



ARMY HEADQUARTERS
Deputy Chief of Army

MINUTE

OCA/OUT/2004/723 .

CDF

For Information:

MA to CA (R1-4-B029)

DCOORD-A (R1-4-B002)

References:

A. CA/DCA Telecom dated 3 May 04

B. SOCAUST Minute IDL45/04 B0306948 dated 3 May 04

HANDLING OF PW'S BY AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL FORCES

1. You directed Army to confirm (vide Ref A) if any Australian Special Forces were involved in the mistreatment of PWs during Afghanistan and Iraq operations.

2. SOCAUST has confirmed (Ref B) that no Australian Special Forces were involved in the mistreatment of PWs during Afghanistan and Iraq operations. All detainees taken by Australian Special Forces in Iraq were handed over to US forces/authorities and the RAF. Australian Special Forces in Afghanistan took no PWs, however, one detainee was transported by LRPV.

3. For your information.

F.X. ROBERTS
MAJGEN
DCA

Tel:

5 May 04

Enclosure:

1. SOCAUST Minute IDL45/04B306948 dated 3 May 04



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE
SPECIAL OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS - CANBERRA OFFICE

R5-SB-41, Russell Offices, CANBERRA ACT 2600

IDL45/04

B 306 948
DCA

HANDLING OF PW'S BY AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL FORCES

1. You have asked for information surrounding the taking of PW's during the Afghanistan and Iraq operations.
2. In Afghanistan, no PW's were taken by Australian forces. One PW taken by US forces during OP ANACONDA was passed to the Australian forces for transfer by LRPV to a US PW cage at Bagram, about 100 kilometres from the point of transfer. This PW was received and handed over in certified good health. The PW in question was, we understand, released by US authorities several days later.
3. Delete Sec. 33(1)(a)(i) Excluded were attached to the SF task force at Bagram but at no time were they permitted to become involved handling PW's in the Bagram Prison. Their task was to liaise with US authorities
4. During operations in Iraq the SPTF was authorised to detain suspects and either release them or hand them over to US officials. A number of detentions were made, with detainees being provided food, water, and medical attention. You will recall our purpose was 'hearts and minds' in the western region of Iraq. On one occasion a number of suspicious Iraqis were detained whilst fleeing the Euphrates river valley. These detainees were handed over to the RAF and certified as being in good health. You should note that while this group of detainees was being flown out of Iraq in UK CH-47's, one of the detainees died. The RAF acknowledge that all detainees were in good order at the time of hand over and are currently conducting an investigation in the incident. No Australians were involved in the PW handling at the time of death. I understand that it is likely that the PW had a heart attack during the flight but this is not yet confirmed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D.E. Lewis'.

D.E. LEWIS
MAJ GEN
SOCAUST

3 May 04