

### 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 Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, LA	2. DATE (YYYYMMDD) 2015/03/20	3. TIME 1300	4. FILE NUMBER
5. LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME [REDACTED]	6. SSN [REDACTED]	7. GRADE/STATUS E5	
8. ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS A Co, 1-244th AVN			

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

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

WIT: [REDACTED] SGT, 1-244th A co, I am a Blackhawk maintainer.

IO: What is your MOS?

WIT: 15T

IO: On the day of the accident you were performing crew chief duties?

WIT: Yes, sir.

IO: What I would like you to do if you just kind of take a few minutes and take yourself back, and start from the time that you were notified that you would be participating in this mission, and take us all the way through it from the start, all the way up until the 12th.

WIT: Of the day?

IO: No from the first time that you had heard that you were going to be assigned to fly this mission.

WIT: It had been weeks prior they discussed it, and I volunteered, I was unsure due to my job if I would be selected to go on the mission. I was selected and I was notified of it a few weeks prior, and I packed accordingly and got all the plans that I needed. I really don't have many details about that. Sunday was drill, we flew out from Hammond and we went to the Destin airport and got fuel.

IO: That was Sunday 8 March?

WIT: That was 8 March I believe. All I really remember from the days prior was flying there, and that day I got to meet all the MARSOC Marines, and they had a big conference room where they were briefing what they required of us, and what they needed to do, and kind their time line. After that we went out to the aircraft, all of us the crews and the Marines, they were figuring out the different set ups that we had, the capabilities of the aircraft, how their equipment worked without set up, so most of that day was spent rigging and figuring things out.

10. EXHIBIT	[REDACTED] PERSON MAKING STATEMENT	PAGE 1 OF 9 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.

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STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT \_\_\_\_\_ DATED \_\_\_\_\_

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

IO: Where did that take place?

WIT: That was at A15.

IO: Just to recap you went from Hammond, to Destin, to A15?

WIT: I could be mistaken I feel like we got gas.

IO: So you got fuel at Destin, went from there to A15, and that is where you did the interaction with the marines?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: Do you know about what time you got to A15?

WIT: No, I actually have no clue, I am actually really bad at remember things. That is what I remember from the 8th, when we returned back it was dark at the airport in Destin, we decided to push our maintenance to the next morning, that way we had daylight to do a good maintenance run over our aircraft, rather than do it in the dark after a long day.

IO: Continue with what you remember.

WIT: Monday we got up, and that was the day we did SPIES, we went out they rigged it, set it up, we discussed it and we briefed it, and discussed what was going to happen, both aircraft did it, both go two iterations I believe during the day, where we didn't actually drop them off, and pick them up in water, it was just from pad, practicing proper airspeed, and what it was like flying around with them tether to the aircraft, put them back down, and then we would do it again with a separate set of Marines. Each aircraft did it separately on their own, so while one was flying one was waiting, we did that, and after we did that we shut down, and discussed more again about the next step, which was picking them up out of the water using the SPIES rig. We did a couple iterations of them actually being in the water, and getting them out of the water, and each aircraft did it I believe, that is what I remember from Monday. Tuesday, when we started doing the boats, but I feel like we did boats before, I just can't remember, we might have done boats the same day as SPIES as well, just loading them up, figuring out flying, what the best airspeeds, how it reacts in the aircraft, belaying them, its new to me. I know that we had done a couple of the boats in the water during the day, and we did a couple at night, and I believe that was Monday, and I believe we did a couple things Monday, but I don't recall really. Tuesday was the day that we were pretty much do the boats in the water that night, which earlier in the day they did the ladders, which MOJO 69 just did the ladders by themselves, we then shut down for the day and waited for the darkness, so that we could accomplish what they needed to accomplish. From the point that we shut down, and it got dark and they were saying, "Hey its not really being forecasted but we can see it, it's here", under goggles we were able to see a tower that was about two and a half miles away, and of course we could actually see the actually drop zone from where we landed at the pad, both groups discussed it as, "Hey just in case", lets go over everything that we need to do, so they discussed inadvertent IMC, altitudes just in case, headings, different airports the closest ones that allow an ILS. Everyone briefed it, and we got in the aircraft and we discussed the weather again, and we were like, ok you know what we can still see it its not too bad, we took off, and then the aircraft was maybe 10 disks in front of us, and when we crossed, there is a road that runs in between A15 and the inter-coastal waterway, that is when the weather really hit pretty bad, and we decided to stop, just as we decided to stop it looked like they were over the water, and they said, hey we are going to punch in to it, we are going to climb, which they were briefing for 3500, and we were supposed to go to 4500, and I believe that the mist was said to be at 2000, so we gave ourselves about 1000 feet between us, and about 1000-1500 feet over whatever the weather was, then call whatever airport you need, so they called that they were punching into the clouds I looked over at them to make sure that they were, and I saw them climbing into the clouds, then I returned back to my aircraft duties, as far as airspace surveillance goes. We decided that we were

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STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT NEW ORLEANS, LA DATED 2015/03/20

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: going to stop, and talk and think about it, the M model has a great feature, the hover hold, and they used it, we discussed it, we could see where we needed to get back to, as a crew we decided to go back to where we were, rather than punching into the clouds, because I: we may be flying through them, since they climbed in before us, it was probably not the best idea since we could still see the ground, we could still see where we needed to go, so we decided to return to A15m, from that point we shut down, and we unloaded our passengers. It was discussed how long before, you guys think something is wrong, he said, well about an hour and if there is no contact a SAR should be initiated, well in between that time our pilots were trying to contact each individual airport and see if they had a call from the aircraft, if they were trying to get in to them or not, it came to the point where nobody had heard from it, and we were actually going outside, like what if they decided to go to Pensacola, what if they were going here, just expanding our calls, then we decided to go on to the radio and push through the guard, and see if they could contact the aircraft, we were on the PD trying to reach him but of course on the ground your radio calls are pretty weak. We went back and the hour had passed, and that was when it was called, to call in the search and rescue, in between that time we were trying to contact the crews, trying to send them a text message, or to call them, get their attention, just something to maybe have them respond with maybe, your there, and we don't know, and you can't reach it, but all four phones going straight to voice mail is kind of a tough situation to wrap your mind around, and from there it is just like one big blur to me. I know that the marines went out, and that they were going to search, so they did, they pushed out and we helped them load up their boat, their zodiac, and mount the engine, and from there it was pretty much what else can you do? They have it. As a crew member you cant contact anyone, other than the pilots were working on what they could, and after a while you just become a bystander, and that was pretty much all the way up until we were at Hurlburt.

IO: To back up, just talking about the weather, were you guys discussing the weather minimums and the calls before, like that night when you had the weather discussion that there was bad weather?

WIT: We knew the ceilings were low, and we saw that there was weather coming in, but I have never been around sea fog, or whatever they were calling it, that they had sea fog.

IO: Was there a discussion as to how low the ceilings were?

WIT: Yes 200.

IO: The ceilings were 200 feet?

WIT: That is what they said, they said they were coming down to 200, but if you look at one side, it was saying 1000, and the other side said 200, but I didn't get too much of the weather in-brief, just said, I could actually see where we are going.

IO: Did anybody actually call that night when the weather issues were coming up, did anybody call any of the weather services, Hurlburt, Eglin, or anybody?

WIT: I don't know but I feel like they did, because they telling that there was actually nothing actually foretasted, but you look outside you could see it.

IO: When you looked outside before take off you could still see the tower?

WIT: Right before takeoff? No we could not see the tower, but we could see the drop zone.

IO: So the visibility was coming in on one side but not the other side?

WIT: Correct.

IO: The tower that you are referring to?

WIT: The big space needle, but I don't know.

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STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] TAKEN AT NEW ORLEANS, LA DATED 2015/03/20

9. STATEMENT (Continued)

IO: That is about two and half miles from A15?

WIT: Two and half miles from A15, roger that sir.

IO: Did you guys do a full air mission brief with the crews and the Marines prior to the day or the night iterations, was there ever a major brief conducted?

WIT: I know the aircrews were together standing around, and we had discussed it, what do you do if this happens, and you have what you have, our mission, and we know what are mission is, we are going to drop them off.

IO: Not just the weather, just briefing the entire mission, did you guys sit down and brief the entire mission?

WIT: Before we ever did anything, we shut down, and for the ladders we were not part of it, because we just said, let's just not do the ladders, so they went a briefed their crew about what they need, what's required, because all of that stuff is new to us as well. Before each different iteration of something we would shut down and we would go talk, what's required and what are we doing?

IO: So just before you took off you would do a brief there by the aircraft?

WIT: Before we took off that night we stood in front of our aircraft's nose, and discussed everything.

IO: In regard to the packs in back were they all strapped in? Restrained?

WIT: They had tethers, and they one person that was in charge, the load master or whatever they would call them.

IO: The Helo-castmaster?

WIT: Yea, he would go around and verify, physically and visually verify that everybody was tethered in, and part of your air crew duties, everybody in the back is part of you, so you are responsible for that as well.

IO: If you guys hadn't been able to conduct that iteration was there any talk about, "Hey if we don't get this we can get it tomorrow", or was there any pressure to fly it that night?

WIT: No, I don't think there was pressure, I don't feel like there was any pressure.

IO: Did you hear any radio calls made from the guys on the boats in the drop zone to either you or MOJO 69?

WIT: Once we stopped and probably right as they were saying that they were going to punch into the clouds, they said, "They said hey you are not clear to drop".

IO: Who is they?

WIT: The had two safety boats that were out, one for each aircraft.

IO: As far as supporting special operations in the past have you done any? You said that it was new to you, doing the rolled duck training, and helo-cast training.

WIT: Yes all that was very new, and very interesting.

IO: So you were doing the crawl, walk, run, it sounds like, with the day before doing the day iterations.

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STATEMENT OF



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9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: Yes, sir.

IO: Was the plan for the night iteration, was it pretty much the exactly the same plan as the day iteration just at night?

WIT: Yes, we had done a night portion the day prior, were we had been over the water and cast out the rolled duck.

IO: So it was just stepping up kinda just another iteration of the same thing.

WIT: Another iteration of the same thing, I believe that they had a different mission set then what was previously done the night before.

IO: But for the helo portion it was the same thing?

WIT: But for us it was the exact same thing.

IO: Lets step back again to the whole weather conversation, do you know what the actual weather minimums were that you were approved to fly in that night, did they anybody ever brief, "Hey if the weather is below X, then we are not going to be able to go".

WIT: No I do not know what the minimums were.

IO: But there was a conversation that 200 foot ceilings were coming in?

WIT: Yes.

IO: Illumination wise, when you guys were on goggles, how was the illumination looking?

WIT: I could see roughly a mile, maybe two and a half miles, I think that the drop point was actually about a mile away from where we were waiting, over water it is hard to tell, but I could see a water tower that is over to our left that was illuminated, all the buildings were illuminated, and you could see all those building and those towers, I would say it was dark, it was darker then what you would ideally want.

IO: Do you know what the illumination was forecasted that day?

WIT: I do not, no sir.

IO: By chance did you see any of the flight packets? Did you guys have a knee board card?

WIT: The pilots did, I believe that  turned his in, in Florida to whoever was requesting it.

IO: Back up one more time, for the whole brief process, so before you started flying iterations for the day, was everybody in a room together? Ground party, air party, for a mass brief as to what you guys were going to be conducting.

WIT: Ground party, air party, pilots and the ground party are in their meeting discussing what they needed to do, usually at the aircraft was where the crew chiefs would receive their mission brief.

IO: So an update brief? So they would basically would brief with them in the other room then they would come and give you guys an update brief?

WIT: Correct.

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9. STATEMENT (Continued)

IO: Did you feel comfortable with the crew mix?

WIT: Yes I did.

IO: I am going to have to ask some fairly pointed questions about aircraft maintenance, it is just because it's what we have to ask, we don't suspect any kinda of wrong doing, or anything like that, I just want to cover some things as far as, what maintenance procedures were done and when they were done. The log book for aircraft 624 did you know that it was not on the aircraft?

WIT: I did not know until after we picked up their rental vehicle and it was sitting in the vehicle.

IO: It was in the vehicle?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: Do you have any idea why they didn't carry it?

WIT: I personally have no clue why, unless someone said don't take it, that is probably what happened, somebody said don't take it.

IO: Do you know of any maintenance procedures or inspections that were conducted on 624 from its departure from Hammond to the time of the accident? Outside of the daily PMD.

WIT: Just the dailies.

IO: Just the dailies?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: Who was doing the dailies on 624?

WIT: The whole crew, the pilots and the crew chiefs, I believe that the pilots would do the pre-flight checks and the crew chiefs do the entire daily as well.

IO: Who was the technical inspector for the mission? Or was there a technical inspector there?

WIT: I believe all the PCs were the TIs.

IO: Did you hear from the other crew, or know about any undocumented faults on 624, maybe something that came up on the trip from Hammond to Destin?

WIT: I had heard that they were not able to log their flight.

IO: But nothing as far as the aircraft goes?

WIT: Nothing as the far as the aircraft goes.

IO: Were PMDs conducted before or after? And when I say that, after you returned to base at the end of the mission day, did you do the PMDs then or did you wait for the day?

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9. STATEMENT (Continued)

WIT: We waited till the next day, because every time we finished it was nighttime, and we had the luxury of being able to do a daily during the day, which I personally prefer to do that myself.

IO: Makes perfect sense, when you guys did the PMDs approximately how long did those take?

WIT: An hour, anywhere from 45 minutes to an hour.

IO: Did you know of any tools that were utilized on 624? anything major outside of an screwdriver?

WIT: Just when we were installing the rings in the ceiling we had to use a ratchet wrench, other than that I don't recall any other tools that we needed.

IO: Did each aircraft have an toolbox on board?

WIT: No, we used one toolbox for both.

IO: After each maintenance procedure was the toolbox inventoried?

WIT: I personally did not inventory the toolbox, I don't know if the other team did, I honestly couldn't answer you the right way, with that question.

IO: I have kind of the same questions as far as the expendables, like rags, or things that you used to clean the windshield, wipe the struts down, what was done with those.

WIT: As far as my aircraft goes, I had a trash bag in my helmet bag, and once the daily was complete, we put everything in that bag and we would bring it into the FBO and throw it away.

IO: You said that you had one tool box between the two aircraft, was that carried with you out to A15 or did that stay?

WIT: It stayed in the rental.

IO: Rental car?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: So it stayed back out at Destin while you guys were at A15?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: Can you recall who made the comment about the 200 foot ceilings? Was that one of the pilots?

WIT: I don't know how it came up, but I know that we wanted to discuss the weather, and it was in front of our aircraft at the nose.

IO: So it was an aircrew discussion then, about the ceilings were coming in, and were forecasted to be at 200 feet.

WIT: Yes.

IO: We have to be as thorough as possible because work on this investigation is going to be inspected fairly high, wanting to know what happened, and trying to prevent it from happening in the future. Are you familiar with AR 40-87 just the use of Alcohol and medications, and things like that prior to flight the standards.

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9. STATEMENT (Continued)

IO: To the best of your knowledgeable was everybody in compliance with AR 40-8?

WIT: I know that they probably had beers with their dinner.

IO: Now what I am going to do is not the most pleasant part of this, because we are done with the rest of the interview, because what I am about to ask you could get you in trouble depending upon your answer, this is a rights waiver form, it's a DA form 3881, it's your basic like the Miranda rights that you hear on the TV all the time. I am about to ask to ask you a couple of questions about alcohol use, you don't have to answer what I say, if you say, "Sir, I am not going to answer that question", I am done, I am not going to badger you, I am not going to ask you five ways to figure out a different way of trying to get you to answer the question, and after this if you request we can get you a defense attorney if you want one. I am going to ask about your alcohol use, anybody else's alcohol use the night before and the day of the accident. Right here is I do not have to answer any question or say anything, if you could just initial there, anything I say could be used against me in a criminal trial, and this is just you are entitled to an attorney at no cost. Are you willing to answer my questions?

WIT: Yes sir.

IO: If you could sign right there. The night before you guys got back to the hotel about 2130, did you or anybody with you drink alcohol that night?

WIT: I did not drink any alcohol that night prior, I actually went to bed.

IO: Did you have dinner at the hotel? Or did you go to bed?

WIT: I think that I had dinner, but I ate, and I was gone, I was pretty tired.

IO: That was from the sun, salt water, etc. you were probably pretty tired. The next day, the morning, and then I know you guys had lunch with the MARSOC guys at their little compound.

WIT: Yea in between the day and the night, we had, I guess a brunch.

IO: Did you or anyone else you say were they drinking alcohol that night?

WIT: No not that day. No sir.

IO: Is there anything that you would like to say or add?

WIT: It is kind of the same questions that I have been asked before, just a little more in depth, they just wanted the events that happened that day, and you guys just wanted everything around it, I guess it's understandable.

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STATEMENT OF



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9. STATEMENT (Continued)

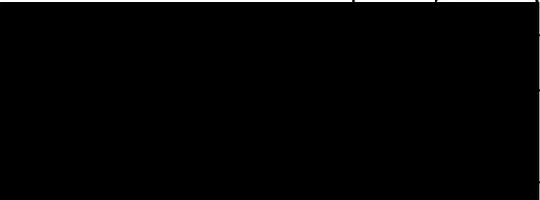
AFFIDAVIT

I, , HAVE READ OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME THIS STATEMENT WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 1, AND ENDS ON PAGE 9. 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.

 (Signature)

WITNESSES:

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized by law to administer oaths, this 31 day of March, 2015

at 

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

ORGANIZATION OR ADDRESS

Judge Hewcatt  
(Authority To Administer Oaths)

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