



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK FORCE - CENTRAL
RADWANYAH PALACE COMPLEX
APO AE 09342

AOSO-SFA-F

26 JAN 2008

MEMORANDUM THRU ~~Commander~~, Special Operations Task Force Central, APO AE 09342

FOR Commander, Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Arabian Peninsula, LSA
Anasconda, APO AE 09342

SUBJECT: Informal Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation of SSG Ryan D. Maseth's Death

I. FACTS. Discovery and Life Saving Measures.

a. On the evening of 02 January 2007 at approximately 2030C, SGT Clague (18D Medic) noticed water coming out from under the door to SSG Maseth's room in the Legion Security Forces Building (LSFB). SGT Clague knocked on the door in an attempt to determine if anyone was in the room and did not receive an answer. SGT Clague then attempted to locate SSG Maseth at the gate guard house, but did not find him there. SGT Clague attempted to find a spare key to SSG Maseth's room, but did not locate a key. At this time, SGT Clague drove to the Support Center where he spoke with MSG Roth (18D Bn Senior Medic) about the situation with water coming from SSG Maseth's room. MSG Roth and SGT Clague drove back to the LSFB when they met SSG Schoepke arriving to the building at the same time (Refer to enclosures #2 - 10).

b. MSG Roth, SSG Schoepke, and SGT Clague proceeded into the building where they knocked on the door, called SSG Maseth's cell phone, and attempted to open the door with a spare key. After receiving no response and the key not working, MSG Roth kicked the door until it opened. MSG Roth, SSG Schoepke, and SGT Clague entered the room and noticed a smell of burning hair. Upon moving into the bathroom they found SSG Maseth unclothed, lying face down on the floor, halfway in and halfway out of the shower with the shower water still flowing. MSG Roth used his uniform sleeve and elbow to turn the water off after he noticed evidence of electrical burn marks on SSG Maseth. After the water was turned off, MSG Roth and SSG Schoepke pulled SSG Maseth from the shower. While removing SSG Maseth from the shower SSG Schoepke brushed his left arm against the shower faucet and received a painful electric shock. MSG Roth and SSG Schoepke carried SSG Maseth into the hallway in order to remove everyone from the water and risk of further electrocution (Refer to enclosures #2 - 10).

c. In the hallway, MSG Roth and SSG Schoepke checked for a pulse on SSG Maseth, but neither detected any signs of a pulse. MSG Roth and SGT Clague then immediately initiated cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) upon SSG Maseth. SSG Schoepke drove to the aid station to alert Dr. (MAJ) Purrington and CPT Kinkead (Physician's Assistant) that they were needed to assist in resuscitation efforts at the LSFB. As SGT Clague continued to perform CPR, MSG Roth ran to the nearby gate guard house to retrieve their medic, SPC Schmolls, to assist in resuscitation efforts.

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MSG Roth returned to the LSFb with SPC Schmolls, and proceeded to assist SGT Clague perform CPR upon SSG Maseth. SSG Maseth was moved into the LSFb office as water from the bedroom had begun to pool in the hallway. CPT Kinkead and SPC Byrd (91W Medic) arrived at the LSFb with an automated external defibrillator (AED) which they attached to SSG Maseth. After the AED evaluated SSG Maseth, it advised that a shock was not necessary due to SSG Maseth's heart rhythm being asystole (no electrical activity). CPR was continued after the AED advised no shock was necessary. MAJ Purrington arrived at the LSFb at approximately 2100C and he inquired as to what steps had been taken up to this point to resuscitate SSG Maseth. MAJ Purrington ordered CPR to be ceased while he checked for signs of life from SSG Maseth. After finding no signs of life present, he ordered CPR to be resumed. A King LTD airway was inserted into SSG Maseth's throat to facilitate airflow and epinephrine was administered intravenously through the left jugular vein at MAJ Purrington's direction. MAJ Purrington asked if there were any other resuscitative measures that had not been attempted to resuscitate SSG Maseth. All available means to resuscitate SSG Maseth had been exhausted. CPR was conducted until MAJ Purrington pronounced SSG Maseth's time of death was 2115C. SSG Maseth's remains were moved into the ambulance and taken to the aid station to await last rites and transportation to the morgue. MAJ Purrington re-examined SSG Maseth's remains at the aid station to check for any previously unseen injuries or conditions, of which there were none noted (Refer to enclosures #2 - 10).

2. Notification of Authorities and Initiation of Investigation. At 2143C ISG Self (SQTF-C Support Center First Sergeant) contacted the Camp Victory Provost Marshal's Office (PMO) and notified the PMO of SSG Maseth's death. SSG Antonetti of the Camp Victory PMO secured the LSFb at approximately 2200C and began to conduct field interviews in order to identify significant witnesses. Criminal Investigative Command (CID) was contacted at approximately 2200C by CPT Mayer (Bn Staff Judge Advocate) and was informed of SSG Maseth's death. CID Special Agents (SA) O'Connor, Farquhar, Smith, and Huggins arrived at the Radwaniyah Palace Complex (RPC) support center first aid station at approximately 2245C. At approximately 2310C CID SA O'Connor examined the remains at the aid station and released SSG Maseth's remains to MAJ Purrington at approximately 2325C. MAJ Purrington escorted the remains to the mortuary affairs casualty collection point in the ambulance (Refer to enclosures #2 and 9).

3. Initial Inspection of LSFb Electrical System. A short time after 2100C, SFC Skaggs and SGT Morrison (Electronic Maintenance NCOIC) received a call from ISG Self and were informed about the events at the LSFb. SFC Skaggs drove to the Kellog, Brown, and Root (KBR) office to alert them to the incident at approximately 2130C, as the KBR office is responsible for maintenance, to include electrical, on RPC. SGT Morrison took his multi-meter to the LSFb in order to perform electrical tests. When SGT Morrison entered SSG Maseth's room in the LSFb he tested the water on the floor with the multi-meter, obtaining a reading of 337 volts. After this, SGT Morrison proceeded outside and turned off the three water heaters. SGT Morrison then found the main circuit panel in the LSFb and used a broom handle to turn off all the breakers. SGT Morrison tested the water on the floor and the multi-meter read 0 volts. SGT Morrison also tested the shower faucet, and numerous spots along the metal pipes, all readings were 0 volts. KBR employees, Mr. Hardin (KBR Chief of Services for RPC) and Mr. Husic (KBR RPC electrician) arrived at the LSFb at approximately 2145C. SGT Morrison, Mr. Hardin, and Mr. Husic then proceeded to inspect the water heaters by removing the heater elements to determine if the heater elements had

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malfunctioned. At approximately 2200C the Military Police (MP) arrived and ordered that all activity cease in order to preserve the scene for the CID (Refer to enclosures #2, 6, 11, and 12).

4. Full Inspection of LSF Electrical System. At approximately 0200C on 03 January 2008, Mr. Husic and Mr. Hardin were brought back to the LSF to inspect the LSF electrical system with CID. When Mr. Husic opened the circuit breaker panel to turn the power to the LSF back on at the main breaker he noticed a black, sticky, tar-like substance. Mr. Husic also noticed that one of the breakers was not functioning properly due to being stuck in place by the tar. When Mr. Husic attempted to switch off this breaker he could not due to the tar. Mr. Husic then proceeded outside to the back of the LSF and tested all three water heaters. All the heaters tested had no problems. The pipes leading into the building registered 240 volts. Mr. Husic and Mr. Hardin noticed that the water pipes lead up to the roof of the LSF building and climbed the access ladder to the roof to continue their inspection. On the roof, they discovered the water pump and proceeded to test it for voltage. The water pump on top of the roof registered 240 volts. Mr. Husic unscrewed and removed the cover to the water pump and discovered that the electrical wire insulation and the wires had melted due to the engine overheating and the capacitor failing. This is what allowed the current to pass through the pipes to the shower in SSG Maseth's room. After unplugging the water pump, the current measured 0 volts. After CID photographed the water pump on the roof, Mr. Husic and Mr. Hardin removed the pump from the LSF. Mr. Husic and Mr. Hardin did not notice any signs that the water pump had been tampered with or to have had the cover to the motor opened in the recent past. CID then took control of the water pump for further investigation (Refer to enclosures #2, 11, 12, and 17).

5. Review of Electronic Devices. On 03 January 2008, CID reviewed SSG Maseth's laptop computer, external hard drive, USB thumb drive, and cell phone. Nothing pertinent to was found relating to the death of SSG Maseth and all items were returned to the unit, which, in turn shipped these items with the rest of SSG Maseth's personal effects to the primary next of kin (Refer to enclosure #2).

6. LSFB Maintenance Procedure Interview. On 07 January 2008, CID interviewed Ms. Taunton, the Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO) for the Defense Contracting Management Agency (DCMA). According to Ms. Taunton, KBR took responsibility for building maintenance on 23 February 2007 for RPC and performed an inspection of every building. The safety inspection of the LSF did not note any deficiency with the water pump. Ms. Taunton established that the majority of the buildings on RPC are level B maintenance. Level B maintenance does not include preventative maintenance, meaning repairs are only conducted when a work order is submitted to KBR by the building occupant (Refer to enclosures #2, 13, and 16).

7. Questions From the Family of SSG Ryan D. Maseth:

a. (1) QUESTION: Determine, if possible, SSG Maseth's whereabouts on or about 25 December 2007, and if anything out of his normal routine occurred.

(2) ANSWER: SSG Maseth was located at RPC on 25 December 2007 with SGT Schoepke enjoying the holiday together. SGT Schoepke stated that nothing bad happened to SSG

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Maseth on the 25th and emphasized that the two of them had great time together (Refer to enclosure #27).

b. (1) **QUESTION:** Determine, if possible, if any local nationals had access to SSG Maseth's living areas, including but not limited to, the roof where the purportedly defective water pump was located.

(2) **ANSWER:** Anyone with unrestricted access to the Radwaniyah Palace Complex (RPC) would be able to access the roof SSG Maseth's living quarters, however only those with a key to the building would have access to SSG Maseth's room and private bathroom. Local nationals would only be able to access the LSF Building while escorted by U.S. military or KBR contracted personnel (Refer to enclosure #27).

c. (1) **QUESTION:** Determine, if possible, whether there is any evidence to indicate that the water pump and/or any other electrical instruments at SSG Maseth's living quarters were tampered with.

(2) **ANSWER:** There was no evidence of any electrical equipment, to include the water pump, having been tampered with as seen by the KBR electrician, Mr. Husic; the KBR Chief of Services, Mr. Hardin; and the battalion electronic Maintenance NCOIC, SGT Morrison. The water pump is currently being shipped to the United States for inspection at a forensic laboratory in order to rule out all possibilities of tampering (Refer to enclosures #2, 11, and 12).

d. (1) **QUESTION:** Determine, if possible, whether SSG Maseth had an argument/altercation with any person on the Legion Security Forces (LSF) compound prior to his death, and if so, the facts and circumstances surrounding same.

(2) **ANSWER:** There is no evidence of an argument or altercation prior to the death of SSG Maseth. SGT Clague, SGT Schoepke, and Mr. Mohamed all stated that SSG Maseth was well liked and did not know of any Soldiers who would want to hurt SSG Maseth (Refer to enclosure #27).

e. (1) **QUESTION:** Determine whether SSG Maseth accompanied TF Raptor on any of its combat operations.

(2) **ANSWER:** According to the command group of TF Raptor (MAJ Gonella and SGM Ninkovich) SSG Maseth did not accompany TF Raptor on any combat missions (Refer to enclosures #24, 25, & 27).

f. (1) **QUESTION:** Determine, if possible, the date and time of an LSF guard's near drowning on RPC, and what role, if any, SSG Maseth had in it.

(2) **ANSWER:** SSG Maseth instructed the Iraqi chain of command to provide corrective training to an LSF guard who had been caught with a cell phone while on duty. SSG Maseth was

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alerted that the guard had passed out face down in a canal. SSG Maseth had the guard transported to the aid station where the guard was resuscitated (Refer to enclosure #26)

g. (1) QUESTION: Determine, if possible, the date of an apparent cell phone triggered IED being detonated at or near an entry control point (ECP) to RPC.

(2) ANSWER: The date of the apparent cell phone triggered IED being detonated at the ECP to RPC was 08 December 2007, and does not appear to relate in any way to the events of 25 December 2007 or to SSG Maseth's death (Refer to enclosure #27).

7. FINDINGS. The following findings are based on evidence, verbal interviews, and sworn statements taken IAW the 15-6 investigation:

a. I find that SSG Maseth died in the line of duty; not due to his own misconduct.

b. There is no evidence of intentional misconduct that contributed to this incident. The death of SSG Maseth was an unfortunate accident. The failed water pump was inspected on 02 October 2006 by KBR during a technical inspection of the LSF. While other electrical deficiencies were noted during the technical inspection, the water pump was found to be within operational standards at that time. The water pump, upon initial inspection by KBR electricians and Defense Contracting Management Agency Quality Assurance state that the three built in safety features (breaker switch, capacitor, and internal fuse) all failed to work as designed and did not interrupt the electrical current.

c. According to the investigating officer's review of the facts, the cause of SSG Ryan D. Maseth's death was electrocution due to the failure of the three safety features of the water pump. It appears that the water pump engine overheated, thereby causing the failure of the breaker switch, capacitor, and internal fuse which melted the wire insulation and the electrical wire inside the motor compartment. This allowed the electrical current to flow directly from the water pump through the metal pipes and into SSG Maseth.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS. I recommend that all buildings utilized by SOTF-C utilized are inspected for electrical deficiencies, and that all noted electrical deficiencies are remedied immediately.

9. The POC for this memorandum is the undersigned at [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]


BENJAMIN L. TIPTON
CPT, PO
Investigating Officer

31 Encls

1. Memo, Appointment Orders dated 05 January 2008
2. CID Form 94, Agent's Investigation