



MOD-83-0000581-A

Witness Statement No 1

WO1 [REDACTED] SO86

Dated 01 Jun 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

WO1 [REDACTED] SO86

I, WO1 [REDACTED] SO86 will state as follows:-

1. I am making this statement for the purposes of the investigations into the deaths of the above named individuals.

A. Background

2. I joined the army in 1994. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. I now hold the rank of WO1, [REDACTED]. Throughout my career, I have been temporarily attached to various regiments, which is normal for soldiers with specialist skills. I have completed tours in Northern Ireland, Cyprus (UN) Bosnia, Iraq (x2) and Afghanistan.
3. I was involved in a serious car accident [REDACTED]. I suffered serious physical injuries and developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of the accident. I spent two and a half years receiving treatment before I was able to return to work. I was greatly assisted by the Army's mental health support. My memory has been greatly affected by the accident and I have difficulty remembering past events.

4. I have previously given two statements to the Iraq Historic Allegation Team (IHAT) on 15 July and 23 July 2014. I confirm that the contents of these statements are correct. There is one minor point that I wish to clarify which I have explained below.
5. In early 2003, I held the rank of Lance Corporal and was stationed at Fallingbommel, Germany. At this time, I was attached to the 1st Battalion Black Watch (1BW). [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. I also conducted foot patrols with Recce Platoon.
6. The Company Sergeant of 1BW was WO2 [REDACTED] SO101. Major [REDACTED] SO88 was the Officer Commanding (OC). I reported to both Staff Sergeants [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I cannot recall which of them was present at Camp Stephen in May 2003.

B. Training and Instruction

7. I have been asked by the IFI to confirm whether I received any training, briefing or instruction in relation to the following areas:
 - a. *The Rule of Engagement in the post-war fighting phase of Operation TELIC*: I think that we did receive training that covered the generic rules of engagement. I don't think that they would have changed whilst we in Iraq.
 - b. *Maintaining Law and Order and the prevention of looting*: I cannot recall receiving any training about this.
 - c. *The detention of individuals*: [REDACTED], so I do not think that I would have been given this training.
 - d. *The use of dangers of water during detention*: I cannot recall anything specific about this.
 - e. *Prisoner handling*: As above, this was not part of role so I would not have had training in this area.
 - f. *The processing of detainees and the requirements for medical examination*: Again, this was not relevant to my role.

- g. Training, briefing or instruction specific to my role at Camp Stephen:* I do not think that there was any specific training, although we might have had some training before we left Germany about the culture in Iraq.

C. Detainees at Camp Stephen

8. Once the combat operations ended, I would describe some areas of the city as being relieved and some as being angry. I have described in detail below an incident of looting of a factory producing metal rods. There were operations to secure the factory and capture the civilians who were doing it.
9. I have been asked to comment on my role with regards to detainees at Camp Stephen. My role [REDACTED] meant that I had no contact with the detainees. From what I can remember, if troops caught any civilian, they would detain them and request transport to go to come and pick them up. They would take them to Camp Stephen or elsewhere. I do not know why detainees would be taken to Camp Stephen. It is possible that it was for processing. I do not know who made the decision to bring detainees to Camp Stephen. In regards to who was responsible for detainees at Camp Stephen, it was most likely WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 as it would have been part of his job role.

D. Culture at Camp Stephen

10. The culture at Camp Stephen was tense at times, particularly after WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 left and a colour sergeant stood in for him. I left Camp Stephen in July 2003 so I am unable to comment on the culture after that time.
11. Iraqi civilians were viewed as just being part of the general population. In my view, detainees were viewed as prisoners and it was thought that they had done something wrong and that there was a reason for their detention.
12. I have been asked to explain my understanding of the term "beasting". In an army context, it is pushing someone beyond their limits or further than they thought they could go. When I went through basic training, PT sessions were known as beastings. I didn't see any incidents of beastings whilst at Camp Stephen.

13. I have been asked how detainees were treated when they were in the EPW cage. I never went into the EPW cage. I had no reason to go there. I was not involved in the detention of detainees and my job did not require me to go in there. The REME work area was an open area of hard standing and close to it was the detention area for prisoners. This was a desert camouflage net held up by poles and pegged into the ground. I recall it was difficult to see into it from the outside.
14. I remember one particular incident, which I heard from outside of the EPW cage. As far as I can recall it was during the evening, I was talking with another REME soldier, at this time I can't remember who it was, all I remember at this is that he was senior in rank to me. I heard the sound, similar to that of someone being punched and/or slapped and the sound of someone crying out in pain, this occurred between one to five times. This sound came from the direction of the prisoner detention area; there is no other area it could have come from. I looked in the direction and couldn't see anything. The lighting in the area at the time was very poor. As far as I can remember the lighting inside the camp was minimal. We were standing between 10 to 20 metres away from the prisoner detention area. There were no obstructions between me and the prisoner detention area. The REME soldier beside me said "This needs to stop", "Not on" he then walked off. I took it to mean that he was going to report this occurrence to the appropriate rank to get it stopped. I did not question this person on whether it had been reported or not, nor spoke with him about it again. I presumed he had reported the incident. I believe that it would have been reported through the Black Watch chain of command.
15. At the time of this incident, the OC, Major [REDACTED] SO88 and WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 were based at Camp Stephen. In fact, when prisoners were being held WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 would have gone across to the prisoner detention area, periodically. He would have to walk past where REME were based to get to the prisoner compound.
16. I did also witness other incidents of mistreatment of detainees at Camp Stephen. I recall that when Iraqi prisoners were brought in there was a lot of shouting and swearing, which I presumed was directed towards them. I did not witness this visually. However, you would always know when they were being brought in by the aggressive shouting and swearing. The accent of the soldiers swearing was Scottish, but I can't remember the words used other than that it was aggressive in tone. I presumed that any prisoners

brought in to Camp Stephen were taken to the tent where they were kept. This was not the way a soldier would speak to a fellow soldier, more like when an Officer or SNCO would shout at a soldier, when getting a dressing down.

17. I also remember, being woken on one or two occasions by what I presumed at the time as prisoners being brought in to camp Stephen and being shouted at. I made this assumption on what was being shouted at the recipients although; I cannot recall what was shouted. I did not make any effort to see what was going on, I turned over and went back to sleep.
18. At times there were other environmental noises such as a vehicle's engine being run, conversation etc. However, I would still be able to hear the sound of prisoners being shouted at above this.
19. I knew that the way prisoners were being treated was not right from what I had heard. The Army culture at that time was a lot different to what it is now, I knew that had I reported my concerns I would have got a difficult time and it would have not gone anywhere. I just got on with my work and this meant I had an easier time. Had I witnessed anything I would not have reported it.
20. There was one incident, which I did see, rather than hear. This occurred just outside of Camp Stephen. I was involved in an operation to deal with looters at the rod factory. This would have occurred somewhere between 60% to 70% of the time I spent, in Iraq whilst deployed in Camp Stephen. This factory had manufactured metal rods which were used as reinforcement for concrete and looters were stealing the metal from there.
21. As far as I recall, we established a perimeter around the factory closing off all exit routes. Once this was done we moved in and arrested all those we found inside the factory, this was roughly between 70 to 90 male persons.
22. In addition, there were a number of vehicles seized. I believe, I recovered a large tipper truck and transported it back to Camp Stephen. During our briefing, we had been told that any vehicles were to be recovered so they could be used again. During my time in Camp Stephen, there was almost a continual stream of vehicles being seized.

23. Following the operation, which occurred during night time, I cannot be more specific than that I was at Camp Stephen working on the large tipper vehicle just outside the camp. As far as I can recall, I believe [REDACTED] that's his nickname I don't remember his forename, surname [REDACTED] was working with me on the large tipper truck. We were working at the front of the vehicle. The prisoners were lined up outside Camp Stephen; they were standing upright with their hands against the wall, this was to the left of the camp as you looked towards it. They were in the process of being searched by 4 to 6 soldiers. None of the soldiers were armed; the soldiers in the sanger overlooking their position were providing cover for them.
24. After the prisoners had been searched they were laid face down on the ground in rows. (WO2) [REDACTED] SO101 was there issuing instructions. Prior to them being laid face down on the grounds, without warning, the lights in the camp and surrounding area went out. I looked up thinking at the same time "what the fucks going on?" Almost at the same time I heard the sound of someone being hit with a punch, a number of times and the sounds of different individuals crying and/or groaning out in pain. I can state from my own experience that I have been present when persons have been fighting and punches exchanged and I know the sound a blow makes when it hits the body, as well as when someone lets out a groan or cry in pain.
25. After about 20 seconds the lights came back on, at a distance of about 50 to 70 metres away from me, I would have been in a slightly elevated position. I saw [REDACTED] SO101 I recognised him immediately, he stands out, and you can't really miss him as he is tall and thin. He was in the area where I had heard the sounds come from, he was the closest to the Iraqi prisoners and I don't really remember any other soldiers close-by.
26. I didn't recognise any of the soldiers and thought they were probably from either Mortar or Milan platoons. There were no obstructions between us, as stated it was night time, with ambient light from the camp, hot with no adverse weather conditions.
27. Something was going on where WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 was standing; there were 3 or 4 prisoners getting up, from the ground, they were moving slowly, as in pain. I made the assumption at that time and still do that they had been struck as I had no reason to suppose how they could have fallen from their stable standing position. I do not know if

any of the prisoners had any injuries. I then heard a shouted instruction "get their fucking hands back on the wall" or words similar to that.

28. I continued to work on the large tipper vehicle for the next while. I eventually went to bed and when I awoke in the morning all the prisoners were gone. This is the only occasion I can recall that the lights in the camp went out.

29. I did not hear any detainees being threatened, other than the incidents described above. I did not hear any threats made regarding water.

30. As I have explained above, a senior colleague in REME indicated to me that he was going to report what he had heard in the EPW cage. I am unable to say whether he did report it or what happened after that.

31. I can say that a few days after this conversation, I remember hearing on the company grapevine, by this I mean the rumours amongst the soldiers that the Commanding Officer (CO) of the Black Watch and the RSM had come to Camp Stephen, where the CO gave all the senior NCO's and above a dressing down on how prisoners had been treated and this was to stop. He told them that all prisoners were to be properly treated from now on.

32. Following this, I not exactly sure how long, I think it was a day or two that Royal Military Police (RMP) L/Cpl's arrived at Camp Stephen; one was a female whom I did not know. The other was a male who I knew as [REDACTED] I think. He had previously been in the REME with me at Fallingbostel and transferred to the RMP. Both of them worked out of the Company HQ building and slept there as well I did not know their role. However, everyday they went over to the prisoner detention area. They arrived about halfway through the tour and remained there for about two months, until I left to return to Germany.

33. I do think that the chain of command had oversight over everything. It was a small compound and everyone was on top of each other.

34. I have been asked to comment on the influence that various people had in Camp Stephen. I cannot recall any NCO's who had any particular influence.

SO101

35. I have been asked whether I recognise WO2 [SO101] as dictating what went on within the Camp. He was the Company Sergeant Major so he was in control of the Camp. My boss would attend any briefings that he was involved in so I did not really have dealings with him.
36. I can state that he was not a popular man within the Company, which deteriorated even further following the incident with Sergeant [REDACTED]. I was wary of him and I thought that he was a bit of a bully.
37. He had a girlfriend in the RMP who came down to visit him quite a lot particularly after the incident with Sgt [REDACTED]. Speculation in Camp Stephen was that she was giving him advice on what to say regarding this. There was also chat that it was wrong for him to have the double bed in his room and have a relationship in theatre. Towards the end of the tour she was not there at all.
38. I have described incidents involving WO2 [SO101] mistreating detainees above.
39. I did have some contact with WO2 [SO101] [REDACTED]. I was tasked to Al Zubayr to inspect the Warrior vehicle WO2 [SO101] had been in when the chain gun discharged a number of rounds, which seriously injured Sergeant [REDACTED]. I recall that WO2 [SO101] alleged there was a fault in the chain gun control system, as it discharged the rounds without him touching or activating it. This incident occurred on the day L/Cpl Stephen of the Black Watch was killed by enemy action.
40. I remember one occasion when I was summoned to the sleeping quarters used by WO2 [SO101], this was situated in the Company Headquarters building and where the OC was also billeted. We had not been there for very long for and I cannot be more precise than that. He knew that I had inspected the chain gun in the warrior vehicle and quizzed me on how the system operated and if there were any circumstances where the chain gun could self-activate. I remember seeing a double bed in his room. Following this I was instructed by the CQMS, I cannot remember his name, not to talk to [SO101] again regarding this matter and to report it if he approached me. The CQMS had replaced, as far as I am aware WO2 [SO101] in running Support Company, following

the incident where Sgt [REDACTED] was seriously injured. I gave evidence in the court martial proceedings which took place in Iraq and at the later appeal hearing in the UK.

41. I also remember being asked by someone, I'm not sure who it was now, to examine an AK47 as it had been involved in a ND (negligent discharge) at that time I did not know who had allegedly discharged the weapon.

42. Shortly afterwards, I was told by someone cannot remember who, that [REDACTED] SO101 had been seen smashing an AK47 against a wall before he brought one to me for examination. I believe that Cpl [REDACTED] REME was also present when this weapon was initially presented to me for inspection, he too, could have examined it. I cannot recall that the weapon was serviceable or unserviceable. In total I would have examined more than ten and less than fifty AK47 rifles during my time in Camp Stephen. I cannot be more precise than that.

43. I think someone told me that WO2 [REDACTED] SO101 had an ND with another AK47. I cannot now recall who told me that. I do not know if he was fined or punished for these ND incidents.

44. I have been asked to describe Cpl [REDACTED] SO102 influence within Camp Stephen. I think that he was in the mortar platoon but I did not have any dealings with him. I cannot comment any further than that.

E. Existence and awareness of wetting

a. "Wetting" generally

45. I understand that wetting is someone being thrown into water, maybe with their hands tied and possibly to simulate drowning. I did not know about this practice or this term until I was interviewed by IHAT in 2014.

46. I did not witness any detainees being (i) placed into water, (ii) threatened with being placed into water, and/or (iii) transported to bodies of water. In my second statement dated 23 July 2014, I stated that I had a vague recollection of a "wetting" incident, this was when an Iraqi male was bought back inside the camp having been put in the water outside. I would like to clarify this. I believe that I said that, I had seen somebody who

was wet being brought into the camp and taken to the EPW cage. The Recce Platoon building was close to the entrance and I happened to be walking out of it at the time. I cannot recall who brought the detainee into the Camp. I do not think that I would have used the word wetting as I did not know it. The incident came to mind after I have been told what wetting was. I do not know how the detainee became to be wet. I did not report it at the time.

47. I cannot recall the date or approximate time of this incident or who was bringing the detainee into the camp. I cannot recall if there were any commanders or senior officers present. I only glanced at the detainee so I cannot recall anything specific about the water. I do think that he was dripping from head to foot. I cannot say how he became to be wet or where it took place. He was taken in the direction of the EPW cage. This was the only time that I witnessed anything like this.

48. I do not know why detainees would be placed into water. I do not recall seeing any detainees being put or thrown into the Shat Al-Arab river. I went out on quite a lot of Recce patrols and I never saw this.

49. As I did not witness any of the incidents of wetting, I cannot comment on the use of restraints on detainees; the use of force; what happened to detainees after being placed in water; whether they were in any danger or how long the practice of wetting went on for.

b. Reporting of "wetting" incidents

50. I do not know whether there was a requirement or process to report incidents of detainees entering or being placed into bodies of water. As I did not have contact with detainees, it was not something that would have been necessary for me to know about.

c. Chain of command

51. I do not recall Major SO88 having to intervene to stop detainees being placed into the stream outside of the camp. I cannot comment on why he had to do this or how he did it. I do not know what the reception of the other commanders or the troops was to his action. I had no idea that this was going on. I do not know when Major SO88 became aware.

52. As far as I am aware that were no directions given to use water generally as a deterrent to looting or about placing detainees in water. I have no idea whether commanders were aware.

d. Wetting at Camp Stephen

53. I did not witness any incidents of wetting at Camp Stephen. I cannot recall that there was a stream outside of Camp Stephen.

I believe that the facts stated I this witness are true.

Signed.....

 Recoverable Signature



Dated...01 Jun 22.....