**190th Fighter Squadron/Blues and Royals Fratricide: Modified Incident Transcript**

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**Overview**

Below we present a modified version of the transcript that accompanied the video of the 190th Fighter Squadron/Blues and Royals fratricide incident in which two United States ‘A10’ close air support aircraft (attached to the 190th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron) launched an attack on a convoy of four United Kingdom Scimitar vehicles (part of the United Kingdom’s Royal Horse Guards and 1st Dragoons, or Blues and Royals, Household Cavalry Regiment) having misidentified them as an Iraqi force[[2]](#endnote-2). The attack, which took place on the 28th March 2003 in the early phases of the Iraq War in the Ad Dayr area to the north west of Basra, resulted in the death of Lance Corporal of Horse (LCoH) Matthew Hull and severe injury to LCoH Alan Tudball. The modified transcript, which corrects and develops the transcript originally released to the public along with the video, employs a simplified version of the conventions used in conversation analysis (Jefferson 2004) and extends ideas for transcribing action put forward in work by Charles Goodwin (1993, and for a more general discussion of the ‘analytical affordances’ provided by different transcription conventions see Gibson, Webb & vom Lehn (2014). Based on long-term academic work by a team of sociologists (see Mair, Watson, Elsey & Smith 2012, Mair, Elsey, Smith & Watson 2013, Elsey, Mair, Smith & Watson forthcoming), in addition to correcting such things as speaker misattributions and other mishearings in the original, it brings in information (including the pilots’ actual call-sign, which was POPOFF not POPOV) made available by the release of the US Air Force’s *Friendly Fire Investigation Board* report (2003) and the British Army’s *Board of Inquiry* report (2004), both of which we have drawn on in reworking the transcript. The primary difference with the original, however, is that the modified version has been reorganised to take into account who was speaking to who at what point in terms of air-ground/ground-air and purely pilot-to-pilot communications. Although we drew on technical literatures in working it up, the modified transcript is not a technical artefact but is designed as an aid to be read while viewing the video to bring out features of the interactions that are less than apparent to the non-military observer. Thus, among other things, it shows that POPOFF 3/6’s communication links to the ground were mediated and discontinuous – a few exchanges aside, the ground could not hear POPOFF 3/6 (or his discussions with POPOFF 3/5 about the status of the British vehicles) and POPOFF 3/6 could only intermittently hear POPOFF 3/5’s exchanges with the ground. This in turn demonstrates that the incident was not composed of one single linearly connected series of interactions but multiple parallel streams of action and interaction, themselves organised as part of a wider real-time battlefield division of labour (Anderson, Sharrock & Hughes 1991) that the video provides only partial and limited access to. Had we audio-video recordings centred on the perspectives of other participants, like the ground forward air controllers (GFACs) for instance, we would, as it were, be able to compose a palimpsest that would highlight the over-layered character of the activities a whole range of heard and unheard military personnel were simultaneously engaged in. Nowhere is this interactional complexity clearer than in the dense tangle of exchanges in lines 314-509 following POPOFF 3/6’s second attack run. This section of the transcript involves six interlocutors who patch into POPOFF 3/5 via MANILA 3/4 (who himself patches in via the same radio network that MANILA HOTEL is using) and includes COSTA 5/8, a British pilot, relaying an abort attack message from British HQ (TWINACT) via the AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft), SKY CHIEF. These exchanges provide some measure of the massively distributed character of real-time communication in such contexts, and further demonstrate that what any one party might say to another was far from available for other parties to listen to in this case. While we lack the additional data that might enable us to trace these lines of communication in real-time beyond POPOFF flight and its direct interactions with heard others, we can, however, do our best to work systematically through the information that is in the public domain, as we have attempted to do here. Our own view on how best to do that, in line with the work of Sacks (1992), is to ensure that transcripts open up rather than close down the ways in which the relevant parties *themselves* organise their interactions and so help us see how *they* orient to and work with such ‘structural features’ of the context of action as multi-channel radio communications. As an example of one way of getting to grips with action-in-interaction in military settings, we hope those who are working on this and other cases find our transcript useful and take it up in different ways[[3]](#endnote-3).

**References**

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**Modified Incident Transcript**

**Speakers**

POPOFF 3/5 & POPOFF 3/6: A10 pilots, POPOFF Flight Lead and Wing respectively

MANILA HOTEL, MANILA 3/4 and LIGHTNING 3/4: ground forward air controllers (GFACs), aka joint terminal attack controllers (JTACS), working on the ground to coordinate air support with British infantry units

SKY CHIEF: US AWACs crew coordinating and monitoring combat operations from the air

COSTA 5/8: British fighter jet pilot, relaying information via SKY CHIEF for TWINACT, British Infantry Command

**Transcription Conventions**

{Beep, beep}: curled brackets contain background cockpit sounds and noises

((To MANILA HOTEL)): double parentheses contain transcriber’s descriptions, and include such things as sighs, inhalations, and so on

((inaudible)): indicates a stretch of inaudible talk

(Eh I see): words placed within single parentheses offer a possible but uncertain hearing of the talk

(LIGHTNING 34): names placed within single parentheses offer a possible but uncertain hearing of the speaker

(1): numbers in brackets indicate time between turns at talk

(.): indicate a micro-pause, under half a second

(>1): less than one second, but more than half

Stress: emphasis in talk

=: ‘latching’, one turn follows another immediately with no audible pause

[: single square bracket between lines indicates overlaps in talk

>faster<: arrows pointing inward indicate faster pacing of talk

<slower>: arrows pointing outward indicate slower pacing of talk

**GUNFIRE**: in bold, indicates sustained gunfire

**Transcript**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **TIME UTC/GMT** | **SPEAKER** | **COMMS INTERFACE** |
|  |  |  | **Pilot-Ground/Ground-Pilot** |  | **Pilot-to-Pilot** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 001 |  | UNKNOWN | (Eh, I see) |  |  |
| 002003004005006 | 1336.30 | MANILA HOTEL | Eh POPOFF from MANILA HOTEL, can you confirm you engaged that eh tube[[4]](#endnote-4) and those vehicles? {automated voice} |  |  |
| 007 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 008009010011012013014015 | 1336.36 | POPOFF 3/5 | Affirm Sir[[5]](#endnote-5). Looks like I have multiple vehicles in revets[[6]](#endnote-6) about ((inhales)) uh eight hundred metres to the north of your arty[[7]](#endnote-7) rounds. Can you eh switch fire, an uhm, shift fire, try and get some arty rounds on those? |  |  |
| 016 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 017018019020 | 1336.47 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger, I understand those were the impacts that uh you observed earlier on my timing? |  |  |
| 021 |  |  | (>1) |  |  |
| 022 | 1336.51 | POPOFF 3/5 | Affirmative |  |  |
| 023 |  |  | (>1) |  |  |
| 024025026 | 1336.52 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger, standby. Let me make sure they’re not on another mission |  |  |
| 027 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 028029030031032 | 1336.57 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Hey, I got a four ship. Uh looks like we got orange panels on ‘em though. Do they have any uh, any eh, friendlies up in this area? |
| 033 |  |  | = |  |  |
| 034035 | 1337.03 | MANILA HOTEL | Understand that was north eight hundred metres |  |  |
| 036 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 037038039 | 1337.12 | MANILA HOTEL | POPOFF, understand that was north eight hundred metres? |  |  |
| 040 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 041042043044045 | 1337.16 | POPOFF 3/5 | Confirm, north eight hundred metres. {automated voice}. Confirm no friendlies this far north uh, on the ground |  |  |
| 046 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 047048049 | 1337.21 | MANILA HOTEL | That is an affirm. {distortion, static} You are well clear of friendlies |  |  |
| 050 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 051052053054055056057 | 1337.25 | POPOFF 3/5 | Copy. I see multiple revetted vehicles. Some look like uh ((inhales)) flatbed trucks and others are uhm green vehicles. Can’t quite make out the type. Look like may be ZIL one fifty sevens[[8]](#endnote-8) |  |  |
| 058 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 059060061062063064 | 1337.36 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger. That matches our intel up there. And unner, understand you also have the other fixed wing[[9]](#endnote-9) up this push? Eh, for terminal control[[10]](#endnote-10), if you can |  |  |
| 065 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 066067 | 1337.44 | POPOFF 3/5 | I’d love to. Ah didn’t talk to him yet |  |  |
| 068 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 069070071 | 1337.46 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger, I believe CASPER’s up this push, two uh Super Tomcats |  |  |
| 072 |  |  |  |  | (6) |
| 073 | 1337.54 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Hey dude |
| 074 |  |  |  |  | (2) |
| 075076077 | 1337.56 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | I got a four ship of uh vehicles that’re evenly spaced eh along a eh road going north |
| 078 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 079080081082083084085 | 1338.04 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Look down at your right. Two o’clock, at ten o’clock low (.) There’s a, a, left, left ten o’clock. OK, look down there, they’re heading north along that eh canal, right there. Coming up just south of the eh village |
| 086 |  |  |  |  | (4) |
| 087088 | 1338.21 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Evenly spaced uh, where we strafed? |
| 089 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 090091092093 | 1338.23 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | No, no. Further east, further eh west, right now. There, an there’s four or five of ‘em right now. Heading up there |
| 094 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 095 | 1338.29 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | No, uh I don’t have any visuals |
| 096 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 097098 | 1338.30 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | I’m uh back at your six, no factor |
| 099 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 100 | 1338.31 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | OK, now where’s this canal? |
| 101 |  |  |  |  | = |
| 102103 | 1338.35 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Don’t hit those F-18s that are out there |
| 104 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 105106107108109110 | 1338.38 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | OK. Right underneath you. Right now, there’s a canal that runs north-south. There’s a small, little village, and there’s vehicles that are spaced evenly there {automated voice} |
| 111 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 112113 | 1338.49 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | They look like they have orange panels on ‘em though |
| 114 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 115116117 | 1338.51 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | He told me, he told me there’s nobody north of here. No friendlies |
| 118 |  |  |  |  | (.)  |
| 119120 | 1338.52 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | I know. They’re right on the river |
| 121 |  |  |  |  | [ |
| 122123 | 1338.53 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | I see vehicles though. Might be our original dudes[[11]](#endnote-11) |
| 124 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 125126127128129130 | 1339.09 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | (They’ve got something) (.) (I see some) (.) (Orange) (.) (There’s something there, can’t quite) {distortion, static} They’ve got some orange on top of ‘em |
| 131 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 132133134 | 1339.10 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF for MANILA Three, is MANILA Three Four in this eh area? |  |  |
| 135 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 136 | 1339.14 | MANILA HOTEL | Eh say again? |  |  |
| 137 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 138139140 | 1339.15 | POPOFF 3/5 | MANILA HOTEL, is MANILA Three Four in this area? |  |  |
| 141 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 142143144 | 1339.19 | MANILA HOTEL | Eh negative. Understand they are well clear of that now. |  |  |
| 145 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 146147148149150 | 1339.23 | POPOFF 3/5 | OK, copy. Uh, like I said, multiple revetted vehicles. They look like flatbed trucks. Uh ((inhales)) are those your targets? |  |  |
| 151 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 152 | 1339.30 | MANILA HOTEL | That’s affirm |  |  |
| 153 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 154 | 1339.31 | POPOFF 3/5 | Okay, uhm |  |  |
| 155 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 156 | 1339.34 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Let me ask you one question |
| 157 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 158 | 1339.35 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | What’s that? |
| 159 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 160 |  |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | The question is |
| 161162163164 |  | MANILA HOTEL | (An I need a first shot on that eh adjustment from you, north, the previous impact) {beep, beep} |  |  |
| 165 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 166167168169 | 1339.45 | POPOFF 3/6 | ((To MANILA HOTEL)) Hey, tell me what type of rocket launchers you got up here? |  |  |
| 170 |  |  |  |  | (5) |
| 171172 | 1339.50 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | ((To POPOFF 3/5)) I think they’re rocket launchers |
| 173 |  |  | (1)  |  |  |
| 174175176 | 1339.52 | MANILA HOTEL | {distortion} MANILA HOTEL, you were stepped on, say again |  |  |
| 177 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 178179180181 | 1339.54 | POPOFF 3/5 | MANILA HOTEL, uh (.) Fire your arty up uh that eight hundred metres north, and see how we do |  |  |
| 182 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 183184185 | 1340.01 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger, standby for shot. They’re getting the adjustments to the guns now |  |  |
| 186 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 187 | 1340.34 | POPOFF 3/5 | Copy |  |  |
| 189 |  |  |  |  | (5) |
| 190191 | 1340.09 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Uh, roll up your right wing, and look right underneath yer |
| 192 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 193194 | 1340.12 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | >I know what you’re talking about< |
| 195 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 196197 | 1340.13 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | OK, well they have orange rockets on ‘em |
| 198 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 199 | 1340.17 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Orange rockets? |
| 200 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 201 | 1340.17 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah, I think so |
| 202 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 203 | 1340.18 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | <Let me look> |
| 204 |  |  |  |  | (8) |
| 205206 | 1340.26 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | <We need to think about gettin’ home> |
| 207 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 208209 | 1340.29 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Uh three point uh six is eh what it says[[12]](#endnote-12)  |
| 210 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 211212 | 1340.31 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Yeah, I know, eh I’m talking about time wise |
| 213 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 214215216 | 1340.35 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | I think killing these damn rocket launchers, would be great ((inaudible)) {heavy distortion} |
| 217 |  |  | (17) |  |  |
| 218219220221222223 | 1340.52 | MANILA HOTEL | Yeah, POPOFF Three Six[[13]](#endnote-13), MANILA HOTEL, I’ve got other aircraft up this push. Not sure they’re coming to me. Somebody else might be working this freak |  |  |
| 224 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 225226227 | 1341.00 | POPOFF 3/5 | Yeah, eh (.) MANILA Three {distortion} MANILA Three Four is working ‘em |  |  |
| 228 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 229 |  | MANILA HOTEL | Roger |  |  |
| 230 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 231232233 |  | POPOFF 3/5 | F-18’s are working with MANILA Three Four. Break, break |  |  |
| 234 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 235236237 | 1340.12 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Yeah, I see that eh. You see ((inaudible talk)). I’m going to roll down, (see a break) |
| 238 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 239240241242243 | 1340.15 | MANILA 3/4 | Break, be advised MANILA Three Four is not working the eh F18s unless they are trying to check in with me, over |  |  |
| 244 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 245 | 1341.21 | POPOFF 3/5 | Copy {distortion, static} |  |  |
| 246 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 247248 | 1341.24 |  |  | POPOFF 36 | OK, do you see the orange things on top of ‘em? |
| 249 |  |  | (8) |  |  |
| 250251252253 | 1341.32 | MANILA HOTEL | Eh, POPOFF Three Six from MANILA HOTEL, uh are you eh able to switch to crimson? |  |  |
| 254 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 255256 | 1341.37 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF Three Six eh, is rolling in |  |  |
| 257 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 258 | 1341.40 | MANILA HOTEL | Tell you what ((inaudible)) |  |  |
| 259 |  |  |  |  | [ |
| 260261262263 | 1341.41 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | I’m coming off west. You roll in, and. It looks like they are exactly what we’re talking about |
| 264 |  |  |  |  | (2) |
| 265 | 1341.49 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | We got a visual |
| 266 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 267268269 | 1341.50 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | OK. I want to get that first one before he gets into that town then |
| 270 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 271 | 1341.53 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Get him. Get him |
| 272 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 273274275276277 | 1341.55 | POPOFF 3/6 | All right, we got rocket launchers, it looks like, eh number two is rolling in from the south to the north. And eh two’s in |  |  |
| 278 |  |  |  |  | (4) |
| 279 | 1342.04 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Get it |
| 280 |  |  |  |  | (9) |
| 281282283284285286287 | 1342.09 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | {distortion} ((inaudible)) ((POPOFF 3/6 puts his A-10 into a dive to strafe the British column, destroying two Scimitar armoured vehicles and fatally wounding LCoH Hull)) **GUNFIRE** |
| 288 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 289 | 1342.18 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | I’m off your west. (Good hits) |
| 290 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 291 | 1342.22 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Good hits |
| 292 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 293294 | 1342.29 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | {distortion, static, overlaps with other sound} Got a visual? |
| 295 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 296297 | 1342.30 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | {distortion} I got a visual. You’re at your high 10 |
| 298 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 299300301 | 1342.31 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | {distortion} (Gotcha) {distortion} ((inaudible)) {background noise} |
| 302 |  |  |  |  | (6) |
| 303304 | 1342.37 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | That’s what you think they are, right? |
| 305 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 306307 | 1342.39 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | It looks like it to me, eh, and I got my goggles[[14]](#endnote-14) on ‘em now |
| 308 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 309310311312 | 1342.59 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | ((inaudible)) {heavy distortion} ((inaudible)) (17) OK, I‘m looking. Getting down low at this |
| 313 |  |  | (10) |  |  |
| 314315316 | 1343.13 | MANILA HOTEL | POPOFF Three Six from MANILA HOTEL, eh guns {distortion} |  |  |
| 317 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 318319 |  | MANILA 3/4 | POPOFF Three Four[[15]](#endnote-15) this is MANILA Three Four |  |  |
| 320 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 321322 | 1343.17 | MANILA HOTEL | To engage those targets in the revetments now |  |  |
| 323 |  |  |  |  | (5) |
| 324325326 | 1343.24 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | It looks like he is hauling ass (1) (Heh, heh, heh) (3) Is that what you think they are? |
| 327 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 328 | 1343.34 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | 1-2 |
| 329 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 330 | 1343.35 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | It doesn’t look friendly |
| 331 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 332333 | 1343.38 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | OK, I’m in again from the eh south |
| 334 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 335 | 1343.40 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | OK |
| 336 |  |  |  |  | (7) |
| 337338339340 | 1343.47 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | **GUNFIRE** {distortion}, ((inaudible)) ((This is the attack run which it is believed killed LCoH Hull)) |
| 341 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 342343 | 1343.54 | LIGHTNING 3/4 | POPOFF Three Four, LIGHTNING Three Four |  |  |
| 344 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 345346347 | 1344.09 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF Three Five, LIGHTNING Three Four. Go |  |  |
| 348 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 349350351352353354355356 | 1344.12 | LIGHTNING 3/4 | Roger, POPOFF. Hey, be advised that eh in the eh three-one-two-two and three-two-two-two group-box you have uh friendly armour (.) in the area. Yellow uh, small armoured tanks. Eh, just be advised |  |  |
| 357 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 358 | 1344.16 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | ((inaudible)) Ah shit  |
| 359 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 360 | 1344.19 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Got the, got the smoke |
| 361 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 362363364365 | 1344.21 | LIGHTNING 3/4 | Hey, POPOFF Three Four, abort your mission. You got a, looks like we may have a blue-on-blue situation |  |  |
| 366 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 367 | 1344.25 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Fuck. God bless it |
| 368 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 369 | 1344.29 | UNKNOWN | POPOFF Three Four |  |  |
| 370 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 371 | 1344.35 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Fuck. Fuck. Fuck |
| 372 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 373374375 | 1344.36 | MANILA 3/4 | POPOFF Three Four, this is MANILA Three Four. Did you copy my last, over? |  |  |
| 376 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 377 | 1344.39 | POPOFF 3/5 | I did  |  |  |
| 378 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 379380 |  | (LIGHTNING 3/4) | (Palm build-ups on the northern side, uh north) |  |  |
| 381 |  |  | (6) |  |  |
| 382383 | 1344.47 | POPOFF 3/5 | Confirm those are friendlies on that side of the canal |  |  |
| 384 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 385 | 1344.51 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Shit |
| 386 |  |  | (5) |  |  |
| 387 | 1344.58 | MANILA 3/4 | Standby POPOFF |  |  |
| 388 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 389 |  | (LIGHTNING 3/4) | North-west, south-east |  |  |
| 390 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 391 | 1345.04 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | God damn it ((sighs)) |
| 392 |  |  | (4) |  |  |
| 393394 | 1344.14 | MANILA HOTEL | Hey POPOFF Three Six, from MANILA HOTEL |  |  |
| 395 |  |  | (8) |  |  |
| 396397398399400401 | 1344.25 | MANILA 3/4 | OK POPOFF. Just uh, west of the three-four easting, on the eh, on the berm[[16]](#endnote-16) up there, the three-four, two-two area is where we have uh our friendlies. Over |  |  |
| 402 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 403404405406407 | 1344.39 | POPOFF 3/5 | All right, POPOFF Three Five has smoke, oh god, let me know how those friendlies are right now, please |  |  |
| 408 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 409 | 1344.45 | MANILA 3/4 | Roger, standby |  |  |
| 410 |  |  |  |  | (4) |
| 411 | 1344.49 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Gotta go home dude |
| 412 |  |  |  |  | (.) |
| 413 | 1344.50 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah, I know. We’re fucked |
| 414 |  |  |  |  | (4) |
| 415 | 1345.54 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Shit |
| 416 |  |  |  |  | (7) |
| 417418419420 | 1346.01 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | {distortion} ((inaudible)) {background noise} As you cross the circle, you are three o’clock low |
| 421 |  |  |  |  | (2) |
| 422 | 1346.03 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Roger |
| 423 |  |  | (9) |  |  |
| 424425426 | 1346.12 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF Three Five is bingo[[17]](#endnote-17). Please let us know what’s happening |  |  |
| 427 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 428429430 | 1346.15 | MANILA HOTEL | Roger. We’re getting that information right now. Standby |  |  |
| 431 |  |  |  |  | (5) |
| 432 | 1346.20 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Fuck |
| 433 |  |  | (27)  |  |  |
| 434435 | 1346.47 | MANILA 3/4 | Eh POPOFF, this is uh MANILA Three four over  |  |  |
| 436 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 437 |  | UNKNOWN | (Confirm your altitude) |  |  |
| 438 |  |  | (.) |  |  |
| 439 | 1346.51 | MANILA 3/4 | Go |  |  |
| 440 |  |  | (4) |  |  |
| 441442 | 1346.55 | POPOFF 3/5 | {Distortion} POPOFF to MANILA Three four over |  |  |
| 443 |  |  | (6) |  |  |
| 444445 | 1347.01 | MANILA 3/4 | MANILA Three four go for POPOFF |  |  |
| 446 |  |  | (1) |  |  |
| 447448449450 | 1347.02 | MANILA 3/4 | Roger, we’re getting an initial eh brief that there was one killed and one wounded, over |  |  |
| 451 |  |  | (7) |  |  |
| 452453 | 1347.09 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF Three (.) Five copy. RTB[[18]](#endnote-18)  |  |  |
| 454 |  |  |  |  | (9) |
| 455 | 1347.18 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | I’m gonna be sick |
| 456 |  |  |  |  | (6) |
| 457 | 1347.24 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | (Aahh. Fuck) |
| 458 |  |  |  |  | (24) |
| 459 | 1347.48 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Did y’ hear? |
| 460 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 461 | 1347.51 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah, this sucks |
| 462 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 463 | 1347.52 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | We’re in jail, dude |
| 464 |  |  |  |  | (7) |
| 465 | 1347.59 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Arrghh |
| 466 |  |  | (13) |  |  |
| 467468 | 1348.12 | SKY CHIEF | MANILA, this is SKY CHIEF, over |  |  |
| 469 |  |  | (6) |  |  |
| 470471 | 1348.18 | MANILA 3/4 | This is MANILA Three Four, send SKY CHIEF |  |  |
| 472 |  |  | (4) |  |  |
| 473474475 | 1348.22 | COSTA 5/8 | SKY CHIEF, SKY CHIEF, COSTA Five Eight {distortion, jets fire} |  |  |
| 476 |  |  | (5) |  |  |
| 477478479 | 1348.25 | MANILA HOTEL | SKY CHIEF, this is MANILA HOTEL. MANILA |  |  |
| 480 |  |  | [ |  |  |
| 481482 | 1348.30 | COSTA 5/8 | SKY CHIEF, SKY CHIEF, COSTA Five Eight |  |  |
| 483 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 484485486487 | 1348.41 | SKY CHIEF | MANILA. (Repeat from TWINACT[[19]](#endnote-19) uh), the A-10s are running on friendlies, over |  |  |
| 488 |  |  | (5) |  |  |
| 489490491492493 | 1348.47 | COSTA 5/8 | POPOFF Three Five, POPOFF Three Five, this is COSTA Five Eight. Relaying message from TWINACT. Abort, abort |  |  |
| 494 |  |  | (4) |  |  |
| 495496497 | 1348.54 | SKY CHIEF | MANILA, how copy, A-10s are running on friendlies. Abort, over |  |  |
| 498 |  |  | (13) |  |  |
| 499500501502 | 1349.07 | COSTA 5/8 | {heavy distortion}, (inaudible) (Relaying message) from TWINACT, abort, abort |  |  |
| 503 |  |  | (3) |  |  |
| 504505 | 1349. 11 | POPOFF 3/5 | POPOFF Three Five aborting |  |  |
| 506 |  |  | (2) |  |  |
| 507508509 | 1349.14 | COSTA 5/8 | COSTA Five Eight, we will relay that back to TWINACT |  |  |
| 510 |  |  |  |  | (4) |
| 511 | 1349.18 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Fuck. God, fucking (.) shit |
| 512 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 513514515 | 1350.21 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | ((long exhale, sigh)) Dammit. Fucking damn it ((repeatedly sighs)) |
| 516 |  |  |  |  | (30) |
| 517518 |  | UNKNOWN | ((inaudible)) Nineteen. Zulu. Taho. Berminster Point. |  |  |
| 519 |  |  |  |  | (26) |
| 520521 | 1351.17 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | God dammit. Fuck me dead ((weeping)) |
| 522 |  |  |  |  | (8) |
| 523 | 1351.25 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | You with me? |
| 524 |  |  |  |  | (2) |
| 525 | 1351.27 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah |
| 526 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 527528 | 1351.30 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | They did say there were no friendlies |
| 529 |  |  |  |  | (3) |
| 530531532533 | 1351.33 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah, I know that thing with the orange panels is going to screw us. They look like orange rockets on top |
| 534 |  |  |  |  | (15) |
| 535 | 1351.48 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Your tape on? |
| 536 |  |  |  |  | (1) |
| 537 | 1351.49 |  |  | POPOFF 3/6 | Yeah. |
| 538 |  |  |  |  | (5) |
| 539 | 1351.54 |  |  | POPOFF 3/5 | Mine is end of tape. |
| 540 | Video ends |

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2. See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/190th\_Fighter\_Squadron,\_Blues\_and\_Royals\_friendly\_fire\_incident](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/190th_Fighter_Squadron%2C_Blues_and_Royals_friendly_fire_incident), and for the original transcript,

<http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Transcript_of_the_%27friendly_fire%27_incident_video_%2828_March_2003%29> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Those who want to use the transcript in published work can use the following citation: Mair, M., Elsey, C., Smith, P.V. & Watson, P.G. (2014) ‘190th Fighter Squadron/Blues and Royals Fratricide: Modified Incident Transcript’, unpublished research paper [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. ‘Tube’: rocket launcher [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Note, the section of the cockpit video released to the public begins seconds after POPOFF 3/5 has successfully completed an attack run on a set of Iraqi military targets. Had the video begun three seconds earlier, POPOFF 3/5 would have been captured in the act of firing. These were the same set of targets he proceeds to confer with MANILA HOTEL about for much of the rest of the video, a set of targets quite distinct from the ‘four ship’ (i.e. the British patrol) he discusses with POPOFF 3/6. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. ‘Revets’: ‘revetments’, i.e. sloping fortified embankments designed to protect, e.g., vehicles and artillery units [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. ‘Arty’: artillery [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. ZIL 157: a Soviet made military truck used by the Iraqi army [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. ‘Fixed wing’: (fighter) aeroplane and not, e.g., a helicopter [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. ‘Terminal control’: reference to himself as a joint terminal attack controller [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. ‘Original dudes’: very likely a reference to the enemy force they were tasked to attack in this area [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. In the original transcript, this is glossed as “giving a fuel measurement” [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. POPOFF 3/6 given as call-sign but POPOFF 3/5 responds [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. ‘Goggles’: binoculars [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. POPOFF 3/5 misidentified as ‘3/4’ [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. ‘Berm’: raised bank running next to a canal [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. ‘Bingo’: has just enough fuel for a safe return to base [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. RTB: return(ing) to base [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. TWINACT: the Air Support Element (overseeing the work SALT, the Supporting Arms Liaison Team, which MANILA HOTEL was leading) collocated with HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division, relayed via COSTA 5/8, a UK Tornado fighter jet pilot, through SKY CHIEF, the AWACS crew [↑](#endnote-ref-19)