Tp Sgt
		Recruits on the beach were taken up to Tregantle Fort
	23:26 & 23:38	LCVP 0354 and LCVP 0338 arrived back at HMNB Devonport respectively
22 Jan 20	~04:00	CO CTW and Padre arrived at Tregantle Fort
	~06:00	282 Tp conducted a search on the beach
24 Jan 20		Recruit Jones pronounced dead

Table 1 – Accident Timeline.

~~OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE~~

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