



MOD-83-0000534-A

Dated.....01/06/22.....

**In the matter of an investigation into the deaths of Radhi Nama and Mousa Ali
and**

In the matter of an investigation into the death of Ahmed Jabbar Karim Ali

Inspector: Baroness Heather Hallett PC DBE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF

WO2 [REDACTED] SO81

I, WO2 [REDACTED] SO81 state as follows:-

1. I make this statement for the purpose of the investigation into the deaths above named.

A. Background

2. I joined the Armed Forces in 1987. My regular regiment was the Royal Highland Fusiliers (RHF). I left regular army in 2011 after 24 years of service. I held the rank of WO1.
3. I rejoined almost immediately under the full-time Reservist Scheme (FTRS) to undertake my current role. [REDACTED]
4. I can confirm the contents of my statement dated 01 May 2014.
5. I was attached to 1st Black Watch (1BW) around June 2002. In March 2003, I was deployed to Basrah in Iraq as part of Operation Relic. I was based at a place that became known as Camp Stephen. At the time of the deployment I held the rank of Colour Sergeant. My main role with 1BW was as a technical sergeant looking after the various vehicles they could use in performing their duties. One of my specific duties and responsibilities, at times, was to act as a driver for the Officer Commanding (OC) 1BW – Major [REDACTED] SO88. In undertaking this role, I was responsible for providing close protection to the OC particularly if we had to get out of the vehicle at any time.

6. I was responsible for Corporal Kennedy. Each sub platoons had a technical sergeant who would update me about issues with the vehicles. It was a small team. I reported to Major [REDACTED] SO88. Major [REDACTED] SO88 reported to the commanding officer (CO), whose name I can no longer recall.

B. Training and Instruction

7. I did receive training whilst in Germany before I was deployed to Iraq. This involved attending various sites in Germany. I have been asked about the following training areas:
 - a. *The Rules of Engagement in the post-war fighting phase of Operation TELIC;* I did receive training in relation to the Rules of Engagement. I also received small white cards, which indicated set out the Rules of Engagement. This included information about when a soldier could fire a weapon. The Rules of Engagement would have changed and new cards issued.
 - b. *Maintaining law and order and the prevention of looting;* I would have received yearly MATT training, which included law and armed conflict as it was known back then. I cannot recall any specific training about looting by the local population.
 - c. *The detention of individuals;* I received general Prisoner of War training.
 - d. *The use and dangers of water during detention;* I was not given any specific training, but the training I did receive was to treat all detainees humanely and how I would like to be treated. I would have not needed training to know that things like water boarding were inappropriate.
 - e. *The use of restraint techniques;* I would have received training on restraint techniques as part the general training.
 - f. *Prisoner handling;* Prisoner handling was not relevant to my role so I would not expect to receive training in this area. I would expect troops who conducted Ops or the Royal Military Police (RMP) would have more training in this area.
 - g. *The processing of detainees;* Again, this was not relevant to my role.
 - h. *Training, briefing or instruction specific to your role at Camp Stephen.* I would have been given training and information about the culture in Iraq, religion, dress, how to treat women, Ramadan etc.

C. Detainees at Camp Stephen

a. Camp Stephen

8. I had no involvement with detainees at Camp Stephen.
9. Looting was a reason to take detainees to Camp Stephen. It was a deterrent to stop them from doing it. Any person you suspected as having contact with who was enemy forces may also be taken to Camp Stephen. The Commander on the ground would make decision whether to take detainees to CS.

10. WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 would have been responsible for detainees at Camp Stephen as that was part of his role.
11. There was a stream outside of Camp Stephen. I would describe it as a dirty old river. It was stinking and smelling; kind of like a sewerage. There was no sewerage system there so this was common. It was definitely not for drinking. There were watch points at the front of Camp Stephen and there was probably some visibility of the stream from there. However, I never had any reason to be in the watch points so I cannot say with any certainty.

b. Detainees

12. After the combat operations had ended, the city of Basrah was a surreal place. People were trying to get back to normal life. They lived in poverty and there was a lack of food and water there already.
13. Looting was taking place and we focused on the big factories, which would have been needed later for construction works or to rebuild the infrastructure of the city. The focus was to get working electricity and running water and to protect hospitals. Each Company (Coy) had their own area of responsibility, so would focus on that area. I explained in my statement of 1 May 2014 that I regularly went out with the OC as the 1BW area of responsibility covered a high number of high value premises and facilities, including banks, water points and a metal works. Even though there was a lot of looting and disorder going on, I would not say that there were major incidents or events occurring on a daily basis.
14. In particular, there was looting at the metal factory. People were taking donkeys and vehicles inside to remove the metal. Our prime role was to stop it from happening. If we caught someone using a vehicle or machinery for looting, we would confiscate it and sometime disconnect so that it could no longer be used. Major [REDACTED] SO88 would have been getting orders from the AO which, included information from officers in different areas about what was going on there with looting. There would have also been liaison in the local community with Iraqi people.
15. To deal with the problem of looting, looters were taken from the place where they had been caught stealing and taken back to camp for couple of hours and then they would be released. We would try to target the main people who were involved in looting and we targeted locations, sometimes at night, where we knew that it was happening. Very often, lots of people would run when they saw the officers. It was like cat and mouse. We also tried to show a presence in areas where looting was happening and on highways.
16. I did see them being detained. I attended a planned operation on the metal works. We attended with the full Coy strength. Many looters were detained and brought back to Camp Stephen. The purpose of detaining the looters was to immediately stop the looting and to act as a deterrent to other. There was no other consequence. The detainees were not held at Camp Stephen for any period of time. However, the word

would spread that people were being detained and they would also have to find their own way home.

17. I had no involvement with detainees whilst there were being detained. I am unable to say where they were processed or what happened to them if they were not processed at Camp Stephen.

c. Orders

18. I do not recall Major [SO88] giving any order to stop putting individuals into the river and I don't not recall this type of event happening however I am sure if it was happening Major [SO88] would have stopped it immediately There were nightly command conferences which between four and six officers would have attended so if any command was given it is possible that it was then.
19. If the order was given I have no idea how the whether the orders met any resistance from commanders on the ground. I doubt that there would have been, as no one would question the chain of command. I do not know how troops received the orders.
20. I can say that I was not given any directions to use water as a deterrent to looting, nor can I recall being given any directions from commanders about placing detainees into water. I am certain that any commands would include that prisoners should be treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

d. Knowledge of senior commanders

21. I was not aware of the practice using water on detainees. I do not know if commanders knew it was happening or what their response to this was. If they did know, they should have put a stop to it.

e. Outside of Camp Stephen

22. I did not see any detainees being forced into the stream outside of Camp Stephen. I am not aware of any incident involving Corporal [SO102] and a detainee being placed into water.

D. Existence and awareness of 'wetting'

a. 'Wetting' Generally

23. I have been asked to describe what I understand the term "wetting" to mean. I believe that it is to put a sandbag over the face of a person and pouring water over them.

24. I did not witness any incidents of detainees being placed into water at any location. I also did not see any detainees being transported for this purpose. I cannot say why detainees were transported to water or how far they were taken.

b. Reporting of wetting incidents

25. If a detainee was placed into or entered water, there would have been a general requirement to report it. It would be fed through to commanders and the OC would expect the reason for the incident to be reported.

26. I have no idea if detainees were brought back to Camp Stephen after being placed into water.

E. Culture at Camp Stephen

27. I previously stated that 1BW are a very close knit regiment and if you join them from another regiment as I did it can take time for them to fully accept you and the only on their terms. My earlier regiment was the RHF so it took time to ease my way in. I enjoyed my attachment with them, which lasted for about 18 to 20 months. I found 1BW to be a professional and drilled regiment. There was a detachment of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) at Camp Stephen as well as a detachment from 1 Irish Guards 1(IG).

28. There was strain in the Camp during certain periods, particularly as one of the soldiers was killed. There would be a dip in morale if someone was killed or injured. The rest of the time, we would eat, sleep and get on with the job.

29. I think that Iraqi civilians were treated fairly and humanely in general. There were civilians working in the camp as interpreters and possible in the cook house.

30. As far as I am aware Iraqi detainees were treated fairly too. I had no cause to go to the EPW cage so I cannot comment on how detainees were treated whilst they were held there.

31. I have been asked to describe what I understand by the term "beasting". To me it means to get someone to physically do something i.e. star jumps or press up and possibly in stress positions.

32. I recall one incident at Camp Stephen where a vehicle had come in with a detainee. The detainee was dragged out of the vehicle and a soldier raised a leg to kick him. I am not sure what the build up to this event was, ie did the detainee try to do something and the soldier was trying to stop the action. I intervened. I was told to mind my own business by his officer. I cannot recall their names. I think that they might have been from the same platoon as L/Cpl Barry Stephens who was killed in Iraq. I did not witness any other incidents of mistreatment and I did not hear any threats being made to

detainees. I cannot say how soldiers who mistreated detainees were considered by the others in camp.

a. NCOs

33. Major [SO88] had a tight grasp over the commanders at Camp Stephen. He would have been directing the commanders to carry out their jobs. Some of them were not doing their usual jobs; i.e. the Mortar Platoon were not firing mortars. There was a bit flexibility with the commanders - they were allowed to make decisions about their troops.
34. The NCOs who were influential in the Camp were WO2 [SO101] and all of the Platoon Sergeants. WO2 [SO101] was in charge of the camp. He was the second in command to Major [SO88]. Nothing would have been done without him knowing about it. He would have had oversight of security, EPW, parking, sentries etc.
35. I am not aware of any incidents of detention or mistreatment of detainees involving WO2 [SO101] or Corporal [SO102].
36. My relationship with WO2 [SO101] was strained when I became involved in a matter that resulted in him facing a court martial. I was responsible for the vehicles used by 1BW and in particular, I was aware of how their weapons systems on the Warriors worked. Whilst in Iraq, WO2 [SO101] fired a Warrior chain gun and seriously injured a colleague. The explanation put forward was a defect in the firing system. I was called as a witness in the court martial to give my expert opinion about the firing mechanism, which contradicted the explanation put forward by WO2 [SO101], as I did not consider the chain gun could have operated in the way he had described.
37. I had other concerns about WO2 [SO101]'s conduct and attitude after he accidentally discharged an AK47 rifle he possessed. That matter was also investigated and the rifle was being tested by the REME personnel in Camp Stephen. It was alleged by the REME staff that he took the rifle from them and tampered with it before returning it to them.
38. I understand that there was a relationship between WO2 [SO101] and Sergeant [SO111], who was RMP. I understand their relationship began prior to their deployment to Iraq. I know that Sergeant [SO111] and WO2 [SO101] lived together from time to time in the accommodation at camp Stephen. They shared what I can only describe as a boudoir in the accommodation block and I do not imagine the decoration was something that WO2 [SO101] would do if he was on his own.
39. The RMP did go out with 1BW from time to time. I believe this arose because of the intervention of WO2 [SO101] as he thought the RMP needed to be afforded a level of protection. So although that may have been put forward as the purpose it seemed to me that having members of 1BW out with the RMP was a draw on limited 1BW resources. My feeling was that this occurred more as a result of the close relationship between WO2 [SO101] and Sergeant [SO111] who was from the RMP.

40. I think that it is fair to say that WO2 [redacted] SO101 and I did not get on. However, I would describe my relationship with the OC as good. In my opinion the OC and WO2 [redacted] SO101 had a strong relationship but that is what I would have expected an OC and CSM to have in order to enable the Company to function properly.

I believe that the facts stated are true.

[redacted] SO81
Signed [redacted]

Dated... 1/6/22