

35

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 Eglin AFB	2. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20140101	3. TIME 0749	4. FILE NUMBER
5. LAST NAME [REDACTED]	MIDDLE NAME	6. SSN [REDACTED]	7. GRADE/RANK C

8. ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS
2D MSOB

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

IO: Please state your name, rank, unit of assignment, and duty position.

WIT: [REDACTED] Hotel Company, 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion

IO: What is your MOS?

WIT: 0370.

IO: On the day of the accident what were your duties?

WIT: I was the ground force commander for the second helicopter.

IO: Can you describe to me the sequence of events, in which everything occurred?

WIT: The general sequence of events are that, prior to us taking off, we loaded everything into the helicopter, and ready to go. At 2020 we took off and began conducting movement to the drop zone, at which point in time the fog came in and reduced the visibility to the point that the pilots were no longer comfortable flying in the conditions. We slowed to a hover over land, we never actually went over the water. At that point in time mission abort was called, and conducted a water safety vehicle. We then turned around really slow, at times stopping, hovering, and regaining orientation, and push back through to the landing zone. I believe at approximately 2030 was when the pilots lost visual contact with the water. Once we landed it was almost 2100. We came back very slow and deliberate. Once we landed we got out, we began to search for the pilots. The pilots said they saw the pilots going high to get a little sky above the fog, and that they were probably going to come back at this LZ, and for us to sit and wait. After a little bit of time passed, around 2115-2120, the pilots said, worst case scenario go and land somewhere else, so they called around to the different local LZs. We also started sending marines to different LZs on the island to check the local LZs, we called the local towers, and range control was notified. At about 2145, we began to search for the pilots.

IO: When you took off was the visibility acceptable?

WIT: It was good; there was a little bit of fog. However, the pilots could see across the bay to the other side. The pre-flight briefing stated that there was a 1300 foot ceiling, and three mile visibility.

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

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

other helicopter. They said they saw them climbing, and I asked them what that meant, and what they would do.

IO: Besides talking to the crew who else were you talking to?

WIT: The air crew began contacting the local towers, I was also speaking to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] contacting his chain of command, to let them know we were contacting around the local area.

IO: Did you have an LNO with Range control?

WIT: Yes, [REDACTED] He was out in the safety vehicles on the water. I have a photograph of a time line of the me and [REDACTED] got together to piece together a time line of what happened.

IO: About how much time do you have working with helicopters?

WIT: I have used them in and out of the infantry for helicopter assaults, and movement, and throughout my time in can't give an exact number but I have used them from the time I was a platoon commander in the infantry.

IO: What different types of helicopters and crews have you had experience on?

WIT: I have flown on Hueys, Blackhawks, 47s, and 22s.

IO: Did you feel comfortable with the crew and their experience and professionalism?

WIT: Yes, we did. This is not based off the tragic events - if this hadn't happened and you had shown up I would [REDACTED] thing. I have never worked with an air crew that was more involved with the process every step of the way. They [REDACTED] incredibly good pilots, they were some of the best pilots I have ever flown with. **////NOTHING FOLLOWS////**

AFFIDAVIT

I, [REDACTED], HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1, AND ENDS ON PAGE 3. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE STATEMENT 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)

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized to administer oaths, this 25 day of March 15

WITNESSES

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

PAGE 3

SWORN STATEMENT

For use of this form, see AR 190-45; the proponent agency is PMG.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

AUTHORITY: Title 10, USC Section 301; Title 5, USC Section 2951; 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 Eglin, AFB	2. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 20140101	3. TIME 0749	4. FILE NUMBER
5. LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME [REDACTED]	6. SSN [REDACTED]	7. GRADE/STATUS CAPTAIN	

8. ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS
2D MSOB

9. I, [REDACTED], WANT TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER OATH:
IO: Please state your name, rank, unit of assignment, and duty position.
WIT: [REDACTED] 2nd Marine Special Operations Battalion.
IO: What is your MOS?
WIT: 0370.
IO: On the day of the accident what were your duties?

WIT: I was the ground force commander for the second helicopter.

IO: Can you describe to me the sequence of events, in which everything occurred?

WIT: The general sequence of events are that, prior to us taking off, we loaded everything into the helicopter, and got everything ready to go. At 2020 we took off and began conducting movement to the drop zone, at which point in time the fog came in around us and reduced the visibility to the point that the pilots were no longer comfortable flying in the conditions. We slowed down and came to a hover over land, we never actually went over the water. At that point in time mission abort was called, and confirmed with the water safety vehicle. We then turned around really slow, at times stopping, hovering, and regaining orientation, and beginning to push back through to the landing zone. I believe at approximately 2030 was when the pilots lost visual contact with the other aircraft. Once we landed it was almost 2100. We came back very slow and deliberate. Once we landed we got out, we began to talk. The crew said they saw the pilots going high to get a little sky above the fog, and that they were probably going to come back around and land at this LZ, and for us to sit and wait. After a little bit of time passed, around 2115-2120, the pilots said, worst case the aircraft had to go and land somewhere else, so they called around to the different local LZs. We also started sending marines to drive along the island to check the local LZs, we called the local towers, and range control was notified. At about 2145, we began to initiate SAR.

IO: When you took off was the visibility acceptable?

WIT: It was good; there was a little bit of fog. However, the pilots could see across the bay to the other side. The pre-mission briefing stated that there was a 1300 foot ceiling, and three mile visibility.

10. EXHIBIT	11. INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT	PAGE 1 OF <u>3</u> PAGES
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USE THIS PAGE IF NEEDED. IF THIS PAGE IS NOT NEEDED, PLEASE PROCEED TO FINAL PAGE OF THIS FORM.

STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT Elgin, AFB DATED 20150315

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

IO: Did the pilots do a weather check and a briefing on the weather?

WIT: Yes, Sir.

IO: You were in the second aircraft?

WIT: Yes, Sir.

IO: How long have you been assigned to your unit?

WIT: Since November.

IO: What was your mission?

WIT: To conduct a rolled duck insert.

IO: Can you walk through the sequence of rehearsals, briefs, and any rock drills you conducted leading up the accident.

WIT: Prior to conducting any of the activities, all of our training, revolves around the methodology of, crawl, walk, run. Meaning that when we first got here we got some classes, got to meet the crew, and started doing some interactions with them, and generally talking to them. After that, everything we did we would practice it before doing anything with the helicopters. For example, we conducted wet casting - slick with no gear prior to moving to recovering via the ladders into the helicopters. We then slowly moved up in methodology, it would always be slick then the next run would be with gear. Everything we did we always did a walk through prior to it with the crews; everyone talked through all the roles and responsibilities. Everyone (crew) was fully involved in all the steps. We would test all the ducks in the bay prior to being loaded into the helicopters. We would move through all of the steps for each set of tasks, and make sure everyone, including the crews, were comfortable with it before moving on.

IO: Basically you would be briefed, conduct a rock drill, rehearse it, and then do it during the day and again at night?

WIT: Yes, Sir.

IO: Were you briefed by the flight crew prior to the flight in which the incident occurred?

WIT: Yes, it wasn't done in the conference room though. We (the crew) got everyone together and we walked and talked through everything. We made sure the pilots were tracking on the sequence of events, like, we are going here, doing this, here is the weather.

IO: Did anyone with the flight crew or MARSOC express any reservations at any time about the weather?

WIT: No, Sir. We monitored it closely throughout the week, because we thought that it was going to thunderstorm on us. Our concern wasn't the fog that ended up coming in on us, we were concerned about the storm clouds way off in the distance, and thunderstorms. We were not concerned but still closely monitoring the weather.

IO: Were you part of any discussion?

WIT: The pilots talked through the procedures of when we come in at 'one minute thirty seconds' and such. Other than that they said we never undo our lanyards at any time. The first time we loaded the rolled duck they had us pull it all the way in the aircraft, to show that we all could fit inside the aircraft and shut the doors.

IO: Can you layout who was involved in the operation?

WIT: We had all of team 1, who was on the other helicopter (1st). My team 2, and we had members of team 4 on my helicopter.

IO: Who was providing the weather data?

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

PAGE 2 OF 3 PAGES

STATEMENT OF [REDACTED]

TAKEN AT Elgin, AFB

DATED

20150315

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: The pilots provided it, their source I do not know. I believe it was someone here within the base. I know that HAVEACE range control has safety personnel on the ground who they get weather reports from. Beyond that I can't speak to the detail of where the weather reports are from.

IO: Who were you referring to as "they" earlier?

WIT: I was talking to our pilots in our helicopter. I was asking them what they would do, and what they saw. I wasn't able to see the other helicopter. They said they saw them climbing, and I asked them what that meant, and what they would do.

IO: Besides talking to the crew who else were you talking to?

WIT: The air crew began contacting the local towers, I was also speaking to [REDACTED]), who was contacting his chain of command, to let them know we were contacting around the local area.

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(Signature of Person Making Statement)

WITNESSES:

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this _____ day of _____, _____ at _____

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

(Signature of Person Administering Oath)

(Typed Name of Person Administering Oath)

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

(Authority To Administer Oaths)

INITIALS OF PERSON MAKING STATEMENT

PAGE 3 OF 3 PAGES

HOTEL COMPANY FLIGHT MANIFEST 13 MARCH 2015

RANK	NAME	ED/PI	BLOOD TYPE
CAPT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	A POS
GYSGT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	O POS
HM1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	B POS
GYSGT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	A POS
SSGT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	O POS
HM1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	A NEG
GYSGT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	A POS
SSGT	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	A POS

NOT ON MOJO FLIGHT

HCO LEAD HELO

CAPT. FORD SHAW

MSGT. THOMAS SAUNDERS

SSGT. ANDREW SEIF

SSGT. LIAM FLYNN

SSGT. TREVOR BLAYLOCK

SSGT. MARCUS BAWOL

SSGT. KERRY KEMP

LA NG CREW LEAD HELO

CW4 WAYNE GRIFFIN

CW4 DAVE STROTHER

SSG LAWE BEREGON

SGT TOM FLORICH

TIMELINE

2020 - LIFT A15 LZ ENROUTE
~~BE~~ WATER DE 1300 FT CEILING
3 MILE VIS

2030 - WEATHER SHIFT, MISSION CANCELED
DUAL CALL SAFETY BOAT PILOT
~~LEAD~~ TRACE LOSES VISUAL
LEAD LAST SEEN CLIMBING

2100 ~~LAUNCH~~ WHEELS DO A15 LZ

2110 BEGIN TO EST COM AND CONDUCT
LOCAL SEARCH AND CALLING AIR
FIELDS

2130 MARINE DRIVE TO CHECK LOCAL
AIRFIELD, ATTEMPT COM RELY THRU
~~FOR~~ OTHER AIRCRAFT, CONTACT [REDACTED]

2145 INITIATE SAR VIA HAUFACE
JGLO & EGLAND AIR BASE
~~CONTACT~~ CO 400D

2215 LAUNCH (1) HCO ZONAC 4xPAX
SEARCHED EAST FROM SPLASH
2xPAX CONDUCT SECONDARY
SEARCH SANTA ROSA ISLAND

2230 JGLO C [REDACTED] ARRIVES
SHORTLY AFTER EST COC AT FIRE
HOUSE WITH CHEF JULIANO
AND BEGIN EST SEARCH AREA
CONTACT OTHER AGENCIES

2330 CG BOAT ON SCENE

2340 EST COM WITH AFRC

2350 LAUNCH 2ND HCO ZODIAC 3x MARINES
1x FIREMEN

NOTIFIED HALO CG AIRCRAFT
LAUNCH FROM NEW ORLEANS

0100 [REDACTED] MOVIES WITH
[REDACTED] TO MOBILE SARCC,
COORDINATE SEARCH

0120 HCO ZODIAC CONDUCTS REFUEL

0130 INITIAL DEBRIS FOUND JUST EAST
OF NAVARRE BRIDGE BY 2ND HCO
ZODIAC

0200 INITIAL REPORTS OF BODY PARTS
BEING LOCATED.

0240 NG PILOTS RECALLED TO THEIR
UNIT

0400 (2) REMAINS LOCATED IN SEARCH
AREA