

On 12 February 2004, a team of officers, directed by Major General Antonio Taguba, conducted the following interview. Major General Taguba was appointed as an Investigating Officer under the provisions of Army Regulation 15-6, by Lieutenant General David D. McKiernan, Commanding General of the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), to look into allegations of maltreatment of detainees, detainee escapes and accountability lapses, at Abu Ghraib, also known as the Baghdad Central Confinement Facility (BCCF). The panel also inquired into training, standards, employment, command policies, and internal policies, concerning the detainees held at Abu Ghraib prison. Finally, the panel looked into the command climate and the command and supervisory presence

The following persons were present:

COL [REDACTED], MP, CFLCC – PMO, Interviewer
LTC [REDACTED], SJA, CFLCC – SJA, Interviewer
LTC [REDACTED], 705th MP Battalion, Interviewer
SGT [REDACTED], 320th MP Company, Interviewee
SSG [REDACTED], 27D30, CFLCC – SJA, Recorder

The interview is summarized as follows:

My name is [REDACTED]. My social security number is [REDACTED]. I am a Sergeant. I am currently with the 320th Military Police Company, at Abu Ghraib BCCF. I am Active Duty.

My job here is to help secure all the compounds and I also help out the 82nd with providing over watch and support. I arrived here at the facility around Mid-November 2003. I worked at the Camp Doha customs facility before I arrived here at Abu Ghraib.

We use AR 190-12 for the performance of our duties. The regulation covers the training of military working dogs. I'm not sure what policy covers use of force for military working dogs.

I haven't been trained on Geneva Hague Convention. I know it is the rules governing the law of warfare. Basically it covers treating people with respect and dignity, I can't recall where I heard about it at.

My duties with the hard site are to patrol, provide security, and search cells whenever needed. We mainly patrol Camp Ganci. We are hardly ever used at the hard site. There is no need for to be in the hard site, and I've tried to explain that before. The SOP originally didn't have much guidance for the dog handlers. The SOP changed to have dog handlers in the hard site when I was put under investigation a couple of weeks ago.

I am in charge of the Army dogs here. We also have Navy dogs here. There isn't a NCOIC for the dogs program as a whole, because the Army and the Navy perform different duties. The navy dogs work ECP's and they work with the IRF. MAI [REDACTED]

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is the senior dog handler. There is no link between the navy and us. Our chain of command is in Baghdad. I don't think we should be used together, because there are too many difference in the way we do things. Only time we work together is for escapes, but it is not the norm that we work together.

The navy supposedly works for MI, but that is the problem since we been here nobody knows who's in charge of what. The people who are in charge try to tell you how to do your job, even though they're not trained in dog handling

We work for the S-3, MAJ [REDACTED] We fall under him, but we know that our mission is to patrol the compounds everyday. We have no set schedule; we base our work times based on how the dogs feel.

We no longer work the hard site because of the investigation. I made a statement to CID regarding my involvement in the abuse and maltreatment of detainees. In December 2003 my dog bite a detainee. I talked to CID and I'd rather not discuss the incident.

We were at the site because it is a patrol area, we were on patrol when the incident happened. LTC [REDACTED] signed an SOP stating that we are suppose to be a physical and psychological deterrent in the hard site and the rest of the compounds.

I expressed to CPT [REDACTED] and MAJ [REDACTED] that the dogs shouldn't be used in the hard site, right after the SOP came out. CPT [REDACTED] is the assistant S-3. They told me that it is a patrol area and SOP directs it. I told them nothing good is going to come out of dogs being in a hard site.

I was not ordered to release my dog. I can't explain the incident because it is an ongoing investigation.

When we arrived we were having problems with electricity, lights, and our heating system. We haven't had much support if any on our request.

I told the S-3 officers that I would write some changes down that needed to be made. We need a vehicle because the weather is getting hotter, we need a kennel for all the dogs, and we need a veterinarian here. I've expressed my concerns to SGM [REDACTED], CPT [REDACTED], MAJ [REDACTED], and my kennel master in Baghdad, SSG [REDACTED].

I was involved in one escape. We scoured the fields, but we didn't find the detainee. We figured where he got out of the cell. We saw that he escaped by jumping from one of the guard's towers. No improvements have been made since the last escape in January. I think the escape that it was from the hard site. Rumor has it that the escapee was one of the IP's cousins.

One of the things that bothers me is that I have saw the detainees get hired here as an interpreter and things happen here all the time like that. Contractors are allowed to go anywhere they want without escorts. We've had problems with contractors stealing from

the soldiers. Another thing that bothers me is that when you go into the Ganci compound you are not allowed to carry weapons.

The detainees run this place we don't, they pretty much do what they want. Soldiers have to bribe the detainees with cigarettes to get them to come out of their tents in the morning. The detainees make shanks and knives and threatened to use them. They have radios; they told us that Saddam was captured.

For hostage situations they have an IRF, but I don't think they are trained or have any plan that they would follow.

I don't know of any other MOS's working in Tier 1A and 1B. I think MP's were the only personnel around when I had the biting incident with my dog.

I have no confidence in the abilities of my leadership, because I don't think I could trust half of these people to take care of me in a combat situation. I feel this way based on the lack of support that we have had, and people trying to tell us how to do our job without having a clue what our job consists of.

My blood type is B negative. I am assigned to HHC, 320th MP Company.

AR 190-12 covers military working dogs. I am not familiar with AR 190-14. I am a 31B. I am not familiar with AR 190-8.

My dog's name is Duko, I have been with Duko for two years. I've been a dog handler since 2001.

We have ROE concerning our dogs. The ROE that covers the use of dogs is in the SOP.

We do shakedown inspections, but I couldn't tell you how often we do them.

I have one other soldier that works with me.

I purchased my own body Armour, because I was issued a flak vest from Fort Bragg. I was given body Armour in Arifjan, but I gave it to my soldier because he was issued a flak vest also.

Finished with their discussion, the panel gave SGT [REDACTED] a list of items, to be addressed, and brought back on a Sworn Statement.

The use of military police dogs is governed by AR 190-12, the utilization of military working dogs, training, general purpose, and requiring of. The kennel master is SSG [REDACTED], he is the senior member for army dogs.

The use of force is governed under AR 190-12, the use of force is the last force used with either escape or before death of force. Tier 1A and 1B are our patrol areas; the policies are the same throughout the prison. When we are in Tier 1A and 1B we fall under SSG [REDACTED], we MI needs something done, they talk to me, then I take it to SSG [REDACTED]. Sometimes we patrol the halls in teams, or we patrol the halls separately.

When we patrol separately and have to make split decisions, every dog handler has a certain responsibility to comprehend the situation and make the necessary decision. No one tells me how to use my dog when I am in Tier 1A and 1B, I control the area. I can't talk about the requests by MI, because it is currently under a CID investigation.

I have worked with MI before with interrogation, but I cannot state any specific times or dates. I've been told there is a policy besides AR 190-12 governing dog handling, but I've been told it's classified by MI, I don't know which policy it is. I haven't seen the policy; I didn't know I had to see anything in writing.

I have seen no maltreatment or unsafe acts toward prisoners since I've been here. I use common sense to determine limitations on the employment of my dog. I've never had any training or seen anything in writing regarding employment of my dog when working with MI. I received a briefing before I came here on the Geneva Convention. The Geneva Convention covers legal laws of land and warfare, what to do and what not to do.

The treatment of prisoner is covered in AR 190-8. I didn't get too much into how you treat prisoners, when I get called in it is pretty much a last resort, usually a riot or something grotesque is about to happen. If someone asks me to execute an unsafe act or perform a violation, it would depend on if I knew the act was a violation, but if it seemed wrong I wouldn't do it. If I knew it was violation I would come straight out and tell that NCO or Officer that I'm not going to do it. I would report the violation to SSG [REDACTED] and he would take care of it.

We have dog handlers out of BIAP who are the kennel masters up here, a new E-6 just took over for SSG [REDACTED] his name is SSG [REDACTED]. I've seen my chain of command three times in two and a half months. I don't know where they reside, but their number is [REDACTED]. I knew they lived in this area, but exactly where I didn't know.

The dogs are trained for the mission here. Our dogs are narcotic patrol dogs. I keep a utilization log to track when the dogs are used. It's hard to do training out here because when we go out in an open field area we get pop shots taken at us, it's more of a

safety/life or death situation. I have used empty parts of the jail before to conduct training.

We haven't received any support from the unit that is suppose to be taking care of us, that unit is 320th MP Battalion. We eventually after a few weeks received most of the things we need after arrival here, but we have been requesting an SUV. The reason we need an SUV is as the weather gets hotter, the dogs will not be a to survive the heat riding around in a Humvee. For the first five days after we arrived here we had no electricity, after the first week we got electricity, after two weeks we got heat. We have four lights, all of them are broken except one, and one of our air conditions has been down and it is still broken. We have submitted request to R&U and 1SG [REDACTED] HHC, 320TH MP Battalion. They said that they lost the contract for the air condition and light repairmen, and they are waiting for the new contractors to take over.

We are properly staffed to do our required work. We are utilized properly. We have other dogs to compliment our mission; we have naval dogs to compliment us. We didn't know that they already had naval dogs working at the compound. We originally planned to bring three dogs up but we told the other dog handler he didn't have to come up because the navy already had three dogs at the compound. The navy works the ECP because they have explosive dogs. SSG [REDACTED] and myself work the compound because our dogs aren't ECP trained.

We tried working the compound together with the navy, but it didn't work because or training and policies are too different. Even though we train at the same school, the navy babies tends to baby their dogs, as we use our dogs more as equipment. Navy regulation doesn't allow pinch collars on navy dogs whereas the army allows pinch collars as a correction tool for the dog. The navy dogs aren't combat trained for missions, they sometimes go out on missions but they shouldn't. I think things run fine the way they do with us working the compound and the navy working the ECP. The naval dogs are assigned to MI but they work with the MP's.

I was advised of my rights on 23 January 2004. I am not sure of the Articles, but CID advised me that I was being charged with, failure to obey a lawful order and cruelty and maltreatment of detainees.

I am stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas. My unit is 523rd Military Police Detachment. I don't have nametags on any of my uniforms because I rather not have the prisoners no my name. I know that my uniform is out of regulation.

My dog is a Belgium Shepard. We were decertified by the program manager that came of a took over for the outgoing program manager I believe in September 2003. Control certification we are good on because we were making our training hours every month, however, being that it's a deployment my certification ended in September 2003. I have been a dog handler almost two years. This is my fifth do in almost two years.

My role in regard to detainees was to be a psychological and physical deterrent. I fulfilled that role by patrolling, that patrolling consisted of walking the tiers. My dog was on a short safety when I walked the tier. We normally don't use short safeties outside of the schoolhouse.

The 320th Military Police Battalion is in charge of the hard site. The Battalion Commander is LTC [REDACTED].

The panel stopped, to discuss SGT [REDACTED] statements.

The panel called SGT [REDACTED] back in.

The military working dog SOP established the hard site as a patrolling area, to include 1A and 1B. The SOP was put out in December. To the best of my knowledge we did not patrol the hard site prior to December.

I was not trained on AR 190-8, but I seen it laying in our hooch yesterday so I picked it up and looked at it. It belonged to SSG [REDACTED].

No one talked to me about the process of this interview.

CID informed me that I am no longer considered to be a suspect in the charges I stated earlier as of now.

I would rather not discuss how MI at the hard site used us.

We helped MI get their interrogations done. After working at the prison for so long the dogs came not to like the Iraqi detainees. They didn't like the Iraqi culture, smell, sound, skin tone, hair color, or anything about them. So, naturally the dogs became aggressive. It's a learned behavior, a learned behavior from working around the prisoners. If a prisoner is always antagonizing a dog, the dog is going to learn not to like them. The dog notices shapes, different shades of gray; they know when they are being antagonized.

A normal day for me would consist of me letting the NCOIC know that I was here. I would walk the tiers. I would have to get someone to let me in the hard site. I walk the hard site. My dogs never went in the cells. Sometimes if prisoners are outside their cells, I would walk near to them with my dog.

I would recommend that when we walk the tiers that they keep the prisoners out of the way. Also that their be different times set to clean the floors. Seems like every time we patrol 1A and 1B they are cleaning the floors, it is bad for the dog's legs because the chemicals can get absorbed through their feet.

MI would ask me to use my dog as a psychological and physical deterrent. It would consist of a dog walking up to a prisoner and the dog barking at a prisoner. The dogs would bark at prisoners unprovoked.

If I were given an order I would carry it out, depending on the order. I wouldn't carry out any order or regulations that would get me in trouble or anyone else in trouble.

When I would assist in interrogating a prisoner sometimes the cells would be open, but the dog or myself never went into the cell. Sometimes they would pull the detainee out of the cell and depending on the situation I would come within less than two feet of the prisoner. I always felt comfortable that I had positive control of the dog.

The panel stopped, to discuss SGT [REDACTED]'s statements.

The panel called SGT [REDACTED] back in. The panel addressed some issues with SGT [REDACTED]