

Witness Name: Peter Beaumont

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits:

Dated: 2-06-09

THE BAHA MOUSA PUBLIC INQUIRY

Witness Statement of PETER BEAUMONT

1. I make this statement in response to the Inquiry's Rule 9 Request dated 24 April 2009. I have read this Request, and I seek here to cover everything that it raises to the best of my ability and recollection.

Rank and role

2. I am currently serving in the British Army as a Major in the Royal Engineers. I am a professionally qualified engineer specialising in military and civilian infrastructure.
3. I joined the Army in 1999 as a commissioned officer. I undertook basic training at Sandhurst, I subsequently served with 58 Field Squadron (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) and then 11 Field Squadron Royal Engineers. I was serving with 11 Fd Sqn over the period of Op TELIC II, but for the duration of that operation I was detached to join 1st Battalion The Queen's Lancashire Regiment ('1QLR'). During the past two years I have completed a Masters degree and an eighteen month civilian attachment.
4. During Op TELIC II, I was a Battle Group Engineer, part of the Civil Military Communication team ('CIMIC'). The team consisted of Capt Wakefield, the Officer Commanding CIMIC, myself, Maj Quegan (a TA

officer) a Colour Sergeant (whose name I cannot now recall), my driver (whose name I cannot now recall) and a number of other junior soldiers. There were also nine or ten American soldiers who were attached to the team.

5. The CIMIC team worked as part of the Battalion HQ Company and we would be tasked with particular jobs in line with the Battalion's intent. For example, we worked with civilians to resolve particular problems relating to infrastructure. During fuel shortages we would look to source fuel and transfer it to petrol stations. I also had other military engineering roles which included the fortification of defences and which involved interaction with each of the Battalion's Companies.
6. CIMIC was based in BG Main. I was ranked Captain at the time and reported directly to Capt James Wakefield. In turn Capt Wakefield was answerable to Col Mendonça, the Commanding Officer ('CO') of 1QLR.

Training, guidance, instructions, orders

7. There was no particular training about the handling of detainees during my basic training at Sandhurst. I did learn about the Geneva Convention and there was and is an annual video presentation shown concerning the Law of Armed Conflict. This includes guidance on what is a legitimate target and the responsibilities of soldiers to civilians.
8. Before deploying to Iraq I completed Individual Training Directives ('ITDs'). These are compulsory training courses which have since been superseded by Mandatory Annual Training Tests ('MATTs'). I have been in a civilian role for the past two years so I do not have any personal experience of MATTs, but I believe that the generic annual scheme includes training and tests in: weapons handling, fitness, nuclear, biological and chemical warfare ('NBC') and the Law of Armed Conflict, in addition to others which I cannot recall.

9. In addition to ITDs I undertook a Pre Deployment Training (PDT) Package prior to deployment to Iraq.
10. From a military engineer's perspective I had some guidance about how detainees and prisoners should be accommodated. Men and women should be accommodated separately, infants should be kept with the women, and there should be provision for ablutions and feeding. There are generic designs for detention facilities for military prisoners of war. However, these generic designs are suitable for holding large numbers (100+) of military detainees in the context of major combat operations and have no relevance to small scale facilities used in operations other than war, such as OP TELIC II.
11. I do not know what training infantry soldiers would have received prior to deployment but as an engineer my training included: a six month Troop Commanders course, which was designed to prepare individuals for the handling of major combat operations; bomb disposal and search; and a Battle Group Engineering Course. None of these courses contained anything of relevance to the handling and treatment of detainees.

Pre-deployment training

12. I was stationed in the Falkland Islands immediately before deployment to Iraq. I think that I went through a week's OPTAG training and so would have received ITDs, in-theatre briefings, some Arabic language training, and training on the Rules of Engagement.
13. The Battle Group spent 10 days in Kuwait before arriving in Iraq. We acclimatised, did PT in the morning, and as I was new to the Battalion I did spend a lot of time introducing myself to the others. I remember there was a brief on health threats and the Black Watch (from whom

1QLR took over) talked through specific scenarios, for example on firing situations and the rules of engagement.

14. I do not recall whether the Royal Military Police ('RMP') gave any briefing. I do not remember any briefing from Military Corrective Training or Physical Training staff.

15. While in Kuwait the Battalion received equipment purchased as urgent operational requirements (UORs), and spent a considerable amount of time in Kuwait training on this equipment. None of this equipment was relevant to the taking of prisoners, handling of detainees or tactical questioning. There were aide memoires provided in respect of the rules of engagement, but not, as I remember, on prisoner handling.

Treatment of detainees

16. On Op TELIC II I understood that detainees were detained in respect of civilian offences. They were not prisoners of war as we were not in a state of war. I do not now what rules were in place about how they were looked after during their detention and when they should be passed elsewhere. I think that Patrol Commanders would organise guards until the detainees were moved on. There were no full time detention staff.

17. I recall that the detention facility was a small building. I think it consisted of three rooms. I entered the building on occasion but never when detainees were there. In my engineering role I was responsible for the camp's infrastructure and so on a number of occasions I would have entered the building to check the condition of the building and check the perimeter defences from the roof. I can't recall if there was electric light as well as natural light in the building. It had the musty smell of an old building.

18. I received no guidance or training in respect of the hooding of detainees. I was never called upon to hood detainees myself. There were occasions when I saw detainees hooded while in Iraq and with 1QLR. I saw hooded detainees outside the detention centre and walking along the road at Battle Group Main ('BG Main'). I considered the use of hooding in those circumstances to be permitted. I can't say why I thought this except that hooded detainees were in full view of everyone. I don't recall ever seeing detainees wearing black goggles.

19. My understanding of stress positions is that these are uncomfortable positions used to induce a person to talk. I have never been trained or taught about the use of stress positions but have received this understanding from their depiction in videos and movies. I never witnessed prisoners being placed in a stress position.

20. I am aware of the concept of exposing people to white noise, because I would say that it is common knowledge within the armed forces and, perhaps outside them, that [REDACTED] resistance-to-capture training involves exposure to white noise, in order to prepare them for capture by enemy forces.

21. Those detained by 1QLR in Iraq were never, to my knowledge, deprived of food, water and/or sleep.

22. I was not issued with plasticuffs because they were not ordinarily required in my role as an engineer. I have never received any particular training on their use and I never had call to use them myself.

Tactical questioning

23. As far as I am aware, tactical questioning was conducted by specialists and not members of the Battle Group. I remember that on Op TELIC II when detainees were to be questioned, a Major would be brought in

from Brigade HQ. I do not know his name but I think he wore a red beret, as a member of the Parachute Regiment, and I think I was told that he was a human intelligence specialist, presumably a tactical questioner. I believe that he was a Brigade level asset.

Chain of command responsibility for treatment of detainees

24. In terms of responsibility for ensuring the proper treatment of those detained by the Battle Group, my understanding was that the CO had ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the Battalion. I do not know what responsibility, if any, the 2iC had.
25. Similarly, I do not know what role the Adjutant had. At the time of Baha Mousa's death I understood that Maj Peebles had oversight of the detention facility and that he had recently taken this role over from Maj Royce. As indicated above, my understanding was that tactical questioners would rarely be brought in but they were a Brigade level asset, but I do not recall ever being briefed individually or as part of the Battalion about any particular arrangements for tactical questioning.
26. I do not know what the roles of the RSM and CSMs were in respect of detainees.
27. I was not familiar with the term Battle Group Internment Review Officer ('BGIRO') during Op TELIC II and I do not know who that was or what the role involved.
28. I do not know what role the Provost Sergeant and Corporal had in ensuring the proper treatment of detainees.
29. I did not get involved in the guarding or handling of detainees and nobody within my group, CIMIC, had formal or routine roles in guarding

detainees. None of the individual's under my command guarded or handled detainees.

14-16 September 2003

30. I did not visit the TDF during the time that Baha Mousa and the other detainees were being detained. As I have stated above, I never went inside the TDF while detainees were there.

31. I do not remember stopping in the vicinity or outside the TDF during this period. Nor do I remember hearing and shouting or screaming between 14-16 September 2003.

Subsequent events

32. I am not sure when I heard of the death of Baha Mousa, nor how I came to learn of it – all I remember hearing is that a detainee had died from natural causes, namely a heart attack.

33. I did attend daily Order ('O') Group meetings, along with Maj Quegan, Capt Wakefield from CIMIC, other officers and the CO, Col Mendonça.

34. I do not remember there ever being any discussion, at these meetings or otherwise, concerning any aspects of the detention of Baha Mousa and the detainees with him, or of Baha Mousa's death. Nor do I remember talking to anyone who was involved in or had witnessed the treatment of the detainees.

35. I was not interviewed by the Special Investigation Branch, nor was I ever asked to give any statement to them.

Press accounts

36. I have never given any statements to or had interviews with the press or the media in respect of matters relevant to this Inquiry's terms of reference.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Peter Beaumont.

PETER BEAUMONT

Dated

02-06-09