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were still waiting to launch. I was like, oh it got too thick they are calling it, as I am sitting there in the water, after the no go I hear a boom! I was like, what the fuck?

WIT: So I asked my boat driver, did you hear that? And he was like, "Yea", so he asked the other guy, "are they doing some bomb drops"? and he was like, "I don't think so", but that was what we heard, that it was a no-go, and we couldn't see anything over the water and we could barely see the other safety boat towards the east, and to the west was where I heard the boom. So we started to head back and everything was good, our helo headed back and that was all that we knew. So we started heading back west, and my boat driver was like, "I can't see", so he asked the other boat driver to take the lead, and the other boat driver took the lead and as we were going back west we lost sight of him, and my driver turned off his engine and was like, "Hey I don't know where you are, can you turn on your strobe"? So he turns on his strobe and we are looking and we can't see anything, then we look behind us, and his boat is actually behind us so somehow in the fog we got turned around and we were heading east vs west. Once we re-orientated ourselves we took off and headed back west and as we would get closer you would see the patches and how bad they were because we could see his light then and as we were still approaching that direction it would go off and you couldn't see the strobe light, then we would clear that patch and then we could see the strobe light again. We headed in and then we pulled in and myself and [REDACTED] got off and we drove over to the boat locker, and when we got there, there was only one set of aircrew there, then they were like where are these guys at? And I was like, what do you mean where are these guys at? They were with you guys. The pilots that were there got on the green gear, and the other guys were calling cell phones, and [REDACTED] was like, they said they were pulling straight up and that they were trying to get over the fog, and that he was hoping they were going to land somewhere. They called Eglin, and they called Pensacola, and a few other airports to see if anybody had seen them or if they had landed there. He then jumped on green gear and started trying to communicate with other aircraft in the air and try to get them to relay a message to MOJO 69, and everyone else was saying that they couldn't get a hold of anybody. Then [REDACTED] asked the other pilot, I think it was [REDACTED], and asked him, "hey what is your guys protocol"? Since we were not getting a hold of anyone. He said that generally we wait for an hour before we call in search and rescue, and I was like OK. On the Marine side we are not too used to any of that, so we were getting kind of nervous, and I told [REDACTED], dude something bad happened, I heard a sound, I don't know what it was, so I described it to him, and he was like, "Hey talk to the pilot". So I went and talked to [REDACTED], and he was like, "What sound did you hear"? I was like, it was a boom, and he was like, "Well that is not really consistent with an aircraft going down, you would hear a lot of screeching, and screaming, and squealing", I was like if you are talking about like the scene in black hawk down, no I didn't hear any of that, what I heard was a boom, he was like, OK, and they were still trying to make contact. He then called me back again and he was like, "Alright doc describe to me again exactly what you heard"?, and I was like I heard a boom, and he was like, "no that is not consistent with the sound of an aircraft going down". So as time

goes on other vehicles had launched to see if they could find anything or anyone, at this point maybe we were hoping that they had just landed wherever they could and were just trying to walk back. I am not sure what time it is but time goes on and a zodiac boat launches, we were like, "Fuck it we are taking off and we are going to see if we can find something". So a boat launches, and [REDACTED] talks to the fire department to get some flashlights, and then they take off, but once he went to the fire station then they got involved, so then they radioed to start trying to get something, and they were calling the sheriffs departments and stuff to see if anyone had reported a helicopter landing in their front yard or their backyard or something. So the hour went by and then they notified Eglin, they were going back and forth whether anybody could help because with fog everybody was on lock-down, boats were on lock-down because they were afraid of going out, and the Coast Guard couldn't figure out where the water was so then we launched another zodiac. At that point the fire department, and [REDACTED] contacted us and asked [REDACTED] if they wanted to relocate the COC over to the fire station, so they went over there and other emergency vehicles started coming in, more police and stuff. They started trying to figure out the map, ok where were you all? where was this? Where was everything? At that point we launched the second zodiac and we went into the water, it was myself [REDACTED], and I forget last name, but they call him [REDACTED] and he is a [REDACTED] and they attached a fire fighter with us because he had an GPS and a radio so that we had communication with the COC, or communication center, and we launched. They said that the majority of everybody else is going to be of the east side, you all head west on the south side towards the Navarre bridge, and that was what we did, we started heading west towards the Navarre bridge on the south side, and we didn't see anything. Then we got to the Navarre bridge and the firefighter radios in says, " Hey we are at the Navarre bridge do you want us to keep pushing west"? And they were like, no just go ahead and turn around and start heading back east, and just kind of go back and forth from north and south, so that is what we did and we started to come back in and that was when we started finding different debris and we were like, "Oh fuck". We rolled up on a big thing, and we pulled it up and it was the deck plate, on the front there was a green strap that says front, and we were like, " Son of a bitch", what are the odds that this is an old piece? We were still hoping, so we pulled that in to the boat and we kept searching, and we started finding little pieces of insulation, foam insulation, and more pieces like the side panels of the bird, so we went from that blue-grey, to the dark green. We then rolled up on another panel picked that up and it was the part of the fuselage that had the MOJO emblem, and we radioed it in and we were like, hey we have debris and we are pretty sure that is from that bird, and they were like, ok, where are you?

WIT: And he gave them our grid coordinates were we found that stuff, and they were like, hey there is supposed to be a Coast Guard boat somewhere is he there? And we were like, no there is no one here, and that kept going back and forth whether the Coast Guard was there or not, they couldn't find where we were, so we were still looking, and we kept moving along and we found a dive booty, a dive boot. We just kept looking, we were hoping that we found someone, but there was no one to help, there was just more

debris that we were pulling in, and we reached some other point that we were surrounded in debris, and we were hoping that this was the site and we could find someone, but there was no one we were just pulling up debris, and pulled I up what looked like someone's liver, and threw it in the boat. We just kept picking up helmets, crushed in and caved in at the back, and you could see parts of the brain matter on the pads, but we couldn't find anyone, we were still trying to make our way back, and they contacted us and said, hey bring all your debris to us, we were still trying to make our way back, and struggling with calling off the search because we were still trying to find people, we were working our way back and we finally made our way back to the boat ramp and we got out....

IO: I am sorry man it looks like you obviously did everything you could. If you would take me back to initial conversation between the boats before the birds took off, those conversations that you were either physically there and heard back and forth between the pilots and/or yourself, if you can and with as much detail as to what was said, and that you were right there and head it or what you actually had with the pilots regarding those initial weather conversations.

WIT: It was maritime they called in and said, "Hey I am out here and I can't see the lights on the top of the tower, I am kind of concerned", [REDACTED] radioed back, and I got a hold of MSG Saunders, so I gave him the radio and he contacted [REDACTED] and he was like, "hey they have concerns", and he was like, OK, at that time Warrant Officer Griffin came in, and he was like, "hey they have concerns about not being able to see the tower".

IO: You were there when Mr. Griffin was told that?

WIT: Yes, and he said, "I am not too concerned about being about being able to see it because we have our flight path plotted, so we don't even go near it, I am not even concerned about the tower at all", so MSG Saunders was like, "ok they are not worried about it", I was like, ok.

IO: Where were the other pilots when that conversation was occurring, do you know?

WIT: I think that everybody was still out by the grill, because everybody was just starting to get ready to push out.

IO: Did Mr. Griffin talk about weather? Anything about ceilings and visibility? Did he mention that he had a weather brief of his own?

WIT: They did mention the ceilings but I don't remember what the distance was, I don't remember that at all, so I am not going to say a number, but they did talk about the ceiling, and they were like it is still ok, we are still good.

IO: Was there a second conversation after that, where the safety boat on the DZ called again and said, that the weather is getting really bad, and said that he was getting really concerned. Was that all one conversation or a couple separate ones?

WIT: No that was prior to even getting into the water, because that was when [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said, "hey these guys are not concerned", and he was like, "I know they are not concerned, but I am". We still went through, everybody else was still good, and the pilot said he felt comfortable and that he had his track, because everybody's main concern was that tower and that is why he was like, "I don't even go near that tower, so I am not concerned with it, we go way around it and don't even get near it".

IO: When you were still on shore there prior to the birds taking off what did the weather look like to you?

WIT: It was bad, it would come in patches then it would drift over, and it would be absolutely clear. When we pushed out in the boats, and we went over you could see the tower, then it would start going out, then you could see the tower again, then the fog would roll in and then you couldn't see the tower, at one point you couldn't even see any of the lights from the tower at all.

IO: This was at the building that you where you guys were doing the barbecue? Or where the helicopters were parked?

WIT: This was after we were already the water.

IO: You guys were at the dock just across from the building?

WIT: At that point we were already pushed out east to the drop zone, and we were already staged there just waiting for them to take off.

IO: Prior to you actually pushing off shore to head out to the DZ, at that point what did the weather look like to you from there?

WIT: At that point the visibility was still okay on the low side but up high it was bad, but down at the bottom you could still see. We pushed into the water and rode out east towards the drop zone, and you could still see the lower half of the tower, and during that time it would go up and down where visibility was good and visibility was poor, like I said we heard the choppers run on but I never saw them, at some points we couldn't even see the other safety boat.

IO: Did you have comms with them? Where they up on comms with you guys?

WIT: The other safety boat had the green gear with the pilots, I just had the Motorola with the other safety boat with [REDACTED], that was how he would radio back to me and I was able to communicate to MSG Saunders about the weather.

IO: Prior to even the daytime iterations for this thing did they hold any type of daily air mission brief?

WIT: Yes, prior to every one we would meet and do the brief, then get dressed then load the boats up.

IO: Did they talk during that about what they would do if say, one of the helicopters broke and they were down to one aircraft?

WIT: I don't recall that.

IO: Did they talk about what they would do if weather started to get bad? Were they would go, or how late this iteration could go until they said, alright this is too late we have to stop, we have to be done no later than a certain hour.

WIT: No I don't recall any of that.

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SWORN STATEMENT

For use of this form, see AR 100-45; the proponent agency is PMG.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: Title 10, USC Section 301; Title 5, USC Section 2061; E.O. 9397 Social Security Number (SSN).
PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: To document potential criminal activity involving the U.S. Army, and to allow Army officials to maintain discipline, law and order through investigation of complaints and incidents.
ROUTINE USES: Information provided may be further disclosed to federal, state, local, and foreign government law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, child protective services, victims, witnesses, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Office of Personnel Management. Information provided may be used for determinations regarding judicial or non-judicial punishment, other administrative disciplinary actions, security clearances, recruitment, retention, placement, and other personnel actions.
DISCLOSURE: Disclosure of your SSN and other information is voluntary.

1. LOCATION [REDACTED] Hurlburt Air Field	2. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 2015/03/18	3. TIME	4. FILE NUMBER
5. LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME [REDACTED]	6. SSN [REDACTED]	7. GRADE/STATUS [REDACTED]	
8. ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS [REDACTED]			

I, [REDACTED], WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH:

IO: Please state your name, and what your job title is?

WIT: [REDACTED] operation specialist [REDACTED]

IO: Can you describe to us what you were doing the day of the crash, and step through the entire process from beginning to end, based on what you were doing out in the water, and your interaction with the crew.

WIT: The timeline is sort of sketchy in my head, it has been a while. For our day iteration we rolled out from Hurlburt Marina and we picked up [REDACTED]. We then moved back to the DZ, at that point once the Helo spun up, they took off. The first helicopter came in and flared, and you could tell the guy could fly, I wouldn't say he was showboating, but he was getting down on the water, and they said that they only had one ladder, so they were doing it "bird by bird," and they were swapping the ladder back and forth. He then dropped the guys in the water, and he then made a loop, came back, and laddered all the guys out of the water. They then repeated the iteration for the second aircraft, they went back, set it down, and did a ladder swap, then they came back out, and dropped the guys again, and laddered them up. I guess they needed a second ladder, so he made another loop around, and dropped the guys in the water, then came back and laddered them up. The whole time we were moving, it went from sunshine, to overcast and nasty looking. I actually have some pictures of the daytime iteration.

IO: So the weather started getting bad during the day?

WIT: It just went from sunshine, to real dreary and misty looking. They went back, and set down, and we were supposed to bring in the CV-22s. We set up for the CVs, and they canceled on us. We called the helicopters and they said, "Hey we have some guys that are eating, and we are waiting on that." I then went back to the dock, and [REDACTED], and wanted to talk to the guys. Then the fog started rolling in, and my other guy who was on the DZ, called up and said, 'Hey man it's getting foggy over here, I can't even see the lights on the tower.'

IO: That was [REDACTED]?

WIT: Yes [REDACTED]. I said I didn't know what to do, that we can let the aircraft know but either way they have the final decision on it. We relayed to the medic who was with the aircraft, and he went and talked to the guys, and they said, "We have the ceilings, we are good to go." Then [REDACTED] called weather, and Weather gave what the actual ceilings were, and he called back and said he was fogged in over where he was and that he couldn't see anything and didn't think it was safe.

10. EXHIBIT	11. INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT [REDACTED]	PAGE 1 OF 4 PAGES
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ADDITIONAL PAGES MUST CONTAIN THE HEADING "STATEMENT OF _____ TAKEN AT _____ DATED _____"

THE BOTTOM OF EACH ADDITIONAL PAGE MUST BEAR THE INITIALS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE STATEMENT, AND PAGE NUMBER MUST BE INDICATED.

USE THIS PAGE IF NEEDED. IF THIS PAGE IS NOT NEEDED, PLEASE PROCEED TO FINAL PAGE OF THIS FORM.

STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT [REDACTED] DATED 2015/03/18

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: We called the medic again, and they said that they were still good to go. I want to say that he said they are good for (like) 300 foot ceilings. Which to me at that point there was not a 300 foot ceiling, but we could still see the shoreline from where we were, and that is a 10-15 minute boat ride, so maybe 2km between us and where [REDACTED] was. By the time [REDACTED], myself, and the [REDACTED] loaded up and got back, it had started clearing some, and the aircraft called and said, that they were good to go, and that they were spinning up. We could hear the rotors spinning up, it then started fogging up around the time they were ready to take off, and they took off. There was a lot of stuff going on at that moment, and between the calls, and all of that, we heard an impact. It sounded like a "105 shell" going off, which is not uncommon for us. It sounded like it was north of the highway but with the fog you get out there and you're discombobulated. The fog was rolling in, and I couldn't see [REDACTED] from here to that wall. He calls up and says, "No drop, no drop, no drop," and the second aircraft said, "Roger, RTB." At that time there were no calls made that would make us think anything otherwise. I can't remember the name of the medic.

IO: Was it [REDACTED]?

WIT: He has a call-sign, and that is all I know him by.

IO: Was he on the aircraft?

WIT: He was on my boat. He said, "What was that?" I said it sounded like a 105 round going off but I'm not sure.

IO: Was the medic also the one that was relaying to the aircrew?

WIT: I am not sure, because at that point all I was doing was shuffling the guys back and forth. I was sitting at the dock, and the only person that was at the dock with me was [REDACTED]. We were talking to another guy, and he told me that it was the medic. It was the same call-sign but I can't remember it. We all heard it but, nobody paid any attention to it, because it's not an uncommon sound. Once they called RTB we said we are indexed for the evening. Then me and [REDACTED] both went back, [REDACTED] had [REDACTED] on his boat at that point, and I had the medic, we went back to the dock at Alpha 15, unloaded those guys, and started making our way back to Hurlburt Field. About 30 minutes into that, and it was horrible to that point because we were on our small boats and didn't have any radar, we then got a call across the radio that said, "Stop all actions at this point, and call us on your cell phone." We called [REDACTED] and he said, "We are initiating the SAR process we are missing a bird," which even at that point it hadn't clicked about the sound because it's not uncommon for us to have a helicopter that won't talk to us. They hear you and won't even reply, it's not like when we work with the winged aircraft. We had good communication with those guys all the time, then all of a sudden he was off the net. Our initial thoughts were that he RTB to Destin and set down, or headed to somewhere else with better weather or something like that. So we then went back and got the large boat with the radar. By the time we got back in the water it was 10:30 or so, maybe a little later, we had to wait for the whole chain of command process to come down, and [REDACTED] came and got on the boat with us, and we went out. We started searching from the point that we thought it would have gone down, which is right around A15, and we were just to the west of what we now as the point of impact, and we started searching towards Navarre. We were at the point of almost quitting because we couldn't even see the bow of the boat at that point, and we then came across some marines in a Zodiac that had found some parts, as we were speaking with them, a piece of the tail floated by with the tail number on it, and we had confirmation. [REDACTED] called the TOC, and let them know, and at that point we started searching, doing a grid back and forth across the sound. Sometimes around 0330-0430, we got the phone call that they had found the two, which we knew were the pilots once we got to them, because of the gear that was on them. We picked them up and took them back to the dock, and at that point it was just picking up bits and pieces here and there. It seems like it has all run together since then. I don't know if you are interested in seeing the pictures from the day iteration, it got tremendously worst between then and there.

IO: Absolutely do you have the ability to email those to us?

WIT [Shows Video]: I also have a video of the second aircraft, when he came in, I actually videotaped them coming in during a portion of the day iteration. As you can see this was the day that it went from sunshine to this in a matter of 15-20 minutes.

IO: Was it like that when they started the day? Or was it like that what it turned in to?

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT [REDACTED]

PAGE 2 OF 4 PAGES

USE THIS PAGE IF NEEDED. IF THIS PAGE IS NOT NEEDED, PLEASE PROCEED TO FINAL PAGE OF THIS FORM.

STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT [REDACTED] DATED 2015/03/18

b. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT [Shows Video]: When they first started turning up rotors it was still sunshine, and it went from sunshine to that. That was [REDACTED] in their first run in, that was the first picture. I do that all the time when we work with aircraft I take pictures. You can see that is when he was coming across the sound, and this was facing from the sound towards A15, and the crash sight would have been off to the right here. This is him coming in, and you can see how the weather progressively got worse, in the matter of his track coming in during the daytime iteration. It was on and off like that, that was when they were dropping the guys in the water, and that is when they came around to ladder them up, and you can almost see sunshine there, and that was after he had dropped them, and that was when he coming around to ladder them up. So it was in and out, and this was the second aircraft,

WIT: [Plays video] and that's the ladder portion.

WIT: [Plays video]. Those are the only videos I have.

IO: If you could email those to us, as that is helping to show how the weather was deteriorating.

WIT: Like I said, I have flown with you guys, I was in Ft. Campbell for four years, in the [REDACTED]. In my mind there is no doubt that the guy was a good pilot, there are people that scare the crap out of you, and there are people that you feel comfortable with, and working with those guys we were comfortable with them. I know that your guys know what they were doing, we have teams that come in and we work with, that are just junk, and we have guys that know what's going on. The weather was deteriorating, it was back and forth, and it was a judgment call, and when they had takes off the weather had gotten to the point that it was not safe.

IO: Did you know why the CVs canceled? Did they say why?

WIT: I believe it was a maintenance issue but I am not positive. [REDACTED] should be able to give you an answer on that, if not [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]. He was the lead for the CV portion, and he can get you the information on why the canceled, I was working with the 60's.

IO: Was it one of the boat crews called for the weather?

WIT: It was my other guy.

IO: Do you know who he called?

WIT: He called Hurlburt field weather, and he has all the information. [REDACTED] is an ex-coop and he has all that information typed up.

IO: You guys started having a conversation over the radio talking about the weather that was closing in on the DZ, was that radio call going back to one of the aircrews? Or did you say it was a medic that was there?

WIT: We were relaying between the medic, and the aircrew. At that point they were sitting on the ground, and I am not sure if they were hearing across their radio or not.

IO: You were talking on black gear?

WIT: We were talking on the LMRs - Land Mobile Radio - black gear is a radio though

IO: The radio on one end was the medic?

WIT: I didn't specifically talk to the flight crew, it was a relay, back and forth. I know that he was speaking to them face-to-face, but I don't know, you know how things get lost in communication.

IO: In reference to when you heard the 105 round going off, when did you make the call for "Hey the weather is just not good enough here at the DZ", and the call for RTB came through.

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT [REDACTED]

PAGE 3 OF 4 PAGES

STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT _____ DATED 2015/03/18

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: None of us can remember whether it was before or after the RTB call. We had bunched our two boats together because the weather had rolled in, and were cross-talking saying, 'Hey this is not going to happen.' We had felt it was a safety issue on our end. I am almost positive that the impact sound, was prior to [REDACTED] calling the RTB call over the radio, and then the other bird replied. That whole ordeal happened within a matter of seconds of each other.

IO: Normally if you relay that the aircraft can't drop at the DZ over the radio, do you all have an SOP for what that means, other than you're not clear to drop? Was it briefed for the crew to basically associate hearing 'we cant drop at the DZ' with, 'if I tell you that you can't drop here, you are to remain on the ground, or go air lager?' Was there a follow-on meaning that you guys had briefed on?

WIT: As far as helo-cast go, we are nothing more than a safety boat, and sometime OSJ does it with their guys. When it come to parachute jumps, we have a say-so, we are the DZ guys, we tell the aircraft whether they can or can't jump. On a helo-cast, it is pretty much between the team and the helicopter if they can fly, unless there is a safety issue. I physically can't say no, because if I do, it comes down to the chain of command to ask 'why did you cancel training.' If I have to make the call then it is done, even at the point that we call it, training is over, there is no try this again because we're making a safety call.

////////NOTHING FOLLOWS////////

AFFIDAVIT

I, [REDACTED], HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1, AND ENDS ON PAGE 4, I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE STATEMENT MADE BY ME. THE STATEMENT IS TRUE. I HAVE INITIALED ALL CORRECTIONS AND HAVE INITIALED THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE CONTAINING THE STATEMENT. I HAVE MADE THIS STATEMENT FREELY WITHOUT HOPE OF BENEFIT OR REWARD, WITHOUT THREAT OF PUNISHMENT, AND WITHOUT COERCION, UNLAWFUL INFLUENCE, OR UNLAWFUL INDUCEMENT.

[REDACTED] (Signature of Person Making Statement)

WITNESSES:

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 26 day of March, 2015 at [REDACTED]

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

[REDACTED] (Signature of Person Administering Oath)

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

[REDACTED] (Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)
Judge Advocate (Authority to Administer Oaths)

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT [REDACTED]