



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
COMMANDER
U.S. FLEET FORCES COMMAND
1562 MITSCHER AVENUE SUITE 250
NORFOLK, VA 23551-2487

5830
Ser N00/S010
2 May 16

This three page endorsement Unclassified upon removal from basic investigation.

SEVENTH ENDORSEMENT on (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) USN, ltr 5830 Ser N00/0034 of
28 Feb 16

From: Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command
To: Vice Chief of Naval Operations
Via: VADM Richard P. Breckenridge, USN

Subj: (U) COMMAND INVESTIGATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE INCIDENT IN THE
VICINITY OF FARSI ISLAND INVOLVING TWO RIVERINE COMMAND BOATS (RCB
802 AND RCB 805) ON OR ABOUT 12 JANUARY 2016

Encl: (354) (U) E-mail COMNECC RADM Morneau/CUSFFC ADM Davidson of 8 Jul 15
(355) (U) CRS 3 Activity Manning Information Report
(356) (U) CUSFFC ltr 5310 Ser N1B/115 of 9 Apr 15

1. (U//~~FOUO~~) Pursuant to the second endorsement and your letter of 19 Apr 16, I thoroughly reviewed the subject investigation and its substantive endorsements and concur with the findings of fact, opinions and recommendations as modified by the endorsements of Navy Expeditionary Combat Command Pacific (NECCPAC), United States Third Fleet (THIRDFLT), and United States Pacific Fleet (PACFLT), and as recommended below. I do not concur with the investigation and first endorsement's conclusions that pre-deployment training was deficient, as they are based on an incomplete picture of the Fleet Response Training Plan, and do not reflect the entirety of training conducted across the basic and advanced/integrated training phases. The comprehensive NECCPAC endorsement rebuts those conclusions and completes the picture. This was validated by COMTHIRDFLT and COMPACFLT in their reviews and endorsements. Ultimately, Coastal Riverine Squadron THREE (CRS-3) was adequately manned, trained, and equipped for deployment and appropriately certified for their expected mission sets. I agree that there were substantial deficiencies in sustainment training. In my opinion, however, the primary causes of this incident were poor planning and lack of operational risk management, cavalier execution, a force protection posture inconsistent with the operational environment, and complacent leadership by the operational and tactical chain of command, which led to a failure to exercise oversight of the tactical planning and execution of the mission.

2. (U//~~FOUO~~) Pre-deployment training is subject to continuous process improvement based on combatant commanders' evolving requirements and lessons learned from deployments. Accordingly, communication is critically important, not only to align pre-deployment training to evolving requirements, but to be postured to deliver additional training and resources to deployed units when

Subj: (U) COMMAND INVESTIGATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE INCIDENT IN THE VICINITY OF FARSI ISLAND INVOLVING TWO RIVERINE COMMAND BOATS (RCB 802 AND RCB 805) ON OR ABOUT 12 JANUARY 2016

non-traditional missions are contemplated. In this case, the investigation found that "FIFTH Fleet/CTF-56 did not communicate all of its real-time operational requirements of the RCB platform and crew to the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command." Had they done so, NECC could have ensured targeted training was provided or appropriate risk mitigation measures enacted to support mission accomplishment. The lessons learned from this investigation, including results of the assessments recommended by COMPACFLT discussed below, will be used to improve the quality and robustness of pre-deployment training going forward.

3. (U//~~FOUO~~) I recommend modifying the following findings of fact, opinions, and recommendations:

FINDINGS OF FACT

II.C.7. (U) While those personnel [referring to personnel in billets transferred from Detachment Yorktown to CRS-3] were of the appropriate rate for the billet, many did not possess the required qualifications. [Encl (72)]

(U//~~FOUO~~) Reply: Non-concur. The Unit was manned at 97% Fit (correct Skill Rating + Experience (Paygrade) vs. Requirement) and 104% Fill (Personnel Onboard vs. Requirement) as stated in FF II.C.5 and II.C.6. [Encls 354 and 355]

II.C.11. (U) In April 2015, U.S. Fleet Forces Command denied this request [referring to Coastal Riverine Groups' request for Priority Three Manning] on the grounds that Priority Three Manning was given to commands that better aligned with the Commander's Fleet priority missions. [Encls (72), (105)]

(U//~~FOUO~~) Reply: Non-Concur, as it provides an incomplete answer. In reviewing this Unit's request on 22 Oct 2014, the 9-month future forecast in manning (without priority assistance) was projected to be 97% fill or 423 personnel assigned vs. Billets Authorized (BA) of 434. The Priority III manning request was denied because the unit was well above the established manning threshold for a sea duty UIC (typically 90%). [Encl 356]

OPINIONS

VI.A.3. (U) The disestablishment of CRS-3 plus the removal of one company of billets (142) created a false indication of adequate manning to Higher Headquarters on the fit/fill of CRS-3 from the beginning of its training cycle and continuing through the 2015-2016 deployment. [FF (II.A.15), (II.B.1)-(II.B.7), (II.C.1)-(II.C.4), (II.C.5)-(II.C.11), (II.C.18), (II.K.11)]

(U//~~FOUO~~) Reply: Non-concur with IO Opinion. I understood what was occurring during the time prior to and after the implementation of the FMD, as did COMNECC. NECC was confident that CRS-3 had the proper skill sets onboard to successfully execute their deployment, and communicated that to me. Although FIT was projected to drop from 92% to 77%, the main factor in that reduction was a decrease in apprentice pay band (E1-E-4) manning, with commensurate increases in

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

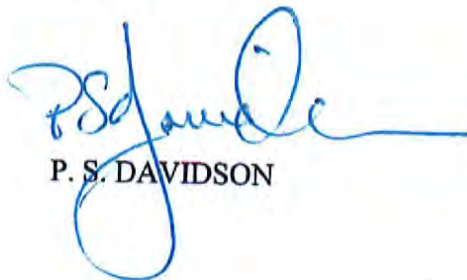
Subj: (U) COMMAND INVESTIGATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE INCIDENT IN THE VICINITY OF FARSI ISLAND INVOLVING TWO RIVERINE COMMAND BOATS (RCB 802 AND RCB 805) ON OR ABOUT 12 JANUARY 2016

journeyman/supervisory pay band (E5-E6/E7-E9) manning. FILL was projected to remain at 94%. [USFF Encl 354]

RECOMMENDATIONS

(U//~~FOUO~~): Additional Recommendation VI.M.13: Within 60 days, NECC and NECC PAC should be directed to critically assess the training and certification for deployment process to determine if the end-product riverine boat squadron and crew are meeting the high expectations and standards necessary to safely and effectively complete deployed tasks in the various AORs. Additionally, NECC and NECC PAC should be directed to critically assess the required mission sets for NECC units, to include signal and intelligence collection operations, to ensure the mission sets are appropriate. Once these reviews are complete, NECC should brief results to CPF and CFFC.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Reply: Concur, and executing.



P. S. DAVIDSON

Copy to:
COMPACFLT
COMTHIRDFLT
COMUSNAVCENT
COMNECC

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~