

**America's Specialized Airpower  
In the War on Terrorism**

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**Moderator:** We are pleased today to have a presentation on Air Force Special Operations. Lieutenant General Mike Wooley who is the commander has got years of experience from squadron command to commander of 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force. You've got his bio, it's in the conference materials. We want to get down to the meat of the subject. We have to be out of here, I will tell you in advance, we have to be absolutely out of the room by 4:25 so that the hotel can make its arrangements to turn this into a [inaudible] dinner tonight.

It's my pleasure on behalf of AFA to introduce Lieutenant General Mike Wooley.

[Applause].

**LtGen Wooley:** [Inaudible] be here and address what's going on in our world and [inaudible]. It's a [inaudible]. I bring you greetings from the 13,000 men and women who wear the uniform of our nation, and that includes active duty, Guard and Reserve, our contractors, our civilian employees. [Inaudible] a very tight-knit family [inaudible].

Let me highlight just a couple of things. You see our CV-22 up on the slide. I wanted to make sure that you all knew that Air Force Test Operations Command is operating the CV-22 and that program is alive and well for us as well as the Marine Corps. They are doing their first operational deployment as we speak within the desert. We have two of our folks that are on that deployment and we are going to be with them every step of the way as they learn their lessons and we will hopefully learn those lessons as well and avoid some of the things that are [inaudible].

But that's not what this presentation is about. This presentation is about what's going on in the global war on terrorism in terms of Air Force Special Operations Command. We are under an incredible period of growth. Most of you understand the things that are coming down in the Air Force. I'm thankful to say that we are not one of them. We stood up four brand new squadrons in the past year. We are flying the Predator now. We've got our third Special Operations squadron that flies the Predator out of Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. We also have its sister squadron, the 11<sup>th</sup>, in [inaudible] squadron that operates the [GPS] that does the exploitation and products, and all the other things that we get out into the field to support

our Special Ops ground team as they go about [inaudible]. We set up the 73<sup>rd</sup> Squadron. That is flying our combat sphere. Congress was very generous and they made allowance for some of our combat losses and other airplanes that we lost. We are in the buildup period of the combat spear era which is [inaudible] tanker, helicopter tanker airplane, in-fill/ex-fill platform. A marvelous airplane. And we will send that whole squadron out in a week's time as we stand up a second Special Operations Wing at Canon Air Force Base.

It's an exciting time for us. We've had that in our vision to have a West Coast base for about 15 years now. With all of our growth we had to go somewhere. The stars and the moon lined up and we are going to realize our second wing, it's the 27<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing. We will stand that up, reflag the unit out there, the 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing will become the 27<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing next Monday at Canon Air Force Base.

As excited as we are to go to Canon Air Force Base we are even more excited what comes with Canon Air Force Base and that is Melrose Range. An incredibly capable chunk of land and airspace where SOF forces, and not just Air Force SOF forces but ground forces as well will be able to integrate on Melrose Range and its contiguous land spaces and air spaces that we [inaudible].

Enough about the commercial. We're still hiring. If you're interested in becoming a part of Air Force Special Operations Command we would be glad to talk with you because it's an exciting time.

But rather than an old three star that's getting ready to retire here in about 60 days standing up here and boring you with the things that I do, I want to introduce one of our Battlefield Airmen. You've heard the Secretary of the Air Force and you heard the Chief talk about the great things that Battlefield Airmen do every day in the global war on terror. We have got one of those individuals here with us today who will give you his perspective on the global war on terror from his vantage point.

I'm going to introduce Staff Sergeant Ryan Wallace who is one of our special tactics NCOs, combat controller by trade. For those of you who may not be quite as familiar as some of us are with what combat controllers do, they are multi-disciplined, multi-talented, very mature, very capable individuals that integrate with other joint Special Operations teams -- that is Navy SEALs, Special Forces, Rangers, and the like -- to integrate air power with those joint teams. They can come at you from under the water because they're scuba divers; they can come at you high altitude [inaudible] delivery method; they can also operate and set up airfields, landing zones, drop zones and the like because there are fully qualified FAA aircraft controllers.

You'll be on the edge of your seat because now Staff Sergeant Ryan Wallace is going to tell you about an incredible firefight that he was in that lasted over 24 hours in Najaf, and you'll get an insight of exactly what these wonderful Battlefield Airmen do for you and I and this great country and our allies and partners around the world.

For this engagement Sergeant Wallace has been put in for the Bronze Star with [inaudible], and that's not his first Bronze Star, by the way. That will be his second Bronze Star. Sergeant Wallace entered the Air Force in '99. He's been a qualified Battlefield Airman Combat Controller since 2005.

Without any further ado, Ryan, come on up here and talk about Najaf.

**SSgt Wallace:** Thank you, sir.

[Applause].

**SSgt Wallace:** I'm Staff Sergeant Ryan Wallace. I'm a Combat Controller assigned to the 21<sup>st</sup> Special Tactics Squadron out of Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina. I've been in the Air Force for eight years. I've been a Combat Controller for six. I'm here to tell you about a firefight that happened in Najaf on 28 January this year.

Slide.

I want to cover the battle of Najaf locations. Friendly forces, enemy course of events, key tactical forces, the complexities and challenges we faced, and then some of the things we overcame.

Slide.

Big drill down of Iraq. We sent four Combat Controllers to Iraq. We had two of them stationed in Baghdad, myself in Al Hila, and then we had one guy about 30 miles north of Al Hila in Bab Kalsu.

On the morning of 28 January the guys from Baghdad had come down to Najaf for some other missions and they were on their way home when this fight happened.

Slide.

Friendly forces. We had the Iraqi police, the Iraqi Army scouts. They were combat advised by ODA which is a Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha. It's a 12 man Special Forces team. We had a Combined Assault Force, Iraqi Special

Forces with U.S. Special Forces and SEALs. Those are the guys that were stationed out of Baghdad. Assigned to them were two Combat Controllers, Tech Sergeant Bryan and Staff Sergeant David "Squish" Orvash, one of our 12 Outstanding this year.

Next we have Hila SWAT. This is the Hila SWAT police team, the same as any other SWAT team in America. They were combat advised by an ODA that I was assigned to. We worked out of al Hila. And the ODA in Kalsu had Sergeant Fred with them, and they also combat advised Hila SWAT.

The enemy the Jaish Alrad, the soldiers of heaven. You can liken these guys to the Branch Davidians in the Waco incident that happened a few years ago.

We're looking at 600 militants defending a fortified farm, basically it was a large farm surrounded by a ten foot berm and multiple trenches and fighting positions throughout.

Slide.

So we've got Najaf to the south. About two miles north is this farm. It's two kilometers square. Like I said, with trenches and berms.

Slide.

This just depicts the in-fill route of friendlies that morning.

Slide.

A close-up picture off of Google Earth. Down here we have a chicken farm, just for your reference later on. The actual terrain are, the compound perimeter was on this left side along the southern berm, and then up to the north and then just off the top of the screen. We had multiple, up to nine, vehicle-mounted machine guns. Numerous positions spread throughout the farm for resupply. Big stacks of weapons and ammunition and food spread all over the place. Then they had a large mortar pit back here with eight different mortars -- a combination of 60mm, 82mm.

Slide.

The morning of 28 January about 0700, the Najaf Provincial Governor and the Police Chief drive out to this compound to investigate reports of armed militia. Right when they get here on this corner, like I say, this is the corner of the compound right here. Right when they turn this left here they get ambushed by heavy machine guns and RPGs. They abandon their vehicles, they head towards that river to the east, and they call for resupply.

Slide.

Correction, they call for a reaction force.

Help comes in the form of the ODA 566 and the Iraqi Army scouts, and then also with the guys from Baghdad and their two Combat Controllers and the SF team. Those guys all roll up there and immediately come under heavy fire.

Sergeant Bryan who's on the mike has got F-16s overhead. They were on station to follow them back to Baghdad. When they re-rolled into this they just kept them along with them. As soon as he got there they started putting in strafing rounds in among these vehicles, because the vehicles had been overrun by the enemy.

Slide.

Then he put down a few, not just these two, but a couple of 500 pound bombs right on the other side of that berm to suppress the enemy.

Once they did that they were able to begin the ex-fill of the Governor and the Police Chief out of that farmland.

Slide.

So as we're linking up all these personnel Sergeant Bryan hands off the mike to Squish, Sergeant Orvash, one of our 12 Outstanding. So now Squish is on the mike and they start taking accurate sniper fire and machine gun fire from a mosque at this position. The local Iraqi Army ground force commander said he wanted that mosque destroyed. So we called in a cleared hot 500 pound bomb, put a hole through that mosque and it didn't blow up. So you can imagine all those bad guys in the mosque looking up at the hole praising Allah that they're still alive. About a minute later, another bomb comes in and completely levels that building.

Shortly after that bomb goes off the pilot of another flight calls in and says hey man, I've got 30 to 40 personnel in a trench line. Squish clears him hot on that target.

Slide.

The first one actually ended up being down here. He gets a call right after that bomb goes off and says hey man, I've got 20 or 30 personnel in a trench, and Squish is like well, did they miss? No, 200 meters north of that last one. We've got another group of individuals. So they put two more bombs up here on this trench and then they began their ex-fill. On the drive out did

some more strafing runs to suppress the enemy so they could leave.

All the friendlies are leaving, they fired off all the ammunition they have, they've taken some casualties. They were able to collect the Governor and the Police Chief, and they ex-filled to the south.

Slide.

Totals for that morning, from the first Combat Controller and then here from Squish, looking at four laser-guided bombs, four JDAMS, and multiple strafes.

Slide.

This just shows their ex-fill. They go back to the fire base in Najaf, refit, and rekit.

Slide.

Here's where my part comes in. This fight started about seven in the morning. These guys show up at maybe 8:30. Then right when they show up we get the phone call, I get woken up from bed to go get ready for perhaps responding to this.

I switch on my SatCom, try to bring up the video feed. We can't get it because we're too far away. I go back to bed, hang out, listen to the SatCom calls, hear these guys going back to their fire base, and I go back to sleep. Right after I doze off they knock on my door again and wake me up and tell me we're leaving.

So we load all the stuff in the trucks, head south, pick up all of Hila SWAT, so we've got four companies, almost 200 personnel and almost 40 vehicles.

Slide.

We get down to this police checkpoint right here, at this checkpoint, like these are the Hila SWAT vehicles. I'm in the back of the Humvee that took this picture. Then this collection of personnel over here is the Police Chief, the Iraqi Army General, my team leader, the SWAT commander and his company commanders. They all go over there and they're having a head shed meeting about what's going on.

Over my shoulder, to the northeast of our position is a flight of two Apache helicopters. These helicopters are about two kilometers over the horizon. We could see them flying. I'm Combat Controller, I want to talk to airplanes, so I'm plugging

into his frequency. As I do that I look up and I see an airburst RPG blow up between the two helicopters.

Shortly after that I'm able to establish communications with them, ask him if he saw it. He rogered up that he did in fact see that and he was engaging personnel on the ground that were near a technical vehicle with a machine gun mount in the back.

I passed that word up to the captain. We jumped in the vehicles, we started moving to contact.

Slide.

Our intent was to head east and get over to this main hard ball road that ran parallel to the river. Our map at the time didn't have this big red square on it. [Laughter]. So we were just going in search of the enemy. We knew the helicopters were out there shooting them up anyway so we weren't too worried about bumping into them.

Slide.

As you can see, we ended up back in the same position that Squish had dropped bombs on that morning.

We came up through the chicken farm. This whole thing was surrounded by a 10 foot berm, so if you can imagine being an ant on a billiard table, you've got that big wall surrounding you, that's kind of what it was like. Spread out about 500 meters.

This is a break in the berm but it's a 10 foot cliff, so we couldn't get past it. We ended up making a left turn.

Slide.

And we pulled the vehicles right up into the berm in turret depolade, so the only thing sticking over the top was a machine gunner. The SWAT vehicles were too short, so all those guys dismounted and came up on the berm.

As soon as we got here, actually over the hood of the Humvee here you can see the Governor's vehicles that were abandoned that morning. Those are right here on this road. As soon as we got here the western flank was under heavy machine gun fire. Accurate. Two of the SF guys that went up on the berm both got shot in the helmet and fell off the berm. Woke up a few minutes later.

But on the eastern flank I was in this vehicle on the far eastern side, we could hear machine gun fire but it wasn't clinking off our vehicles and we didn't know it was directed at

us and we had coms but those guys down here weren't talking yet, so they were taking cover.

We dismounted our vehicle. I got assigned to grab the Carl G recoilless rifle. He crawled up on the berm and started launching high explosive rounds at this machine gun truck up here. Now we didn't see any people, but we saw a threat so he began to engage that vehicle.

I called up the Apaches, told them hey, man, we ain't got nothing going on over here except this enemy truck we're trying to blow up. We don't see anybody. What have you guys got?

He called back and said they had more personnel, more machine gunners, more technicals, and they were rolling in on those positions as they spoke.

I looked up over the tree line, the first Apache came in, you could see his chin gun. It was pointed down at something. He rolled through dry. He had a malfunction in the gun from taking small arms fire. Then his wingman came in right behind him, pointed at the same target, and then his rotors just stopped. They completely froze up. No smoke, no sparks, no fire. The rotors froze and the helicopter fell out of the sky from 600-700 feet.

As soon as it went behind the tree line, maybe 15 seconds later, a big black cloud of smoke came up so we assessed that those guys had died instantly.

I made a net call on the radio that an Apache had gone down. Team leader and team sergeant started talking and then I made the same call to the Apache flight lead. He called back and acknowledge that, and he was rolling in on enemy that were advancing towards the crash site.

Because the western flank over here was under such heavy fire the team leadership decided we could not make a movement towards that crash site at the time. We needed to execute a right flank to shut down the enemy so we could relieve some pressure and move out.

Slide.

So the team leader grabbed myself, the medic, which is the guy that was out shooting HE rounds. The three of us, our interpreter, and we grabbed the Hila SWAT commander and about 50 SWAT guys and we made our way over to the far right side.

We ended up stopping just short, beneath those vehicles from the Governor that got shot up. We could see under the vehicles because it was kind of up on a hill. So we could see underneath

the vehicles to the berm on the other side and we were still taking fire from our front.

At that time we had a flight of F-16s check on, another flight of Apaches checked in. The Apaches went over and started working with the crash site, then the F-16s just sat up there and watched on their pod and were pretty busy talking to everybody else.

We had the base of fire element which is basically everybody that's still on the line on the south. They were unable to motivate SWAT to get up there and shoot all at the same time. Basically those two Americans, they both got hit in the helmet, they treated those guys. They got a little upset about that. They were real worried about snipers. So they get this half of the line set up to shoot and these guys would watch, then they'd get them all motivated and these guys would stand up, these guys would get supported before so now they're waiting and these guys would come up and shoot. So it was a battle for the SF guys to get everybody on line at the same time.

While they were working that fight we called in some Apache gun runs from our position.

Slide.

We put some Hornets down about 200 meters to our front to get some heads down so we could get up and move.

Slide.

We got about 75 meters and then this machine gunner popped up from the berm in front of me. We're running, we've got this 10 foot berm on my left side and then out to the front, it comes out about 10 feet then it continues off to the left. The guy popped up right in the corner about 100 meters out. The machine gunner put us in the prone, we returned fire. I got on my scope, lined him up in my sites. The guy popped his head up, I took off a couple of shots and hit the dirt right beneath his chin, so hopefully those armor piercing rounds skipped through it and hooked him up.

I readjusted my aim on my scope and waited about 20 seconds. That guy didn't come back. So I called in another Apache run. This one was ineffective. The helicopter came in, he got off about five rounds. Most of them were on my side of the berm. I was not impressed so I called back to the team leader and said hey, man, I think we ought to put a bomb in there. He agreed. So now we're putting a 500 pound laser-guided bomb which has a danger of close to 300 meters, we're going to put that thing 100 meters away from our position.

The second attack, GBU-12, set the conditions for our next advance. Basically it shut down all the bad guys in that berm. As soon as it went off we were up and running. Still big clouds of dirt falling on us. Come over the top of the berm and engage the personnel inside.

Slide.

I was able to take this picture about 15 minutes after we laid waste. The bomb landed right here, vaporized about five guys. You can just barely see this guy right here. He was still awake, unhappy and holding his weapon. We engaged him first.

These guys here were dead. You can't really tell, but all back in here were another 20 to 30 personnel that were still alive and unhappy. To see us.

As you can see from the picture, our flank had worked perfectly. Everybody in that trench, the only guy that could engage us was a guy that was on our side. Once we knocked him down, because he was basically masking everyone else's fire. Once we knocked him down we just knocked down the next guy and the next guy and the next guy. I went through 2.5 mags. Everybody else went through a couple of mags of ammunition. Then all was quiet.

On the initial attack, three Americans and one SWAT commander went up on the berm. The company commander got shot in the face as soon as he showed himself. The round went through his right cheek, under his nose, knocked out a tooth, then came out his left cheek. He fell off the berm. He ended up going back to work about two months later. But he fell off the berm there. That pulled a medic off the berm to treat him.

Once the SWAT guys saw that they hesitated, they held position. They were still worried about snipers to our rear. All these enemy had been reported pursuing the Governor off in here. So we still had bad guys out here somewhere. So the SWAT guys were worried about getting shot from the back and the front, so they just watched our back.

The three Americans went up on the berm, engaged all those personnel. Then the team leader comes off the berm to use the interpreter and start yelling at SWAT guys to get them to start pulling security. I'm checking that out, looking behind me. Okay, that guy's getting bandaged up, the team leader's over there yelling. I think to myself, I'm the only guy up here with this much exposed to the enemy that we just laid waste to for about two minutes. So I turned around as fast as I can, and a guy had sat up from behind this dead body right here and he was just bringing his AK down on me. I instinctively squeezed off a couple of rounds, I hit the dirt by his feet, the guy laid back

down, tried to play dead again. I put him in my sights, shot him in the leg, saw him jump. Yelled at my team leader, hey sir, get up here and help me engage this guy. He came up beside me. Asked me where he was. I got him back in my sights. My intent was to make him jump again. Just as I got the sight set, the guy blew up in my face. The top half of his body rolled into the trench.

After that I was like never mind, sir, that was him. You can go back to what you were doing. [Laughter].

After that I just scoped out this area, this tree line out here. About an hour later there ended up being a machine gunner that popped up into this tree here. We'll get to that. But from this position I could see also to the north. So we're right here in this corner. I could see all the way up to the north here about 500 meters, and I could see guys that were running back and forth. I called up the Apaches to use them to prosecute those movers.

Slide.

At the same time Sergeant Orvash and his element are coming back from Najaf. They got to Najaf, unloaded their vehicles, started treating the wounded, reloading ammunition, they go inside, grab a cup of water, and then they get a phone call, hey, Apache just went down, you guys need to go back to secure the crash site.

So they had about 10 minutes in the camp and then they were rolling right back out again.

They had a couple of bogus positions for the crash site passed to them. As soon as I crashed I got a grid coordinate, but the grid coordinate I got was also incorrect. So they just ended up driving out here looking for it. By the time they got there, the smoke had settled and there was nothing for them to find. So they just made a movement to contact, movement towards the sound of machine gun fire to link up with us. We had some, like I said, Apaches were firing all up in this corner. They were going up until I heard their machine guns firing around the corner.

We got a video coming up, you could hear the burp of the mini-gun. That's how I knew they were friendly because I heard that mini-gun on the horizon. You could hear the 50 cal shooting. You hear some plinks on the armor, that's them getting shot. You'll see the berm. It's going to be maybe 25-50 meters away. You can see the rounds will be hitting that berm and the bad guys are just poking their heads up right on the top of that berm.

Slide.

This was taken from a combat camera inside one of the Iraqi Humvees. This element, they take a combat camera with them for legal purposes, so they get some pretty high fidelity video.

[Film shown].

There's Squish, that's me, here's our team leaders.

That's a medic telling me to remember to bring that rocket launcher with us when we leave.

Slide.

That video is from this stretch of road right here.

Slide.

They linked up. Basically we split this battlespace down this hard ball road so we could see it on the map. Everything to the west of that was theirs. I gave them the Apaches. Everything on the east side of that was mine and I kept the F-16.

This green line shows the route they ended up taking. They were just driving in the blind, out there searching for a crash site.

AIF is Anti-Iraqi Forces. This is the actual podded crash site after we figured out exactly where it was.

Slide.

Once they made this turn to the south they engaged in a near ambush anywhere from one meter out to about 50 to maybe 100 meters. They had 15 vehicles. When they were done all 15 vehicles were disabled and I'll go ahead and play the video before I finish talking.

[Film shown].

This is from inside an Iraqi Army Humvee. They have an American advisor, an Iraqi driver, Iraqi gunner.

Hear those plinks, that's rounds landing on the Humvee.

The Iraqi gunner got shot in the head. He died instantly. Fell into the camera guy's lap. One of the Iraqis in the back of the Humvee jumped over the top, got into the gun, and went back to work.

Slide.

Some of the damage they took. Lots of concentrated fire into the windows.

Slide.

Also on the popte glass up by the turret. None of it penetrated, so the armor works.

Slide.

They lost two 50 cal's. These are the M2 heavy barrel 50 cal machine guns. Both took rounds into them. They lost three 240s. Both of the mini guns went down. Actually one of the mini-gun gunners went to his pistol and engaged two personnel with his pistol on the move.

Slide.

They ended up stopping about 100 meters west of the crash site. All 15 vehicles disabled. They only had one tire that was not flat. They had eight Iraqi killed in action, three wounded Americans, a lot of guys with gunshots in their arms.

Slide.

They held that position waiting for the Stryker brigade out of Baghdad to show up and reinforce them. They didn't have the means to move into the crash site and secure it because all their stuff was broken.

So the Strykers show up.

[Film shown].

You can see the Stryker at the end of the line.

Sergeant Bryan. And that's one of my bombs on the other side of the battlefield.

This was 30mm from the Apache into a house 25 meters away. You can see the video clip and it's a Hellfire into the same house.

Basically that guy is coming out of that house shooting over the top of the berm, and then running back into the house.

Right now they're shooting at enemy around the crash site and beyond. Laid down some suppressive fire. Sergeant Squish Orvash and one of the SF medics along with a few other SF guys loaded on one of the Strykers, moved to the crash site to secure

the remains of the pilots. They returned to their vehicles, then those guys depart back to the fire base.

Slide.

They leave behind a section Stryker element, then we're still down here in the south.

Just a smattering of all the stuff that gets hit. This bomb here is one I ended up putting, that's the one that was in the video. That went into a trench line. I got five personnel with that one. Then there was a white pickup truck that was running back and forth between the compound buildings and the trench line. I tried to engage that pickup truck with some British tornadoes. They were about 15 seconds from dropping when they lost it going into the trees. About 30 minutes later a pair of F-16s saw it and we engaged it with those.

Slide.

So totals for the afternoon, just before sunset, all Apache gunship stuff on the western side, then all laser-guided bombs on the east side.

Slide.

The sun sets. Everything comes together right about the same time. We get some intel from the SWAT guys down here. We finally get the interpreters talking to them. That they saw an Iraqi Army Humvee inside that village, was shooting at the helicopters that morning. We get reports that these guys are the Jaish Alrad, the soldiers of heaven, a bunch of crazies out there.

We get reports back -- I mentioned this earlier, but we didn't have ground communications with those guys that went to the crash site before they got there or after they left, so we had no communications with them once we weren't talking to them face to face.

Once they got back to their fire base and reported to headquarters, headquarters called back to us and told us all their vehicles got messed up, that whole village, this whole section of highway was shooting at them, pretty much everybody within 500 meters of their position was shooting at them. Then we got another report from our headquarters. I'm guessing it's the Predator. They called back and told us there were 100 people massing in the village.

So the gunship checks on station. We tell him to look for 100 personnel massing in that village. He calls me up and says

hey, man, I've got 100-150 personnel in a trench line, and the game starts.

Slide.

We got some of the greatest hits from all four gunships. I winchestered three and a half of them that night and they flew until dawn.

[Film shown].

That's a 25mm. That's what it looks like when it hits the ground.

What they were doing is they were watching them come out of those trench lines and move into the houses. Once a bad guy went into a house we chased them down with ordnance and took this guy out.

Lots of buildings in there. Lots of vehicles. They had a large motor pool. They had a car bomb factory, lots of weapons and ammunition, stockpiles and supplies. Large secondary explosions.

Once the gunship found some guys in a building rather than waste 105 rounds on it we orchestrated the attacks with F-16s and A-10s dropping laser-guided bombs and JDAMS onto those buildings.

Slide.

The next morning at 9:00 o'clock -- all the air fire stopped at dawn pretty much, but we were still engaging enemy bad guys up until about 8:30. At 9:00 o'clock in the morning we roll in from the west. They call for surrender. They get a lot of people coming out of the village, coming out of their holes to surrender. The colonel is working the Strykers over here, calling in Medevacs for those wounded personnel. Then we move around to the east side and our SWAT guys get on their PA system calling for surrender.

After that, a sweet sandstorm comes in. Makes the place look eerie. Covered in orange. It all looked like this and worst. Those Medevac pilots are still flying in 200 feet, visibility is less than a couple of hundred meters, to ex-fill those personnel.

There's that bongo truck that was shooting at me earlier -- correction, not shooting at me but the bad guys were right here in the bottom of this trench shooting at us.

I don't know if you can tell, but this berm comes up ten feet on my side, then goes down 20 foot into the bottom. It's

about a car lane and a half wide. It comes up 20 feet again. Then it comes down 10 feet on this side, so back level again. This other trench over here, same idea except it was terraced. Got a little walking section there so these guys had a berm about this high to hide behind. If they wanted to really get out of there they could drop into the bottom of the trench and take off.

Here's the SWAT Commander, my ODA team leader, myself.

Slide.

Some of the vehicles that were down here in the urban area.

Slide.

One of three Iraqi Army Humvees that were captured that morning. Three Iraqi Army soldiers were taken prisoner and executed in the village. One of them, a fourth I guess, committed suicide to prevent capture. But they got their Humvees and they fired these weapons at the Apaches so we hooked them up with a gunship later that night.

These vehicles on the left, this is an Iraqi Army armored personnel carrier. This is an American Humvee. We're assessing that was probably captured sometime after the invasion. Like I said, they were stockpiling stuff and they were collecting for a long time.

Slide.

They had enough weapons for every man in that compound to have three fully loaded machine guns or to outfit about 2,000 people.

Slide.

Caches similar to this one all over the place. Every couple of hundred meters there's a large cache.

Slide.

Some of the rubble.

Slide.

Totals. Four gunship sorties, winchestered 3.5, estimated 175 killed in action. Sixteen sorties from the MH-60 Night Stalkers that flew into Najaf with resupply, Humvee tires, ammunition, food and water and they ex-filled wounded personnel. Combat Control sorties, CAS sorties, 36. We dropped over 10,500 pounds of ordnance, estimated 250 killed. We were there for the surrender and the prisoner pickup of over 300 enemy prisoners.

Mutualized, that should be nine, maybe ten heavy machine guns mounted on vehicles. Deconflicted that dense airspace. At one point I had two UAVs, maybe two or three flights of Apaches, F-15s, P-3 Orion, Tornados, and A-10s, all there at the same time. So you can imagine in this one small bit of airspace stacked all the way up to 20,000 feet. We had a lot of aircraft.

Slide.

That concludes my brief. Any questions?

**LtGen Wooley:** We do have a few minutes left. That's the kind of thing that these great Battlefield Airmen do for you and I every day as we're engaged in the global war on terror.

You heard about this guy Squish Orvash. Stand up. He's one of our --

[Applause].

We are very fortunate this year to have two great Airmen selected as the 12 Outstanding. Sergeant Orvash is one of those two. The other individual is Sergeant McCoy, also a Combat Controller.

We'll ask him to stay up here.

If anybody's got any specific questions on the engagement for these two gentlemen, feel free to engage. If there's any other questions, I'll stay up here as well in terms of Air Force Special Operations Command in general.

But I thought it was important that you really get a first-hand look at what we do. It was incredible, and don't think that we've got this fidelity every time we go out and engage. But I wanted to make sure that we took advantage of this one since there was a combat camera involved, that we could put together a very detailed story and so you could understand exactly what goes on with our Battlefield Airmen. They are incredible.

These two individuals are out there literally with U.S. policy and their rucksack, making life and death decisions, and making sure that the friendly forces on the ground keep the enemy at bay or off their back or eliminated as the case goes.

We'll open it up now for questions.

**Question:** Are you lasing the GBUs or are the [inaudible] lasing [inaudible]? That's the first question.

The second question is can you tell us a little bit about the soldiers of heaven? Are they like a local militia or how do they fit?

**SSgt Wallace:** All the laser-guided bombs were buddy lased by other aircraft.

The soldiers of heaven [inaudible] I guess. They're a collection. So we've got the Sunnis, Shia, Christians, and who knows who else, but they were all together. They've got their own thing going. Their intent here, this happened during Shira. Shira's got the pilgrimage of all these people walking down the highway basically, going to Najaf. Their intent was to mingle with those villagers, civilian clothes, weapons at the ready, move in to Najaf and then just create chaos, kill lots of clerics. They were going after mostly civilians. Pretty much everybody that had anything to do with the Shira meetings in Najaf, they were going there to raise hell.

**Question:** We hear a lot on the news but we don't ever get to hear from the guys that do it. So first of all, thanks for what you do.

Second of all, what's your assessment of the Iraqi, you're fighting side by side with these guys. What's their state of readiness from your own experience?

**SSgt Wallace:** I'll speak for the Hila SWAT guys. This was an eye-opening battle for them. When we do stuff that's on our playing field, when we raid houses, we do normal SWAT stuff, those guys are squared away. This was an eye-opening experience, really stepped up the awareness I'd say for them, so they realized they need the training we're there to provide. They were well motivated for training after this happened.

Their company commander got wounded, so when he came back to work everybody was really happy. Then right when we first got there one guy got shot in the arm and he was ex-filled before the fighting even started. So those guys both came back to work, just real motivated.

As far as the other element, those guys [inaudible]. As you can tell from that guy that came over the back of the truck into the turret and got back on the gun, got back to work, those guys were really impressive.

**Sgt Orvash:** As far as ICTF I'll just give you an idea. We're working mostly in Baghdad, a lot in Sadr City. So you can imagine moving around on those deadly streets. We've seen a lot of contact, but nothing as heavy as this.

So once we got done with this battle and we went back to Sadr City missions and we'd get shot at, it didn't really seem to phase them as much. They were really I guess used to this here. But as far as ICTF, they were good to go until we hit that turn around the crash site. They seemed a little demoralized after seeing a lot of their comrades get shot and killed. So I think they still held their own and executed the mission. It was outstanding.

**Question:** It's a great war story. Part of the success seems to be our ability to integrate conventional forces with [inaudible]. Can you talk a little bit about what worked and what didn't? Com links, data [inaudible], and so forth. [Inaudible] air power?

**SSgt Wallace:** I'll start with com links. Ground coms were a pain in the ass. So each team, we could talk to each other but we couldn't talk to the other teams. That was an issue just between the Army elements on the ground. Basically these guys working out of Baghdad and us working in the south. We weren't on the same net for anything. That never got settled out in the short time that we had to work on it.

Between ourselves and between the aircraft, the coms were fine. It was standard operating procedure for us.

As far as data links go, I carried a data link system in the vehicle, I used it once to send a message, but when I turned that thing on I turned off my big radio, so it's one or the other. So I'll use that in the field, sending up paperwork and stuff. But [inaudible] network for us.

Rover video, live video downlink. I had the system in the truck. I had already dismounted and took off running before those F-16s showed up and I couldn't have used it with me anyway where I was moving. It's just too big of a system. You're looking at another full-sized rucksack for the radio and then it comes with a big tough book to actually look at it, so it's not where it needs to be right now to use it tactically while we're moving around through the city or even on the battlefield like that.

Did that cover your questions?

**Question:** [Inaudible].

**SSgt Wallace:** Procedures. [Inaudible] that engagement. But everything we did there worked well. Of course we had some bickering after, yelling at each other, what could have worked better. But there was no fratricide and the enemy got dead so we accomplished our mission. And we accomplished in about 24 hours [inaudible].

**Sgt Orvash:** On the communications part, I think the biggest issue for myself and Bryan who were on the northern engagement was the link from us on the ground to the UAVs in the air. The initial attack, you had three UAVs. The big problem was to try to get guns on the ground and bombs on the ground, but yet we had three unmanned aerial vehicles in the air. We didn't have direct links with them. We had to rely on the TACP who was [inaudible]. So we couldn't really pull on SatCom or pull data [inaudible] that aircraft. So [inaudible] air to ground [inaudible].

**LtGen Wooley:** Let me put in a plug for the work that's being done at many different levels on the Battlefield Airman kit. You heard first-hand some of the issues that these gentlemen are dealing with. Fully kitted out, they're carrying about 140 to 160 [inaudible] with them. So when they bail out of a vehicle they've got to be very selective on what they carry.

So for all you contractors out there, I put in a plug for helping us out, miniaturizing anything that you can miniaturize. And as I did last year and the year before and ever since I can remember, battery technology is key.

Now we've come a long way in batter technology because the power supplies that they carry, the ability to plug [inaudible] power source and the smart technology will figure out whether it needs AC/DC, how many volts, how many amps, how many whatever's, and it will just work.

We've come a long way, but there's still a huge need to lighten their load and increase their reliability, increase the connectivity between air and ground passing anything that can be passed over the air waves, whether it's video, audio, or text or [inaudible]. [Inaudible] put in a plug for that type of thing.

And for you all that are wearing the uniform, I deputize you all to talk with the folks in the exposition down below and give them that same message on our behalf.

What other questions do you have?

**Question:** [Inaudible] an Iraqi [inaudible] aircraft. I'm curious, [inaudible] what would you [inaudible] weapons for that area?

**SSgt Wallace:** I'd say something that they can see very well, and precision ordnance so they can hit what they're looking at to minimize collateral damage. The biggest key there is seeing what you're hitting and then having timely and accurate intel from the ground to positively engage.

**Question:** [inaudible]?

**SSgt Wallace:** Is smaller better? It sounds like [inaudible] smaller [inaudible].

**SSgt Wallace:** Personally, I think 500 pounds is pretty damn big. But, yeah, ordnance is, I don't know what else to say about that.

**LtGen Wooley:** I think they just have to look at the mission that they're given. They patrol the border or they patrol a pipeline or they go in after insurgents. They're going to have to have [inaudible] as our ConOps is, it's [inaudible]. So we're going to stick with that ConOps [inaudible] near term.

Allen, since you were over there if you've got any information that you want to add to that, but from my perspective those are my thoughts.

What else?

**Question:** You talked about the aircraft stacked up above your area there and not being able to com with your fellow Combat Controllers. How normally is that airspace and those platforms, how are they deconflicted between you guys so that you can coordinate that? Or does that get messed up [inaudible]?

**SSgt Wallace:** A situation like this was unique. It hadn't happened before where we got so many airplanes sent at the same time to the same location, they just kept pushing them.

The first one checked on, tell them what's up. When the second one checks on, I should have told him to hang out. I didn't do that, so they just kept coming in, coming in. [Inaudible].

How it normally works Squish, like you saw him in the video, came up to me, we handed off frequencies, who was where. Told him what he had, told him what I had, then we went our separate ways.

Now if I can't talk to him on the ground then I'll relay through an airplane. [Inaudible] had a FAC-A A-10 pilot come in. I was task-saturated on the ground talking to helicopters, yelling at people, taking cover, shooting back. So I asked that FAC-A for help, then he coordinated all the airspace [inaudible]. [Inaudible] process for him to talk to everybody at the same time and get them all [inaudible].

How it's supposed to work, they send help, we send back an update of what's happening, then every airplane that comes in gets that update before he shows up. The airplane on station does his work. When he leaves [inaudible] set up and working

now. When the time happened, the lesson learned, they've learned the lesson now that you don't send everything and keep pushing. You've got to kind of hold back a little and see what's going on.

**Sgt Orvash:** I was just going to bring up how we deconflicted. Ryan and myself took all the Apaches in that center row that ran down the entire target area. We just kept left or west of the target area, 1,000 and below. Then Ryan took all the fixed wing and above. When eh brought in a [inaudible] gun, we would just push the Apaches out farther to the west and then the space would be his.

**LtGen Wooley:** I mentioned the fact that they're fully qualified FAA air traffic controllers. That is a key point. This is something that is left only to professionals. Airmen. This is Airmen business. You can't do this on the fly. This is complicated. You saw how with bullets flying off of their Humvee, this is incredibly difficult work.

So I'm so very proud of these folks and the things that they do.

We talk about our air power all the time, but very rarely do we get to talk up close and personal with the integrators of air and ground power. That's why I wanted to bring this presentation to you so you have a little better understanding of what goes on out there in our world and Air Force Special Operations Command. As you saw, we don't do anything unless it's joint and/or combined in this fight. We don't do anything unilaterally with great exception. I can think of once or twice we've done something unilateral inside [inaudible]. It is always a joint team. This is a joint fight and we're proud to be in that joint fight.

We're proud to be wearing this Air Force Blue. We're glad that the allied partners, our international partners are here to partake with us all week, and as you've heard, the 90-some-odd global Air Chiefs, we will learn from you and hopefully you will learn from us.

And Bob Largent, we really appreciate the work that the AFA does for the country and on our behalf.

I will close by saying it's been my incredible honor to be a part of this great team, to wear this uniform for over 35 years. I hang it up the 27<sup>th</sup> of November. But if you look at the new generation that's coming up, one of the things that we all do is we want to make this place better as we walk out the door than it was when we came in the door. That's not an indictment on how we found it because it was an incredible organization when I walked in the door. But I walked out the door with a huge sense of pride that the next generation will take it to even bigger and

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better and newer heights, especially as we move into space and cyberspace. And if you think that Air Force Special Operations Command is not engaged in those two realms, think again. We have [inaudible] cyberspace for a while now.

So Bob, thank you for the opportunity for us to put on this seminar for you, and thank you all for what you do in whatever capacity.

[Applause].

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