BOARD OF INQUIRY ASSEMBLED AT HEADQUARTERS ROYAL AIR FORCE SUPPORT COMMAND ON 11 JANUARY 1987

LIST OF EFFECTIVE PAGES

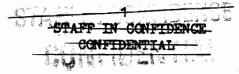
Exhibits

Page No	Classification	Page No	Classification
1 2 3 4 5 6 9 10 11 11 11 15 17 18 19 20 12 21 21 22 22 23 24 26 29 29 29 29 29 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20	क्षे के	A-1 A-2 A-3 A-4 A-5 A-6 B-1 C-1 C-2 D-1 E-1 G-1 G-2 H-1 J-1 K-1-1 K-1 L-1-1 M-1 M-2 L-2	
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BOARD OF INQUIRY ASSEMBLED AT HEADQUARTERS ROYAL AIR FORCE SUPPORT COMMAND ON 11 JAN 87

Serial	Date (b)	Time (c)	Action (d)
1.	ll Jan	1230-1250	Members of the Board were briefed by Gp Capt at HQRAFSC, RAF Brampton.
2.		1300-	Members of the Board departed for RNAD Dean Hill.
3.	n ·	1600	Members of the Board arrived at RNAD Dean Hill.
4.	'n	1615-1645	Members of the Board, accompanied by Sqn Ldr , Convoy Commander, Fg Off Convoy Safety Officer and Wg Cdr Command MTO at HQRAFSC, visited the accident scene.
5.		1700-1730	Members of the Board viewed TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84), which was under guard in Bldg 25 (the weapon unloading shed) at RNAD Dean Hill.
6.	. 11	1730-1750	The Board discussed the next days operations with Fg Off who had been detailed to unload TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84).
7.	"	1750	Board departed to accommodation.
3.	12 Jan	0 900	The Board reassembled in the Headquarters building at RNAD Dean Hill.
9.	11	0900-1000	The Board discussed what action was to be taken.
10.	"	1020-1100	The Board interviewed first witness, Sgt
11.	n	1100-1210	The Board interviewed second witness, Inspector
12.		1210-1230	The President of the Board telephoned OC RAFASUPU to have certain documents available on arrival.
13.	11	12 30–1330	The Board discussed a change in the terms of reference proposed by HQRAFSC (later cancelled by HQRAFSC).
14.	11	1330 –1430	The Board discussed the tactics for conduct- ing the Inquiry.



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(a)	(b)	(ç)	(d)
15.	12 Jan	1430-1830	Board travelled to RAFASU.
16.	11	1830-1915	Sqn Ldr isolated certain convoy documents.
17.	13 Jan	0900-1225	Board interviewed third witness, Sqn Ldr
18.		1225-1350	Board interviewed fourth witness, Cpl
19.	11	1350-1435	Board interviewed fifth witness, Cpl
20.	11	1435-1530	Board interviewed sixth witness, Cpl
21.	"	1530-1625	Board interviewed seventh witness, Cpl
22.		1650-1755	Board interviewed eighth witness, Cpl
23.	Ħ	`181 0- 1915	Board interviewed ninth witness, Flt Lt
214.	11	-1940	Interim report despatched to HQRAFSC and Board adjourned for dinner.
25.	11	2030-2110	Board interviewed tenth witness, 2nd Lt
26.	Ħ	2110-2230	Board interviewed eleventh witness, Fg Off and adjourned for the night.
27.	14 Jan	0810-1030	Board interviewed twelfth witness, SAC
28.	"	1055-1150	Board interviewed thirteenth witness, SAC
29.	11	1200-1300	Board interviewed fourteenth witness, WO
30.	11	1305-1340	Board interviewed fifteenth witness, SAC
31.	11	1345 - 1350	Board interviewed SAC no statement taken.
32.	"	1350 -1420	Board interviewed sixteenth witness, Cpl
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			19 25	Board interviewed eighteenth witness, Flt Lt (and adjourned for dinner.
	36,	ti	2015-2145	Board discussed findings and adjourned for the night.
	37.	15 Jan	3830-0850	Board interviewed nineteenth witness,
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	5%	.:	1710-1930	Board drafted verticals.
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	7		-2 200	Board discussed recommendations.
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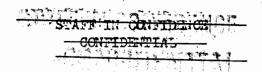
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(a)	(๖)	(c)	(d)
54.	15 Jan	2200	Board adjourned for the night.
55.	16 Jan	0800	Board reconvened.
56.	**	0800-1200	Board reviewed Inquiry report for accuracy.
57.	11	1200-1300	Inquiry checked by P1.
58.	11	1300	Proceedings of the Board handed to OC RAFASUPU.



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ROYAL AIR FORCE

PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF OFFICERS, BOARD OF INQUIRY Etc.

, •	NOTES	PROCEEDINGS of a Board of Inquiry
	single sheet paper only to be used. I documentary exhibits to be pasted on aper.	convened at Headquarters Royal Air Force Support Command RAF Brampton on the 11 January 1987
		by order of Air Vice Marshal RAF
evide	a separate page for the recording of ace of each witness. Full signature of witness must be inserted at end of his noce.	for the purpose of Investigating the circumstances of the accidents in which 2 vehicles in a convoy on 10 January 1987 were involved in an accident.
	alterations and erasures in record of nee must be initialed by the witness.	The Board is to determine:
(iv) QR adver	1269 to be complied with whenever se comments are made by a witness another.	a. The cause of the incident and examine contributory factors.b. Determine what injuries were caused and whether they will be the exciting cause of later disability.
	the proceedings are complete, assemble securely in following order:	c. Investigate and comment on any fatigue implications
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(e) I (d) I	osition of the Board. ist of Witnesses. ist of Exhibits. arrative of Evenia,	Wg Cdr (Comp) (Engineer Branch) MOD parented by RAF Abingdon
(g) F (h) E	Record of Evidence (check that QR 269 has been complied with). Findings. Recommendations.	MEMBERS
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(k) I	Remarks by AOC and AOC-in-C.	Sgn Ldr (Supply Branch)
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	Board, etc., is to study QR, Chapter d AP 3392 Vol 4 Chap 15.	IN ATTENDANCE (S∞ QR 1261)

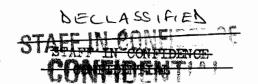
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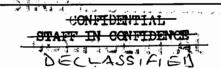


2. Inspector (RNAD West Dean Hill 3. Sqn Ldr A (RAFASUPU), RAFASUPU	(Page 10) (Pages 11, 12 & 52) (Pages 13,14,15,16,36, 37,38,46,47 & 48)
4. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 5. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 6. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 7. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 8. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 9. Flt Lt (), RAFASUPU 10. 2nd Lt (), Comacchio Group 11. Fg Off (), RAFASUPU 12. SAC (), RAFASUPU 13. SAC (), RAFASUPU 14. WO (RAF Uxbridge 15. SAC (), RAFASUPU 16. Cpl (), RAFASUPU 17. Wg Cdr (), RAFASUPU 19. Flt Lt (), RAFASUPU	(Page 17) (Page 18) (Page 19) (Page 20) (Page 21) (Page 21) (Page 23) (Page 23) (Pages 24 & 25) (Pages 26, 27 & 28) (Pages 29 & 30) (Pages 31 & 32) (Pages 33 & 34) (Pages 35,50 & 51) (Pages 39 & 40) (Pages 41,42 & 49) (Page 43) (Page 45)

LIST OF EXHIBITS

A.	Movement Order 419 (with extraneous classified detail removed (6 pages)
B.	Four photographs of TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) - one copy only
C.	Damage assessment of TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84)
D.	Convoy communications with Task Control - Responsibilities of Convoy
	Commander.
E.	Convoy Operating Procedures Chapter 7 page 5 paragraph 24.
F.	Preface to RAFASUPU Convoy Operating Procedures.
G. 1 & 2	Two pages of Task Control Diary relating to 10 January 1987 (2 pages)
H.	Responsibility of
J	Video tape from Convoy Commander's vehicle. one copy only.
K. 1 & 2	FMT 3 and driver's statement (VRM 30 AJ 84)
L. 1 & 2	FMT 3 and driver's statement (VRM 81 AE 13)
M. 1 & 2	658A for (VRM 30 AJ 84 and 81 AE 13)



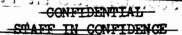


ROYAL AIR FORCE

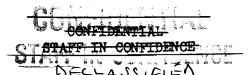
PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF OFFICERS, BOARD OF INQUIRY Etc.

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(i) A4, single sheet paper only to be used. Small documentary exhibits to be pasted on	1 000000000 04
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(v) When the proceedings are complete, assemble	
them securely in following order:	J. Establish whether the supporting post accident
(a) Diary of Action, showing day to day progress of the Board.	•
(b) Form 2 completed as to the convening authority, terms of reference, com-	
position of the Board. (c) List of Witnesses.	
(d) List of Exhibits.	
(e) Narrative of Events.	
(f) Record of Evidence (check that QR 1269 has been complied with).	
(g) Findings.	
	MEMBERS
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THESE PROCEEDINGS ARE TO BE PASSED THROUGH EACH STAGE WITHOUT DELAY



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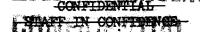


ROYAL AIR FORCE

PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD OF OFFICERS, BOARD OF INQUIRY Etc.

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(ii) Use a separate page for the recording of	·
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(iii) All alterations and erasures in record of evidence must be initialed by the witness.	
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(a) Diary of Action, showing day to day progress of the Board.	
(b) Form 2 completed as to the convening authority, terms of reference, com- position of the Board.	PRESIDENT
(c) List of Witnesses.	
(d) List of Exhibits.	
(e) Narrative of Events.	
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(A) Recommendations.	MEMBERS
(i) Statements from Witnesses under QR 1269.	
(1) Remarks by Unit and Station Com- manders.	
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(vi) The Board, etc., is to study QR, Chapter 17 and AP 3392 Vol 4 Chap 15.	
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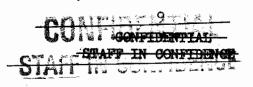
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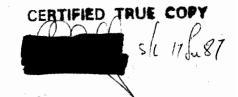
BOARD OF INQUIRY CONVENED AT HEADQUARTERS ROYAL AIR FORCE SUPPORT COMMAND ROYAL AIR FORCE STATION BRAMPTON ON 11 JANUARY 1987

NARRATIVE OF EVENTS

- 1. On 10 January 1987 a convoy constituted of 4 TCHDs and supporting vehicles (Movement Order 419) was proceeding on an unclassified road approximately 2 miles east of West Grimstead. The third TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) left the road, dropped down a short bank, and came to rest on its side in a field. The last TCHD (VRM 81 AE 13) came to rest some 30 yards further back at an angle across the road with its nearside front corner embedded in the verge. The accident occurred at Map Reference 227259 on Ordnance Survey Sheet 184, 1:50,000 Landranger Series.
- 2. As a result of both accidents only one Service person sustained very minor injury.



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First Witness Sergeant () Ministry of Defence Police of Royal Naval Armament Depot, Dean Hill, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am a shift Sergeant in the MOD Police at RNAD Dean Hill and have been employed in this capacity since November 1981.
- 2. At 1554 hours on Saturday 10 January 1987, I left the Police Post to go to the site of the accident. I drove into West Dean and turned left through the village. At the junction of the Farley and West Grimstead roads, I was stopped by the Wiltshire Constabulary, who directed me to approach the scene of the accident via the Farley road and West Grimstead. I arrived at the rear of the convoy at 1610 hours.
- 3. Although I do not use the road on which the accident occurred daily, I am very familiar with it. In common with many other roads in the area, it is prone to icing in the winter. On this particular stretch, not only is the road shielded by a high ridge from the sun, but the drainage is reduced by debris from farm vehicles which use the road regularly. When I arrived, it was full daylight, overcast and dry. The road was in a treacherous condition due to ice, so that in places it was difficult to even stand. This was because the road surface is not flat, but cambered. I was driving a Land Rover and I found that braking and cornering were difficult.

-10-

Second Witness Inspector Ministry of Defence Police, of Royal Naval Armament Depot, Dean Hill, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am the Senior Serving Police Officer in the MOD Police, RNAD Dean Hill and have been employed in this post since May 1982.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was on duty at the Depot Emergency Headquarters. At 1554 hours, a message was received from the convoy that an accident had occurred outside the depot. The message requested traffic control assistance on the road to the west of RNAD Dean Hill. I immediately despatched Sergeant to the scene of the accident. From this point on, I maintained close liaison with the convoy and provided assistance from my resources, as necessary.

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Can you tell the Board something about the

approach roads to RNAD Dean Hill?

Answer:

In my opinion, there are 4 feasible immediately local approach roads to RNAD Dean Hill which could be used by large vehicles. All 4 roads are

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unclassified country roads which are very narrow in places. The general characteristics of these roads are that they are of tarmac construction with soft verges. We do not furnish information regarding the state of the local roads, unless this information is specifically requested.

Question:

Were you asked to provide any information on the state of the local roads by RAFASUPU personnel

over the period prior to the accident?

Answer:

No. In my experience, the MOD Police have never

been asked to

11

provide this type of information.

Question:

Had you been asked on this occasion, what would

have been your response?

Answer:

I would have advised an approach from the direction of Romsey, because of the adverse

weather conditions.

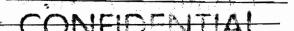
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Third Witness Squadron Leader (Provost), Security (Provost) Branch of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit (RAFASUPU), Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am a Convoy Commander at RAFASUPU and have held that post since 20 April 1985.
- 2. On 5 January 1987, I was detailed by Task Control, on behalf of OC RAFASUPU, to carry out the duties of Convoy Commander for Movement Order No 419. The convoy was due to leave RAFASUPU on Wednesday 7 January 1987. I now present a copy of Movement Order No 419 (Exhibit A).
- 3. In accordance with the Convoy Operating Procedures, I briefed the members of the convoy immediately prior to our departure on the morning of Wednesday 7 January 1987. All those members of the convoy who were present in the convoy on Saturday 10 January 1987 were present at this briefing. As is the normal procedure when no changes to convoy personnel occur during the course of the Movement Order procedure, no further briefings were required.
- 4. The convoy left RAFASUPU at approximately 1000 hours on Wednesday 7 Janbuary 1987.
- 5. During Wednesday 7 January 1987, the convoy personnel were on duty for $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours, of which 3 hours were driving time.
- 6. During Thursday 8 January 1987, the convoy personnel were on duty for 8 hours, of which 6 hours were driving time.



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7. During Friday 9 January 1987, the convoy personnel were on duty for $7\frac{3}{4}$ hours, of which 2 hours were driving time.

8. On Saturday 10 January 1987, the convoy personnel had been on duty for 62 hours at the time of the accident, of which one hour 25 minutes were driving time.

13

- 9. At no time was the break between duty periods less than $15\frac{1}{2}$ hours and on the night of 9/10 January 1987, the break was $16\frac{1}{2}$ hours.
- 10. In addition, the mandatory breaks during driving time of 15 minutes in every 2 hours were taken throughout the convoy movement.
- 11. During the overnight stops, the personnel were accommodated in hotels providing appropriate rest facilities.
- 12. I have no reason to doubt that the 2 drivers of the vehicles involved in the accident made full use of the rest facilities available at all the overnight stops. On the morning of 10 January 1987, I saw the drivers and they appeared to be in a perfectly normal state of health and fitness for duty.
- 13. During the course of the journey on 10 January 1987, the majority of the route was on major trunk roads and there were no untoward events and driving conditions were normal. Prior to turning off the A36 trunk road onto the minor, unclassified, road to West Grimstead and West Dean, the Escort Commander received a , that there was slush ahead on our report from I did not consider that this was a hazard to the convoy and from experience I accepted the Escort Commander's decision to continue.
- 14. Some short time later, we encountered some slush on the minor road near West Grimstead and I assumed this to be the hazard which had been reported. I was not aware of any further problem until I heard a radio transmission saying Convoy Accident. At this time I was in the Transit behind the 4 Truck Cargo Heavy Duty load carriers and the Fire Tender.
- 15. My Transit vehicle stopped and I saw the third Truck Cargo Heavy Duty lying on its side in a field to the north of the road and the fourth Truck Cargo Heavy Duty was slewed across the road behind

14

it, with the cab suspended over the ditch on the north side of the road.

1 WITNESS 11 16. I instructed the convoy to stop and I informed all convoy callsigns over the radio of what had occurred. I noted that the 2 WITNESS 10 Convoy Safety Officer, Flying Officer was at the scene of the toppled vehicle and also I noted that fire personnel were attending that vehicle. There was no evidence of fire. noted that the security forces under the direction of the Stand Off Escort Commander, Lieutenant (RM), were reacting and traffic

control was in operation.

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- 17. Within 10 minutes, I was satisfied that the situation was stable and that the security situation was under control. During that time, I was advised that there were no injuries sustained by the personnel involved.
- 18. I took reporting action in accordance with Convoy Operating Procedures and RAFASUPU Task Control were advised of the occurrance at 1600 hours.
- 19. At no time were any classified documents lost or compromised.
- 20. Having read the foregoing statement, I wish to clarify the position of the slush referred to in paragraph 1^4 in relation to the accident site. The slush was some $1^{\frac{1}{2}}$ miles before the accident site and the road conditions appeared reasonable to me up to the time I received the accident call.

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Can you tell the Board the road conditions at the precise scene of the accident?

15

Answer:

No. The Standard Operating Procedures require me to retire some way from the scene of the

accident to set up a Command Post.

Question:

Can you give an estimate of the damage to farm property after the accident site had been cleared?

Answer:

There was some damage to an intermittent and poor quality hedge over a total distance of some 30 yards and no apparent damage to the field.

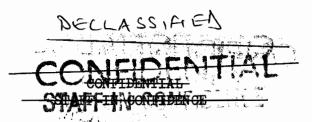
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Fourth Witness Corporal (, Royal Air Force Police, Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am a member of the RAFASUPU and have been employed on these duties since January 1984.
- 2. I was detailed to act as the NCO IC Movement Order No 419.
- 3. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was responsible for

and at a point some $\frac{2}{4}$ mile past West Grimstead, I encountered some slush on the road, which extended for approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile and the road then became clear. I encountered no further adverse conditions between this point and the convoy destination.

STAFF IN CONFIDENCE





4. I then returned to the junction with the A36, by the same route and reported the slush to be Escort Commander. At this time the convoy had not arrived at the junction and did not pass me until a short time later.

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

At any point between the A36 and the convoy

destination, did you notice any severe road

surface icing?

Answer:

No.

17

Fifth Witness

Corporal (Royal Air Force Police, of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am employed on convoy support duties at RAFASUPU and have been so employed since August 1985. I successfully passed the Civil Police Advanced Motorcycle Course in March 1986.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was the motor-cyclist in the lead over the section of road where the accident occurred. On this section, roads were not good. There were patches of slush and I suspected that there was black ice. However, travelling at 20 to 25 mph and keeping within the tracks of previous vehicles, I did not have any particular problems with the handling of my motorcycle.
- 3. I saw an oncoming civilian car, to which I gave a hand signal to slow down, but I did not stop. About a minute or a minute and a half later, I heard the Convoy Accident transmission.

18

Sixth Witness Corporal Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am employed on convoy fire duties at RAFASUPU and I have been so employed on these duties since April 1978.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was the NCO IC Fire Crew on the convoy. At the time the accident occurred, I was in the Convoy Fire Tender, which was travelling immediately behind the last Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD). I saw the last but one TCHD attempting to negotiate a stationary on-coming vehicle, which was a civilian car. We were travelling at 5 to 10 mph and I estimate that the TCHD was travelling at a





similar speed or less. There did not appear to be any problem until, suddenly, the TCHD toppled very slowly off the road onto its left hand side. The last TCHD braked sharply and slewed across the road. Our vehicle also slipped as it came to a halt.

- 3. I jumped down from the cab and only then did I realise how slippery conditions were under foot. In fact, I shouted to the Convoy Safety Officer, who was just ahead of me, 'Take it easy Sir'.
- 4. I ran to the toppled TCHD and checked that the fuel tank was not ruptured and that there was no other fire hazard.

19

Seventh Witness Corporal () Royal Air Force Police, of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am employed as a Royal Air Force Policeman at RAFASUPU and have been so employed since 13 January 1986.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was acting as the Vehicle Escort in Truck Cargo Heavy Duty, Vehicle registration mark 30 AJ 84, driven by SAC
- 3. A couple of minutes before the accident to our vehicle occurred, I remarked to SAC that I was detailed to ride a motorcycle the next day and I was not looking forward to it if the conditions were similar to those we were travelling on at that time.
- 4. As we approached the point at which the accident occurred, SAC had slowed down due to the condition of the road and because we had been warned of an oncoming vehicle. As we approached the on-coming vehicle, I noticed that it was a car and was stationary, but some 1 to $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet from its nearside verge.
- 5. We continued to move forward to pass the car and I estimate our speed to have been 5 mph. We had just got level with the front of the car, when I felt our vehicle slide to the left, so that the nearside wheels were off the metalled surface of the road. As we continued forward, SAC said 'I can't hold it' and the vehicle slowly toppled to the left and came to rest on its left hand side. As the vehicle came to rest, I fell to the side and banged my head on the side of the cab. I have suffered from a headache since the accident and have reported sick at Royal Air Force Wittering. The Medical Officer told me that I might be suffering from slight concussion.

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Eighth Witness

WITNESS 13

2 WITNESS 7

Corporal () Royal
Air Force Police, of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit,
Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am a Royal Air Force Policeman on RAFASUPU and I have been employed on convoy security duties since November 1986.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was acting as the Vehicle Escort in Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) Vehicle Registration Mark 81 AE 13, driven by SAC . We were the last of the 4 load carriers in the convoy.
- 3. After we turned off the A36, apart from hearing the message about slush on the road, I was not aware that my driver was having any problems. At the time of the accident, when the TCHD in front of us toppled off the road, we were about 30 metres behind it and a black civilian car was between us and the other TCHD.
- 4. We were travelling at walking pace and I could see a car which was stationary on the opposite side of the road in front of us. As the TCHD in front of us approached this car, the car appeared to move and then stop again further from its nearside verge. The TCHD appeared to move slightly more to the left to pass the car. I then saw it slide to its left and gently topple over and come to rest on its side.
- saw the civilian car in front of us brake and slide slightly. At the same time, I realised that our vehicle was sliding to the left and it came to rest at an angle to the road; with the left front corner buried in the hedgerow. Before I could report it, I heard Cpl report a Convoy Accident. I was completely uninjured in the accident and remained on duty in the vehicle.

21

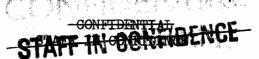
Ninth Witness Flight Lieutenant (Provost) Branch of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am the Escort Commander at RAFASUPU and have held this post since October 1986.
- 2. On Saturday, 10 January 1987, I was Escort Commander for the convoy, travelling in the leading Ford Transit of
- on the A36, I received a radio message from warning me that there was slush on the unclassified road leading to our destination.
- 3. After leaving the A36, we proceeded along the unclassified road and encountered a small and intermittent amount of slush about one kilometer east of West Grimstead. I then passed



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a message to the convoy, warning of the presence of this slush. During this time, we were having problems in communicating with our destination and I was not aware of any further problems with the driving conditions. The next thing I heard was a Convoy Accident radio message, which I logged at 1545 hours.

4. I immediately took the appropriate emergency actions in accordance with Convoy Operating Procedures, including informing the Civil, and Ministry of Defence Police at our destination, that a Road Traffic Accident, involving a convoy, had occurred and requesting the assistance of the Civil Police in controlling traffic.

22

Tenth Witness Second Lieutenant (Royal Marines Condor, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. For the period of the convoy, I was detached to Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, under the command of OC RAFASUPU.
- 2. On Saturday, 10 January 1987, I was the Stand+Off+Escort Commander for the convoy. When the convoy turned off the A36, my vehicle was to the rear of the 4 load carrying vehicles, in its correct convoy position. During the rest of the journey, up to the time of the accident, I was not aware of any unduly adverse road conditions. I did, however, hear the Escort Commander's transmission concerning the slush on the road.
- 3. When I heard the Convoy Accident transmission, I immediately leapt from my vehicle to proceed with establishing the Security Cordon. I also sent the Convoy Medical Attendant forward.

23

Eleventh Witness Flying Officer (), (), Engineer Branch, of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

1. I am a Convoy Safety Officer at RAFASUPU and have held that post since June 1984.

X WITNESS 3

had given his Convoy Commander's briefing, I then gave all convoy personnel the official Safety Brief. I was present throughout the whole of Movement Order No 419, up to the time of the accident.



- 3. Although I am not formally required to monitor the rest periods of the drivers, I do concern myself with these matters and therefore I am able to say, with confidence, that the 2 drivers of the accident vehicles received adequate rest throughout the whole period of Movement Order 419. In particular, on the Friday night before the accident, they both had adequate rest. I saw them on the Saturday morning and can confirm that they were rested and fit. SAC is known to me as a non-drinker and SAC is a responsible airman, with very moderate habits.
- 4. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was travelling in the Convoy Fire Tender, immediately behind the last of the 4 Trucks Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD). As far as I was concerned, nothing of particular note occurred up to the time of the accident. I was first made aware of the accident by the Convoy Accident transmission. Virtually at the same time I saw the TCHD ahead of us slewing across the road and, although my view was obstructed, I was aware of the one in front of that toppling into the field. Our vehicle slithered to a stop and I jumped out.
- 5. I had trouble keeping my feet on the treacherous road surface and I went forward to what I judged to be the more serious accident, the vehicle lying on its side.

24

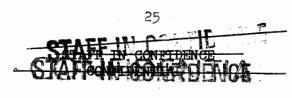
2 WITNESS 13

WITNESS 12

3 WITNESS 6

4 WITHESS 7

- 6. I ordered Corporal , my Fire NCO, to attend to possible fire risks. Almost at this point, the Convoy Fire Tender arrived. On moving round to the front of the vehicle, I noticed that Corporal the Escort, was in an agitated state and still inside the cab, whilst the driver was outside and uninjured. I made arrangements for Corporal to be helped from the cab as soon as possible. I ensured that the engine of the vehicle, which was still running at this time, was shut off and the condition of the vehicle was stable. I then directed the MT Fitter and spare driver from the Convoy Support Vehicle to attend to the batteries, which were leaking.
- 7. I ensured that the vehicle cab had been cleared of personnel and I left Corporal to maintain a fire watch on the vehicle.
- 8. I then went to the second vehicle and there appeared to be no hazards and the personnel were uninjured.
- 9. I now present 4 Polaroid photographs, which I took with the convoy camera, taken approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after the accident. (Exhibit B).



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Twelvth Witness

Mechanical Transport Driver of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am a Mechanical Transport Driver at RAFASUPU and have been so employed since August 1986. I have completed 4 previous convoys driving a Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD).
- On Movement Order No 419, I was tasked as the driver of TCHD Vehicle Registration Mark 30 AJ 84. fully briefed before starting the Movement Order and at no time did I have any problems understanding my instructions. At each night halt, I was allocated comfortable accommodation and received adequate rest. This was particularly so on the night 9/10 January 1987. I did not consume any alcohol that night and I slept soundly and awoke refreshed. I had a full breakfast in the hotel before leaving for duty. I was fully fit up until the time of the accident. At the time of the accident, I had been on duty for about 7 hours. I had only driven for less than 2 hours in total prior to the accident. I had a meal at lunch time and most of the rest of the time I spent sitting in my vehicle I wasn't in any way frustrated by the waiting waiting. and at the time of the accident I was in a perfectly normal state of mind. The convoy that day proceeded in a perfectly normal way.
- We turned off the main dual carriageway onto a country road. After some time on this road, we encountered some slush, of which we had been previously warned. The slush was in thin and intermittent patches and had no effect on the handling of my vehicle. At some stage, Corporal , my escort, said to me 'I wouldn't like to drive my motorcycle in these conditions. In common with other members of the convoy, I received a warning of an on-coming vehicle. We were approaching a hump in the road, on a bend and I could not see the TCHD in I slowed to between 15 and 20 mph, by braking and changing gear and did not notice any handling problems. I then saw that the on-coming vehicle, a private car which was stationary, although not fully pulled into its nearside, appeared to have left sufficient room for me to pass I estimate this car could have pulled a further one to $1\frac{1}{2}$

feet to its nearside. I lined up my vehicle to pass the car, decellerating under control, so that as the front of my vehicle reached the front of the car, I estimate my speed to have been 5 mph. At this point, I felt the front of the vehicle slide towards the nearside, still moving forwards. This drew my attention to the pronounced camber on the road and I realised I was on ice.

26

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4. In view of this, I avoided violent corrective actions, I did not brake or yank the wheel to the right. I maintained a firm pressure to the right on the steering, hoping that the nearside front wheel would grip on the verge and enable me to regain my original However, the vehicle continued to move forwards, at the same time toppling over onto its left hand side. As the vehicle fully landed on its side, we stopped moving forward.

asked me to get out first and I did Corporal so through the roof hatch. Flying Officer ordered me to get back into the cab and switch off the engine, which was still running, which I did. The Fire Crew then assisted myself and Corporal leave the cab via the drivers door. I was totally uninjured, but Corporal had hit his head on the side window. He appeared shaken and disorientated and he received immediate medical attention from the Convoy Medical Attendant. Some 2 hours after the accident, I was seen by a Medical Officer from Royal Air Force Lyncham, who told me I was perfectly fit. At no stage did I feel that I had suffered any effects ,3 then Convoy NCO I assisted Corporal of shock. IC MT, to complete the FMT 3 (Accident Report) and I started a statement, which I completed after I returned to base.

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WITNESS 11

3 WITNESS 16

Questioned by the Board:

Question: At any time during your approach to

the stationary car, did you see it move?

Answer:

No.

Question:

What maintenance was carried out on your

27

vehicle on the day of the accident?

Answer:

I carried out my normal Daily Inspection that morning and a tyre condition check was carried out at the 10 mile check.

Question:

At any stage, during the course of Movement Order 419, had you any problems

with the vehicle handling?

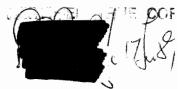
Answer:

I have never driven this particular vehicle before and each TCHD has its own characteristics. After I had got used to the characteristics of this vehicle, after about 10 miles driving on Wednesday 7 January 1987, I had no further problems at any time.



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Question:

What class of driving license do you

hold?

Answer:

Heavy Goods Vehicle Class 1, although

TCHD is only a Class 2 vehicle.

28

Thirteenth Witness

Senior Aircraftman (()
Mechanical Transport Driver, of Royal Air Force Armament
Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been
duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am employed as a Mechanical Transport Driver on RAFASUPU and have been so employed since April 1986. I have been driving Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) since then, but I had a break of 4 months due to a joint infection in my ankle and I returned to TCHD driving some 2 months ago. I hold a Heavy Goods Vehicle Class 1 license and have completed 4 previous convoys driving TCHD.
- 2. On Movement Order No 419, I was tasked as the driver of TCHD, Vehicle Registration Mark 81 AE 13. fully briefed before starting the Movement Order and at no time did I have any problems understanding my instructions. At each night halt I was allocated comfortable accommodation and received adequate rest. On the night of Friday 9 January 1987, I consumed 2 pints of beer whilst having a meal and went to bed at about 2300 hours. I had a good sleep and awoke refreshed. I had a full breakfast and I was fully fit when I reported for work. At the time of the accident, I was still fully fit. I had been on duty for about 7 hours at the time of the accident, of which only 2 hours had been actual driving I had a lunchtime break and meal and most of the rest of the time was spent sitting in my vehicle waiting.
- 3. As we were driving along the country road, having turned off the dual carriageway, I was following TCHD 30 AJ 84. I had heard a call warning of an on-coming vehicle and a little later I saw the TCHD, then some 50 metres ahead of me, clearly slowing down and attempting to negotiate past a stationary on-coming vehicle. There seemed to be no problem until suddenly the vehicle started to topple sideways to its left. At this point I had slowed to 5 mph and I applied the brakes and to my surprise, my vehicle slithered to the left and my nearside front wheel became embedded in the soft verge and I then realised that there was ice on the road. Up to that point I had had no problems

29

in handling my vehicle and during the whole of the Movement Order, my vehicle handled perfectly normally.



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4. I was completely uninjured, as was my escort Corporal and I remained on duty guarding my vehicle.

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

What maintenance was carried out on

your vehicle on the day of the accident?

Answer:

A full Daily Inspection and the tyres were checked on the 10 mile check.

30

Fourteenth Witness

WITNESS 8

Warrant Officer ((), Mechanical Transport Technician of Royal Air Force Brampton, parented by Royal Air Force Uxbridge, having been duly sworn, states:

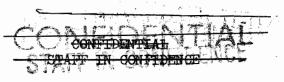
- 1. I am the MT Assessor No 3, stationed at Royal Air Force Brampton and I am responsible for the Eastern District, which includes RAFASUPU at Royal Air Force Wittering. I have held this post since September 1983 and I have previously been involved in damage assessments for Trucks Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD).
- 2. On Monday 12 January 1987, I was detailed to carry out a damage assessment on the TCHDs, Vehicle Registration Marks 81 AE 13 and 30 AJ 84, which had been involved in accidents on 10 January 1987.
- 3. On Tuesday 13 January 1987, I inspected TCHD 81 AE 13 and considered that there was no damage to this vehicle, but decided that it was prudent that a check of the left hand front wheel station and the steering geometry was carried out on return to base. I was satisfied that the vehicle was roadworthy and could be driven back to base, therefore I did not raise a damage assessment sheet.
- 4. I then inspected TCHD 30 AJ 84 and found the damage which I have listed on the Estimate Sheet, AFG 1084B, MT Assessor Task No 031 of 1987. I now present this estimate sheet (Exhibit C).
- 5. Due to the weather conditions and lack of serviceable batteries, I was unable to run the engine and I cannot therefore state whether it is serviceable or not.

 My damage assessment does not include an allowance for replacement of the engine if it has been damaged.

Questioned by the Board:

Question: When you carried out the assessment of the vehicles, did you examine them

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for signs of defects in the brakes, steering and front suspension, which may have been present before the

31

accidents?

Answer:

Yes I did. During the inspections I found no visible defects in those systems, but I was unable to carry out functional tests on the brakes of either vehicle.

Question:

What will happen to TCHD 30 AJ 84?

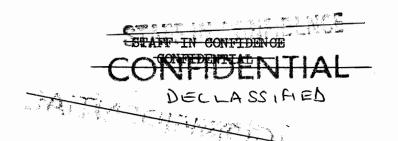
Answer:

I have arranged through Contract Repair Branch at Arborfield for the repair of the vehicle by Glover Webb Ltd and for RAFASUPU to be responsible for towing the vheicle to the Contractors.

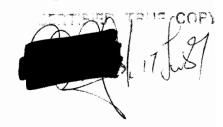
32

Fifteenth Witness Senior Aircraftman ()
Mechanical Transport Driver of Royal Air Force Armament
Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been
duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am an MTD at RAFASUPU and have been so employed since June 1983.
- 2. I was tasked as the driver of the second Truck Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD) on Movement Order No 419 and this is the position I took up for the journey on Saturday 10 January 1987. After turning off the A36, driving along the country road, I did not experience any problems in handling my vehicle. I noted that the road had patches of thin slush in places, of which we had been previously warned. In many places the road is so narrow that it is necessary to reduce speed to 5 to 10 mph when passing oncoming traffic.
- 3. The first I knew of the accident was when I saw, in my nearside mirror, the next TCHD toppling onto its side. At this time I was some 30 to 40 metres in front and I had just passed an on-coming stationary private car. I did this without undue difficulty and I noted as I passed the car it moved forward. I also noted that in this area there was ice on the road. I cannot estimate how far forward the car moved, but I am sure it did move.



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Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Roughly over the 200 metres which covered the accident site, had you noted any problem in discerning where the metalled road ended and the verge

began?

Answer:

No, I could reasonably clearly see where the edge of the metalled road was.

Question:

At any stage of your drive along the country road, had you found it necessary to put your nearside wheels onto the

verge in order to avoid

33

on-coming traffic?

Answer:

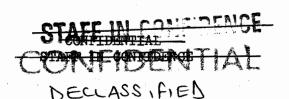
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34

Sixteenth Witness

Corporal (), Mechanical Transport Driver of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am an MTD at RAFASUPU and I regularly act as NCO IC convoy drivers. I have carried out these duties since July 1984.
- 2. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I was driving the Convoy Support Vehicle as part of Movement Order No 419. I was the last but one vehicle in the convoy and as is the normal procedure, we were some 2 miles behind the Trucks Cargo Heavy Duty (TCHD).
- 3. Just before we turned off the A36 onto the minor road, we were notified of the accident by the Convoy Commander. I immediately switched on my emergency blue light and I drove as fast as possible towards the scene of the accident. During this time, I did not experience any problems in handling the vehicle. I stopped at the Royal Marine Cordon Roadblock and shortly afterwards, I was called forward by the Convoy Safety Officer, in company with the Convoy Fitter. On arrival, we were instructed to disconnect the batteries on both TCHDs. I noticed when we arrived, that the road surface was very icy at the scene of the accident.
- 4. Some hours later, I assisted the 2 drivers to complete the FMT 3s and statements.



35

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Third Witness (Recalled) Squadron Leader his former oath, states:

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Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Did your Convoy Commander's Brief prior to Movement Order No 419 include any instructions with regard to weather?

Answer:

No. This is not normal procedure, unless there was some extraordinary known weather conditions imminent.

Question:

During the course of the Movement Order, what daily checks do you make on weather conditions?

Answer:

I am required by Convoy Operating Procedures, Annex A to Chapter 5, to contact Task Control prior to leaving. During this contact, the question of weather is invariably discussed. I can confirm that this was the case prior to departure on this occasion. I present a copy of the relevant instruction (Exhibit D).

Question:

Do you make a distinction between weather conditions and road conditions?

Answer:

Yes. It is recognised, however, that the 2 are often complementary.

Question:

Since weather forecasts do not always cover actual road conditions, how do you address the specific question of road conditions?

Answer:

If there was any doubt in my mind, I would ensure that specific checks on road conditions were made, as far as is possible, either by Task Control or by the Convoy Escort Commander, or both.

36

Question:

Did you have any concerns in this regard on Saturday 10 January 1987?

Answer:

No.

Question:

If you had been so concerned about the weather and road conditions on your planned route that day, prior to departure, are you authorised to postpone the convoy?

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Answer:

Yes. I would communicate my decision to Task Control. However, they could override my decision, should they wish to, with the authority of OC RAFASUPU. Co-incidentally, on the morning of 8 January 1987, during the same Movement Order, I had postponed the convoy's departure from another location because of ice on the road at our departure point. I arranged for the ice to be treated and only after it had thawed, did I authorise the departure of the convoy.

Question:

If during a convoy, you became unhappy about conditions ahead, what would you do?

Answer:

I would stop the convoy, take time to fully appraise the situation; consider my options; inform Task Control at RAFASUPU of my intentions. I have the authority to direct the convoy up to 5 miles from a planned route, but circumstances permitting, I would seek Task Control's approval. Longer diversions require their prior authority. I present the extract from my orders (Exhibit E).

37

Question:

When was the route, used on the 10 January 1987 journey, chosen and by whom?

Answer:

Sometime before 7 January 1987 by Task Control.

Question:

Were you given a planned alternative route for that days journey in the Movement Order?

Answer:

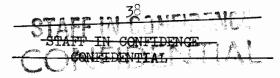
No. This is not normally done unless there is an exceptional reason.

Question:

How did you satisfy yourself that you were setting out on an approved route on 10 January 1987?

Answer:

I accept that a route given to me by Task Control in the Movement Order is fully approved.



CONFIDENTIAL STAFF IN CONFIDENCE



Seventeenth Witness Wing Commander
Branch of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit, Royal Air
Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

1. I am the Officer Commanding Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit and have held that post since December 1983.

Questioned by the Board:

Question: Were you on duty and aware of the convoys

progress on Saturday 10 January 1987?

Answer: I was in my house and I had instructed

Task Control to keep me informed of the

progress of the convoy.

Question: Were you at any time made aware of any

problems with the operation of that convoy?

Answer: I had been notified periodically throughout

Saturday 10 January 1987 of the satisfact-

ory progress of the convoy, until I received a telephone call at 1602 hours Zulu, informing me of the convoy accident.

Question: Are you the authority for changes to

planned routes, once the Movement Order

has started?

Answer: I have the authority for a deviation of

up to 5 miles, which I delegate to the Convoy Commander. For diversions of greater length, I would seek the formal approval of Weapon Engineering 3(RAF) at

the Ministry of Defence.

39

Question: Who is the authority for approving

pre-authorised routes?

Answer: Command Provost and Security Officer

at Headquarters Royal Air Force Support

Command.

Question: Are you the authority for Convoy Operating

Procedures?

Answer: Yes, I publish the Convoy Operating

Procedures under the provisions of QR 64(2)

and I present a copy of the Preface to the current Orders (Exhibit F). As Unit

Orders, I publish them under my own authority.

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Eighteenth Witness Flight Lieutenant ()
Supply Branch of Royal Air Force Armament Support Unit,
Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn states:

- 1. I am the Officer Commanding M M Flight at RAFASUPU and I have held this post since October 1985.
- I was the officer responsible for planning Movement Order No 419. I did not actually preface the plan, but I checked it thoroughly and authorised it. In particular, I personally authorised the route used on Saturday 10 January 1987. This had been chosen by my Flight Sergeant on the basis of previous frequency of use. The choice of this route had no other consideration. This route is known as Route 44. I was the Task Control Officer on duty at all times when the convoy involved in Movement Order No 419 was on the road. On Saturday 10 January 1987, I came on duty at 0915 hours. At 0921 hours, I received a call from the Convoy Commander. This was a routine call, during the course of which we discussed weather and road conditions. I present the relevant pages of my log which records the information I received from Weather line, which I conveyed to the Convoy Commander at 1032 hours, but we did not discuss the weather or the state of the roads.
- 3. I received a call, from the Convoy Safety Officer at 1325 hours in which the weather was discussed. He advised me that there were a few snow flurries in his immediate area. I asked him if it was going to have any effect on the convoy's departure and he said 'No'. I had no other conversations with any convoy personnel on the subject of weather or road conditions prior to the accident. We monitored the hourly weather forecasts on the radio and there were no significant changes from the information previously exchanged. Based on the information available to me, I had no reason to suspect that there were any particulary adverse weather or road conditions on the route of the convoy that day.
- 4. As Task Control Officer, I would not have authorised

41

any significant change to any aspect of the authorised Movement Order, without reference to the Ministry of Defence, Weapon Engineering 3 (RAF).

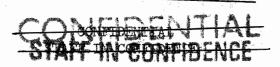
Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Were any alternate routes planned for

Movement Order No 419?







Answer:

It is not normal to plan alternate routes, because my understanding of the policy is, that it could lead to confusion with the Special Safety Organisation and the Civilian Police. In addition, there

would be a logistic problem in the transportation of additional route maps. It could also lead to confusion within

our own convoy personnel.

Question:

Did you make a call on Saturday 10 January

1987, to the convoy destination, to

ascertain their weather and road conditions?

Answer:

No. There is no formal requirement that I know of for me to do this. We do sometimes do this, however I saw no reason to do it on

this occasion.

42

Nineteenth Witness

Flight Lieutenant Medical Officer of Royal Air Force Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- I am a Unit Medical Officer at Royal Air Force Wittering and have been so employed since February 1986.
- On the afternoon of Monday 12 January 1987, I saw Corporal who had reported sick complaining of a headache. He told me that he had had the headache since he was involved in the accident on Saturday 10 January 1987.

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I examined Corporal and concluded that his headache was precipitated by the accident and that it was due to a simple injury to the head of which there were no physical signs. He was prescribed a simple analgesic and returned to duty. He was also given a standard head injury warning, which is normal in these circumstances.

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

In your opinion, will this simple injury to

the head be the exciting course of later

disability?

Answer:

In my opinion it is unlikely.

43

Ninth Witness (Recalled)

Flight Lieutenant on his former oath, states:

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

What are the orders for close to the destination?

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Answer:

I present the relevant section of Convoy

Operating Procedures, Convoy Standing Temporary Instruction Number 7 sub-

paragraph 1g. (Exhibit H).

Question:

In respect of Saturday 10 January 1987 did you alter or supplement in any way

these instructions?

Answer:

No.

44

Twentieth Witness

Warrant Officer ()
Mechanical Transport Technician, of Royal Air Force
Armament Support Unit (RAFASUPU), Royal Air Force
Wittering, having been duly sworn, states:

- 1. I am the Mechanical Transport Officer at RAFASUPU and have held that post since 15 September 1986.
- 2. I confirm that I have inspected the documentation for TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) and TCHD (VRM 81 AE 13) and confirm that both vehicles have been correctly serviced at the appropriate frequencies and that neither vehicle was overdue for any servicing at the time of the accident. I produce to the Board the documents in confirmation of this statement. In as far as I can be I am satisfied that both vehicles were fully serviceable at the time of the accident.

WITNESS 12

WITNESS 13

3. I produce the records for SAC and SAC showing the currency of their Heavygoods and County Council licences, in addition to their MT Drivers Permits.

45

Third Witness (Recalled) Squadron Leader () recalled on his former oath, states:

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Is it normal to travel in wintry conditions?

Answer:

Yes. The presence of snow itself would not necessarily prevent a convoy's departure providing black top conditions had been assured along the route, and, that all the usual sources of road travel information indicated that conditions were satisfactory.

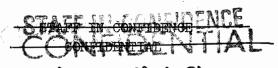
Question:

Do you have, as a Convoy Commander, a published set of guidelines in your

orders regarding weather.

Answer:

No.



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Question:

Is the Board correct in thinking that a Convoy Commanders judgements on weather are based on personal experience and the

advice of Task Control.

Answer:

Yes, and a Convoy Commander would also consult the Convoy Safety Officer and Escort Commander before making his decision.

Question:

In respect of your decisions and actions on Saturday 10 January 1987 do you, with hindsight, consider that there is anything that you could have done which would have avoided the accident.

Answer:

No. I have obviously thought about this and discussed the matter with other Convoy Executives since the accident and I am satisfied that all my decisions and actions were correct.

Third : Witness (Recalled) Squadron Leader former oath, states: recalled on his

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Immediately after the accident were you satisfied that you had all the supporting equipment and facilities.

Answer:

Yes. For the initial actions in response to the accident I had sufficient fire rescue. first aid and security equipment and facilities.

Question:

Can you think of any additional equipment or facilities which could be added to the Convoy inventory which would be useful in similar circumstances?

Answer:

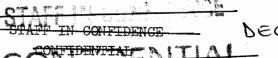
No, but we did at times have problems with radio communications. This has been reported to the appropriate authorities.

Question:

Can you produce your Convoy Commanders Orders?

Answer:

Yes. I produce Convoy Operating Procedures which are published under the authority of OC RAFASUPU. These contain all the orders for all convoy personnel under normal and emergency circumstances.



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Third Wi**tnes**s (Recalled) Squadron Leader () recalled on his former oath, states:

1. I present to the Board the video tape taken from my vehicle which records visually the events leading up to the accident. (Exhibit J).

48

Eighteenth Witness (Recalled)

Flight Lieutenant (recalled on his former oath, states:

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Can you produce the document which

authorises route 44 as an approved route.

Answer:

No because the relevant part of the RAFASUPU

file was Put Away and has since been destroyed; the original authorising documents were lost in a recent fire at Headquarters Royal Air Force Support Command. No copies of the authorising document were held by any other formation.

Question:

Can you quote the relevant regulation

governing weather checks.

Answer:

Yes. SD 814, 3rd Edition, Part F,

Leaflet F4 paragraph 14 states: "The following

factors are to be borne in mind; Road

Condition Reports from Civil Police Traffic Departments, motoring organisations, radio and other sources are to be studied prior to

and during movement".

49

Sixteenth Witness (Recalled) Corporal () recalled on his former oath, states:

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Can you now present the Form MT3 and

drivers statements to the Board?

Answer:

Yes, I now present the original copies of the Form MT3, completed shortly after the accident.

In addition the statements of the 2 TCHD

drivers. (Exhibit K&L)

50

Sixteenth Witness (Recalled)

Corporal former oath, states:



recalled on his

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Question:

Can you now produce the RAF Form 658A authorising the journey to take place on

10 January 1987.

Answer:

Yes. I present the RAF Forms 658A for TCHDs (VRM 30 AJ 84) and (VRM 81 AE 13).

(Exhibit M).

51

Second Witness (recalled)

Inspector

having been recalled on

his previous oath, states:

Questioned by the Board:

Question:

Will you amplify the answer to the last

question?

Answer:

The weather conditions locally were icy and I know that the road from West Grimstead is particularly prone to icing, although I had no specific knowlidge of the state of that stretch of road on the day in question. I also know that as the road in question is in Wiltshire, the Wiltshire County Council are notorious in this area for failing to grit

the minor roads.

Question:

Knowing that a convoy was due, why did you not contact Task Control and advise them of

the state of the road.

Answer:

I was not advised of the route the convoy was taking and when I heard that an accident had occurred and where it was, in company with many people at Dean Hill, I was very surprised, as this road had never previously been used in my experience and the question of informing Task Control never arose. They have always arrived from the direction of Romsey and that is a more feasible route and a better road. In

addition, I am familiar with the make-up of a convoy and I assumed that unless I was specifically asked, the convoy personnel would

be aware of the condition of the route they

were travelling on.



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CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ACCIDENT

1. On the afternoon of Saturday 10 January 1987 the convoy
was heading north on the A36 trunk road approaching the
junction with the unclassified road leading to West Grimstead
and West Dean. Before the junction a report was received
from the Convoy (Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl Cpl
there was slush on the unclassified road. Up to this
noint the road conditions had been completely clear.

- the l with
- 2. The convoy turned on to the unclassified road and shortly after passing West Grimstead some intermittent thin slush was encountered. This slush did not affect the handling of the vehicles, as recorded by several witnesses. Some further way down the road the Escort Commander (Fit Lt.) warned the convoy of an on-coming vehicle.
 - 3 WITNESS 15

1 WITNESS 4

- 4 WITNESS 12

5 WITNESS

- 4. When the driver (SAC) of the third TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) saw the vehicle it was stationary approximately one to one and half feet from the verge, as confirmed by Cpl . There was still sufficient space to pass as can be seen from Exhibit J. He slowed down to an estimated 5 mph and as the front of his vehicle reached the front of the car the TCHD slid toward the nearside still moving forward. The nearside wheels ran onto the verge which gave way and the vehicle toppled to its left coming to a halt on its side in a field 3 feet below the level of the road. This was confirmed by SAC () and Cpl
- 6 WITNESS 13
- 7 WITNESS 8
- 5. The driver SAC of the fourth TCHD (VRM 81 AE 13) saw the TCHD some 50m in front slowing down to negotiate the stationary vehicle, and slowed in order to pass by in his own turn. At the point where he saw the TCHD in front start to topple sideways he had slowed to 5 mph. He braked and his vehicle slid to the left coming to rest with its nearside front wheel embedded in the soft verge.
- 6. From the evidence of several convoy personnel who disembarked from their vehicles on this stretch of road it is clear that there was severe icing. In addition, the camber at the accident site is pronounced and the verge is soft.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT AND CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

7. The Board considers that the cause of the accident

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involving the third TCHD was a combination of slow forward speed, the camber of the road, and ice. The contributory factors were the position of the on-coming stationary car and the soft verge. On the other hand the cause of the accident to the fourth TCHD was solely ice on the road The contributory factor was the accident which occurred immediately in front of this vehicle.

INJURIES CAUSED AND FUTURE EFFECTS

- WITNESS 7 8. The only injury noted during the 2 accidents was sustained by the Escort Cpl in the third TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84). When the vehicle rolled over on to its side he hit his head on the nearside window superstructure.

 2 WITNESS 19 He also suffered from shock. Col was medically examined by Flt Lt () Medical Officer at RAF Wittering, who prescribed an analgesic to relieve his headache.
 - 9. The Board considers that the injury to Cpl is unlikely to be the exciting cause of later disability.

CONSIDERATIONS OF DRIVER FATIGUE

- 10. Movement Order 419 started on the morning of 7 January 1987 and during the 3 days prior to the accident the drivers never had less than 15 hours rest and indeed had 16½ hours rest prior to duty on 10 January 1987.

 They were accommodated in good conditions each night.
 On the Friday night SAC consumed no alcohol, and SAC consumed 2 pints of beer with his evening meal.
 On the day of 10 January 1987 both drivers had a full breakfast and lunch and drove for only 2 hours or less out of their 7 hours duty.
- 11. Movement Order 419 was the authority for the drivers 5 witness 14 to be on duty.
 - 12. The Board accepts both drivers were fully fit for their duty at the time of the accident.

PERSONNEL ON DUTY

13. The Board is satisfied that all personnel who were involved in Movement Order 419 were on duty prior to the accident.

THE STATE OF VEHICLE SERVICEABILITY

14. Both TCHDs (VEM 30 AJ 84 and 81 AE 13) had received their correct periodic maintenance and would have completed this Movement Order before being due their next lubrication maintenance. The damage assessor WO (Complete) could not see any signs of defects other than those caused by the accident in either vehicle, from his visual inspection.

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15. The Board are satisfied that both vehicles were fully maintained in accordance with current procedures and the Board believes that the vehicles were serviceable at the time of the accident.

AUTHORISATION OF ROUTE AND DRIVERS

- 16. The route used on Movement Order 419 was Route 44. This route is well documented at RAFASUPU but during the Board's proceedings it has not been possible to produce the actual authorisation by HQRAFSC. The Board understands this to be due to a recent fire at HQRAFSC and the destruction of the relevant P/A files at RAFASUPU. However the Board is satisfied that Route 44 had been correctly authorised.
- 17. The drivers both hold current Service and civilian licences.

EXAMINATION OF ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS

18. All of the relevant Ministry of Defence and Command Orders and Instructions pertinent to the operation of convoys are extracted and published under the authority of OC RAFASUPU, who supplements them with his own detailed instructions, in a document called Convoy Operating Procedures. The Board had inspected this document and is satisfied that the instructions were complied with. In 4 cases excerpts have been presented to the Board and they are appended at Exhibits D, E, F, H.

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS

19. The Board found that AP 3086 Chapter 3 paragraph 3056 was not appropriate. (Loss of Classified Documents).

SUPPORTING EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

20. The Board is satisfied that the supporting equipment and the facilities available to the convoy were satisfactory for the initial post accident actions and responses.

LOSS OR DAMAGE TO SERVICE/CIVILIAN PROPERTY

21. As a direct result of the accident TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) suffered damage to the softer parts of the vehicle estimated to cost £1653. Wheel tracking, suspension and braking could not be operationally checked. However, the engine, which had lost 4½ gallons of oil by the time it was examined, could not be run or checked for internal damage. TCHD (VRM 81 AE 13) did not appear to have suffered any damage at all and was considered drivable, although functional checks would have to be carried out prior to the vehicle being used operationally.

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- 22. As a result of TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84) leaving the road and its subsequent recovery some 30 yds of poor hedging were removed.
- 23. The Board accepts the advice of the assessor. On sensitivity considerations the Board has not pursued the question of damage to private property. However, from the Board's experience at the site of the accident the Board consider that if any claim is made on the Crown it should be very small.

DISCUSSION

- 24. The combination of circumstances that have been determined as the cause of the accident might conceivably have been forseen, but the fact that they were not cannot be attributed to negligence on the part of any individual. Having said that, there are clearly organisational matters which can be addressed to avoid such an accident in the The weather information available to RAFASUPU Task Control and the Convoy Commander did not indicate any route problem, nor during the journey up to the time of the accident did any of the convoy personnel report conditions which would have caused the convoy to stop. However, according to the second witness there was information that there was ice on the road in the vicinity of the accident site. In future this sort of local knowledge information at destinations should be more routinely utilised.
- 25. No member of the convoy had a clear awareness of the extent of the ice on the road until after the accident. It is clear to the Board that in sub-zero conditions more attention must be paid to the hazards of ice in Convoy Operating Procedures. This could be by using dedicated personnel or by utilising commercially available detection equipment (if suitable), or both. This action would lead to a need to introduce into the Convoy Commenders Orders a set of authorised guidelines specifically for ice on roads. The Board's inspection of the Convoy Operating Procedures produced by the third witness showed that there are no detailed instructions relating specifically to ice or the reporting of it by convoy personnel.
- 26. The question of ice as one of the causes of the accident has been dealt with above.
- 27. In respect of road camber and the soft verge these are matters that can only be dealt with by a detailed road survey. With the hindsight of the accident the Board consider that any road which has a soft verge coinciding with a drop of level below that of the road should be considered very carefully before use.

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- 28. The Board could not avoid the conclusion that on-coming traffic and one civilian car in particular had contributed to the accident. However, there would seem to be no completely satisfactory solution to this question. The car in question was behaving reasonably, even co-operatively, and had left sufficient passing space under normal circumstances.
- 29. The Board does not consider that a recommendation to close roads to civilian traffic is merited.
- between the time the second TCHD passed it and its location at the time of the accident (Fifteenth Witness). Consequently the precise combination of circumstances faced by the accident driver SAC had not previously pertained.

ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITY AND APPORTIONING OF BLAME

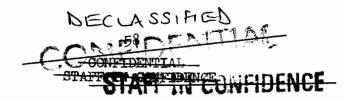
31. All relevant orders, instructions and operating procedures were complied with and all personnel concerned in Movement Order 419 showed adequate care. No person is held to be blameworthy. This includes OC RAFASUPU and the sponsors of the various publications from which OC RAFASUPU extracts information in order to publish Convoy Operating Procedures; who could not reasonably be criticized for not having forseen the particular set of circumstances leading to the accident.

Wg Cdr President
Sqn Ldr
Members

Date 16 Jan 8 / DECLASSIFIED

32. It is recommended that:

- a. HQRAFSC re-issues authorisations for the Convoy Approved Routes.
- b. Mandatory checks are introduced for the Convoy Commander to confirm with destinations that there are no local factors affecting road conditions on his route. Such checks should be made at all times of the year.
- c. In sub-zero, or recent sub-zero conditions that a unit in the vanguard of the convoy should have the task of maintaining an ice-watch.
- d. If suitable ice detector equipment can be found commercially, it should be utilised.
- e. The Convoy Commander be provided with a specific set of orders relating to ice and the possibility of ice.
- f. All Approved country roads are re-surveyed bearing particularly in mind the lessons to be learned from the accident: verges which can collapse and cause a vehicle to topple down a slope or drop; and road cambers which can affect very heavy vehicles.
- g. Consideration should be given to the possibility that some routes should only be authorised for certain seasons of the year.
- h. Very careful consideration should be given by the Route Authorising Authority before Route 44 is ever used again and it should not be used in the meantime.



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EXAMINATION OF ORDERS AND INSTRUCTIONS

8. I agree with the Findings of the Board.

CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS

9. I agree with the Findings of the Board.

SUPPORTING EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

WITHESS 3

10. I note the evidence of the third witness, Squadron Leader , regarding problems with communications at the accident site. This unsatisfactory feature will be pursued through engineering staff channels.

LOSS OR DAMAGE TO SERVICE/CIVILIAN PROPERTY

11. I agree with the Findings of the Board.

DISCUSSION

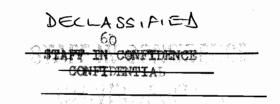
- 12. All RAFASUFU personnel employed on convoy movements and in Task Control undertake their role: as their primary function. No duty personnel are employed on such activities. Extensive training is given and assessment of performance is made over a period of up to 3 months before each individual is declared fit to undertake the operational task.
- 13. As routine before the commencement of each daily convoy movement Task Control assess weather conditions by obtaining weather and traffic reports with respect to the intended areas of movement. These conditions are discussed with the Convoy Commander prior to deployment. The destination is consulted if the weather forecast suggests inclemency or deterioration in that area. Individual routes are not discussed for reasons of security. If, at anytime during this process, there is concern with respect to potential safety anywhere along the route a recommendation is made to Wpn Eng 3(RAF) to postpone the movement.

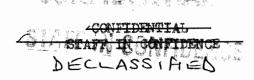
	vary in length from	7
	Precise and changing weather/road conditions have to be	monitored
continually by the	Convoy Commander en route.	-

- 15. The activities described above were undertaken on 10 January 1987 and have been illustrated in the evidence given during the Inquiry.
- 16. I agree with the conclusions drawn by the Board including their consideration not to recommend closure of roads to civilian traffic. I do not agree, however, that the second witness had information that there was ice on the road in the vicinity of the accident site. When recalled the second witness stated that he had no specific knowledge of the state of the West Grimstead to West Dean road on the day in question.

ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITY AND APPORTIONING OF BLAME

17. It is inappropriate for me to comment on the Findings of the Board.

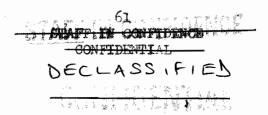




RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18. I agree that HQRAFSC should re-issue authorisation for Convoy Approved Routes.
- 19. I intend to introduce mandatory checks for Task Control to confirm weather conditions with destinations prior to convoy departure. I wish to discuss the ramifications of security before a decision is made regarding assessment of the specific route during this mandatory check.
- 20. I intend to assess with HQRAFSC Engineering Staff the feasibility of providing ice detection equipment for use on RAFASUPU convoys. If such equipment can be made available its employment and orders and instructions for its use will be devised.
- 21. I intend to resurvey approved unclassified roads used by RAFASUPU convoys bearing in mind the lessons learned from the accident.
- 22. Consideration will be given to the possibility of authorising some routes for seasonal use. However, the general application of such a suggestion is felt to be impracticable without restricting movements to some areas of Great Britain to the summer months.
- 23. All 6 routes utilising the West Grimstead to West Dean road have been prohibited from further use pending the actions of the Inquiry.

Unit	RAFAŞUPU	Signature		••••
Date	17 Jan 87		Wg Car OC RAFASU	PU



(when completed)

W6 CDR PRESIDENT

RATASUMO 419 181-87 EXTRANEOUS

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001/002 ALL CHANGES INITIALLED. CERTIFIED.

15 JAN87

RAFASUPU MOVEMENT ORDER

SQU'LDR. 1. You are detailed to complete the task detailed in this document in accordance with Convoy Operating Procedures. This document, together with completed Annexes A to I is to be returned to SNCO Task Control, within 7 working days of task completion.

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2.2	<u> </u>	CUTIVES:			WITNESS:	2.3	NOM	INATED APPT	<u>5</u> :		
	a,	cc:	SOULDE.		3		a.	DSO:	297		-
	ь.	Escort	Cdr: <u> </u>		٩		ъ.	Team Ldr:	591		_
	c.	cso:	fg off		11	,	c.	Pire NCO:	CPA	No.	_
	ď.	SOE Cdr	: 17		10	•	d.	MTD NCO:	CPL	Jen	
			,				e.	MT Fitter:	CL	/cm	
							٤.	Radio Fitt	er: CPA		

2.4 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

A. Yileage and Time Chart (Annex A) - Yes/36

YATA NO b. Temperature Record (Annex B)

(x 2.) Staging HO/TO (Annex C) Yes/No

P.S' MIST OF FUTECTIVE PAGES

Page No	Classification	Page No	Classification	Page No	Classification
1	SCILLET	ک	STELET	! !	
2	SURCT	7	SECRET		,
3	SERRET	8	See Res	1	
Ų	SECRET				
5	Sale				

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2.6 LOAD DETAILS

Ser No	Qty	Sect/Ref	Description	From	70	· Task · No	_
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3	1	20 02	P	6	1/4)	(co)	Ξ.
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7	/	2002	(0)		1/2)	10	_
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2.7 AUTHORITY FOR THE CARRIAGE OF CLASSIFIED MATERIAL

Authority is granted for the carriage of the following documents:

a. COPS (x 3)

- b. Classified Notebooks (x 3)
- c. CC's folder (x 1) EC's folder (x 1) CSO's folder (x 1)
- d. RAFASU/MO 419 /86-87 e. Route Cards (5 sets)

THE ON OTHER STATE IS ALL WE WILL BE

- f. Paging Unit 532-75489 CC
- g. Paging Unit 532.76497-20150

n.	_
2.8 Additional Information. That FIR CONSCIENT ONSE TO REFUEL, MED Pros 11	/
SALESSION FOR REFUEL, NORD WONDERSION OF THE CONCESSION TO PACK MUST CONCESSIO	_
3:11. PRETURENTED ARRIVAL PREKLUNGED WERNIGHT, ILC FIR BASE DE REFUEL PINER EMETY.	
AND WALKER WILL JUNE CONSTRUCT STATED 3+1 PREFERENCE OF A PREFERENCE OF A PROPERTY OF PARTICIPATE OF OF PARTICI	ישנים מואח
in as Action orgen 3+1 THEN 10 . Office A SERVAL PARKETLY OVERICHTE "/ The To King.	1
ENTIN 14 JONST DURISSIST SALO . FIR . 2+1 TO ARRIVE INST. AS PLEASE THAN WY ENTINES TO HAT RELUCI ON ARRIVAL PARK LONDED OVERNICHT. 12/1 2 3+1 TAILS TO MILLION	-
ON PRAINT PENT PREPENTY EVERNICHT. DYR EXAL M TOCK 12. YILL TO 201 ALTERNO ON MALIVAN	
THE STATE ATTENDES - ETLINE EX X 91 DIES - SIGNED:	
SI, RONCE AND RIA. Name:	-
Date: 22-12.51 Appt: 01C:H'KF	_
AS CAN H. BAVERANY MERMINEST RESERVING ME PAGE NO Fr	
When completed)	
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REVERSE of PA

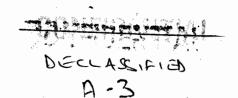
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Type Can No F Serial (front) Type Can No Serial (rear)

Key

NOTES:

- (1) CC to obtain following from DCSO location of each can.
- (2) CC to obtain following from site controller Serial No and type of weapon in each can.
- (3) CC to annotate detail on pro formae.
- (4) CSO or DCSO to pass following information to the Task Controller:
 - (a) Location by Serial No of each can.
 - (b) Type of weapon in each can.



When completed

ASU/MO 419 / 86-	ST CONVOY DET			
Date: 7JAN		CIN:		
Call Sign:	10)	Route:	89	
DAYLIGHT HRS Fr	om: \$7973	6 #	To:	71032#
SAFETY DETAILS				
		, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		
r COVER: Unit		GPO Tele No	From	To .
1.	6	7	1250#	1410 #
2.			1340#	1520#
3.	- the		,	
4.				
5.				
6.				
<u> </u>				
DECONFLICTION TINERARY	-3/			
DECONFLICTION	Planned	Actual	M	ileage
DECONFLICTION	Planned (Time or I	Actual ocation)	Reading	ileage
DECONFLICTION	l .			
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY	(Time or I	IS IS 7		
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY Departure Point	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading	Total Run
DECONFLICTION TIMERARY Departure Point Departure Time	(Time or I	ocation)	Reading Cu 40	Total Run
DECONFLICTION TINERARY Departure Point Departure Time TMC	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading Cu 40	Total Run
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY Departure Point Departure Time TMC Break	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading Cu 40	Total Run
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY Departure Point Departure Time TMC Break Break	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading Cu 40	Total Run
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY Departure Point Departure Time TMC Break Break	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading Cu 40	Total Run
DECONFLICTION ITINERARY Departure Point Departure Time TMC Break Break Break	(Time or I	IS IS 7	Reading Cu 40	Total Run

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SECRETA LA SA AN LA	

SAFETY DETAILS	Mars of You			8 1645 #
SICELL CHIKIDS	Type of Mov	· ·		-
COVER: Unit		GPO Tele No	'From	То
1.	(.)	· fr)	0820#	1030=
2.	6		10007	1215 # 17
3.	(m)	6	11467	1510# 149
4.				
5.				
6.				
•		- / •)		
ITINEPARY	Planned (Time or L	Actual	Reading	ileage Total Run
****	(Time or L	Actual		
ITINEPARY	(Time or L	Actual ocation)		
ITINEPARY Departure Point	(Time or L	Actual ocation)	Reading	
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time	(Time or L	Actual ocation)	Reading 42235 42249 42255	Total Run
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time	(Time or L	Actual ocation)	Reading 42235	Total Run
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time TMC Break	Ogoo # 10	Actual ocation) C(25 Z	Reading 42235 42249 42255	Total Run
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time TMC Break	Ogoo # 10	Actual ocation) C(25 Z	Reading 42235 42249 42255	Total Run
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time TMC Break Break	(Time or L 0900 ≠ 10 15 15	Actual ocation) C(25 Z	Reading 42235 42249 42255	Total Run
ITINEPARY Departure Point Peparture Time TMC Break Break Break	Ogoo # 10	Actual ocation) C(25 Z	Reading 42235 42249 42255	Total Run

SAFFIY DETAILS		• .		016527	
	Type of Mov	ve:			
COVER: Unit		GPO Tele No	From + De.	То	
2.	(c).	£ .	1330≠	16407	
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.	,	·		,	
DECONFLICTION			<u> </u>		
ITINERARY					
			,	Mileage	
	ł	Planned Actual (Time or Location)		Reading ; Total Run	
Departure Point	10				
Departure Point Departure Time	14307	14252	A2450		
			42503		
Separture Time	14307	14252		2)	
Departure Time	14307			2)	
Neparture Time	14307	1514	42505	2 >	
Neparture Time TMC Break Break	14307	1510	42505	2)	
Departure Time TMC Break Break	14307	1510	42505	2)	
Neparture Time TMC Break Break Break Break	14307	1510	42505	2)	
Neparture Time TMC Break Break Break Break Break	14307 10	DELAY -	4250S		

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF TCHD (VRM 30 AJ 84)

ONE COPY ONLY - WITH ORIGINAL DOCUMENT