



MOD-83-0000257-A

Witness Name: Andrew Richard Price

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits: ARP/1

Dated:

**In the matter of an investigation into the death of
Mr Muhammad Abdul Ridha Salim**

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
ANDREW RICHARD PRICE**

I, Andrew Richard Price, will say as follows:-

1. I have been asked to provide a statement setting out what I can remember in relation to an incident that occurred on 5 November 2003 in Basra City, Iraq, resulting in the death of an Iraqi male whom I now know to be Mr Muhammad Abdul Ridha Salim.
2. At the time of the incident, I held the rank of Sergeant ('Sgt') and was the Warrior Sergeant of 7 Platoon ('7 Pl'), C Company ('C Coy'), 1st Battalion, 1 King's Regiment ('1 KINGS'). I was attached to 1 KINGS and moved to Basra when my regiment completed its posting in Catterick, North Yorkshire. My Platoon Commander was 2Lt [REDACTED] SO13. My Platoon Sergeant was [REDACTED] SO11. The Officer Commanding ('OC') of C Coy was Major Routledge, and the second in command was Captain Rawsthorne.
3. I first joined the Army in 1982. Prior to my first deployment in Iraq, I saw active service in The Falkland Islands, Northern Ireland, Belize and Bosnia. I had served 21

and a half years in the Army by the time of the incident on 5 November 2003. I left the Army in April 2004.

4. Turning to the evening of 5 November 2003, I recall that we received a briefing from Major Routledge that we had received intelligence that there were possible weapons, including rocket propelled grenades and rocket launchers, being stashed in a house located a stone's throw away from Camp Cherokee. Attacks were a regular occurrence at that time and we were frequently being shot at, and because we were nearing the end of our tour there was a good possibility that Camp Cherokee would be attacked. During the briefing, we were instructed that we were initially to attempt to gain entry to the target location by means of a 'soft knock'. If this was unsuccessful we could enter using a 'hard knock'.
5. After the briefing, I recall departing Camp Cherokee in one Land Rover. Corporal Johnson, Sgt **SO11**, 2Lt **SO13** and Major Routledge would each also have travelled in their own Land Rovers, and there would also have been a Warrior. I presume therefore that altogether there were around five Land Rovers and a Warrior which travelled to the target location.
6. When we arrived at the house, the Land Rover I was travelling in stopped around two to three metres from the wall. As well as myself, there was also a driver and two kingsmen who would be ready to go off the back of the vehicle if the need arose. From my position inside the vehicle, I saw what I believe was the Platoon Commander's Land Rover bust open the gates into the courtyard. I have been asked by the Inspector whether at this stage I had heard any gunfire coming from inside the house. At that point, I hadn't heard any gunfire nearby.
7. After the gates were busted open, I believe that the Platoon Commander's team of four and the Platoon Sergeant's team of four both went forward into the courtyard. One of those teams would then have moved forwards into the house. The team which entered the house would have been led by Sgt **SO11** as the Platoon Sgt he would have been sent in first by 2Lt **SO13** who, as Platoon Commander, was overall in charge of the situation. I do not recall seeing exactly how Sgt **SO11** got through the door of the house, but as I have said we had been instructed that we were to attempt to gain entry by a soft knock, and if that didn't work we were to break entry

into the house. Sgt SO11 must not have got an answer to his soft knock, because he had to proceed to break entry to the house. I do remember seeing 2Lt SO13 by the front door of the house when Sgt SO11 went in. Whenever we carried out operations in buildings we would always have a link-man to the outside world to relay information in case radios stopped working. In this instance, 2Lt SO13 was acting as the link-man to Major Routledge.

8. I have been asked if I recall who first went in with Sgt SO11 into the house. I would say that there were probably more than two or three others with him, but I cannot now remember who it was. Once they had gained entry to the house, I remember hearing large calibre rounds fired from what I believe was an AK-47, followed by one lower calibre round from a rifle 5.56 (which used to be called an SA-80). Before I was deployed to Northern Ireland we received training where we were fired at under control so that we could tell what kinds of weapon were being fired at us. I know what an AK-47 sounds like as these used to be used a lot by the IRA. As an AK-47 is fired you hear a crack, followed by a thump as the bullet goes past you. This is different to the sound from an SA-80 being fired, which gives off much less of a bang. I am absolutely sure that after Sgt SO11 went into the house I heard multiple shots from a higher calibre gun followed by a shot from a lower calibre gun. The shots all came from inside the house, but I couldn't tell where they were directed.
9. After we heard the shots, myself and Corporal Johnson got our teams to dismount from the vehicles and to take cover either by the vehicles or next to the wall to the courtyard. We then waited for orders as to what to do next, however before we knew it the shots had all quietened down. The next thing that happened was that somebody called for a medic, so that we knew that someone had been injured, and I saw the medic go into the house. I can't remember his name but I have been shown a witness statement by SO14 dated 20 November 2014, and I presume that Cpl SO14 was the medic who went in to treat the casualty. I now produce that witness statement as **Exhibit ARP/1**.
10. After the medic had gone into the house we were instructed by the Platoon Commander to search the outside of the building for weapons as that was the reason why we had gone to the house in the first place. I did briefly enter the house but I soon left as there were too many people in there. I seem to recall that there was a

woman and somebody else in the house, who were taken away from the area where the injured man was. There may also have been a couple of kids in there. I do not recall actually seeing the injured man whilst I was in the house, but I did see him come out of the building on a stretcher.

11. The Inspector has asked me whether I recall seeing an AK-47 inside the building. I do not have a good recollection of this, but I think I remember seeing one of the Kingmen handling an AK-47. I do know for certain that I heard two different weapons being fired. The second one was an SA-80, and from my training I would say that the first was an AK-47. If an AK-47 was fired inside the house then the soldiers would then have taken that weapon away in order to diffuse the situation.
12. After the incident, I heard that the inhabitants of the house had likely been stitched up by another family who they were in a feud with. I have to say that a lot of our job in Iraq was doing the best we could to try to keep the peace between different tribes, and although the politicians in the UK were very good at planning the war, they were not good at giving guidance after the war had ended. Most of my time was spent in Ali al Jabbar, where six RMPs were murdered and we were frequently being shot at.
13. I do not recall how long it took for the ambulance to come to take away the casualty, but I was in one of three Land Rovers which escorted the ambulance to the hospital. There was also a medic and a driver travelling in the ambulance. We went to the Iraqi hospital first, but it was filled with people who were running around and I could tell that he wasn't going to get looked at properly or helped in there so we decided to take him next door to the military hospital, which was run by the Czechs. The medic went into the Czech hospital with the casualty, and would have passed on everything he knew about the injury and how it had been sustained to the doctors.
14. After delivering the casualty to the Czech hospital we returned to Camp Cherokee. I do not recall the de-brief back at Camp, but we would have received one from Major Routledge. We then went on a patrol to check that there was no-one within a certain radius of the camp who was likely to attack, and were then tasked to return to the hospital to check on the casualty. At that time the feedback we received was that he was going to be ok. It was only later that I learnt by word of mouth that he had subsequently died from his injuries.

Statement of Truth

I believe the fact  his witness statement are true

Signed 

Dated 14.11.15