



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS, 110<sup>TH</sup> AVIATION BRIGADE**  
**BLDG 4509, ANDREWS AVENUE**  
**FORT RUCKER, ALABAMA 36363-5105**

ATZQ-ATB

23 MAY 2017

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**SUBJECT: SSG Branch's email incident of FEB 2014**

1. SSG Branch was serving as the Public Affairs NCOIC for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). His job entailed him to produce, as well as review stories published about the unit.
2. I was the commanding officer of E Co. 160<sup>th</sup> SOAR(A) at the time of the incident.
3. I received a "draft" copy of the article produced by Malley T. Hislop, a Boeing reporter, in February 2014 concerning my unit which had visited and toured the AH-64 Boeing facility in Mesa, Arizona. The story was a total of eight paragraphs long and was rather routine within the scope of his duties. I then sent the copy of the article to the 160<sup>th</sup> SOAR(A) PAO for review as a standard operating procedure.
3. In his article, the Boeing reporter had composed a sentence alleging the unit's involvement in the Osama Bin Laden raid of May 2, 2011. SSG Branch used his training as a Public Affairs professional to recommend the sentence be removed due to the sensitivity of the information in question. Upon SSG Branch's recommendation I instructed the Boeing reporter to remove the sentence and it was published internally within a Boeing magazine with the sentence removed. SSG Branch's actions prevented any possible spillage of the sensitive information despite it having already been publically known prior to 2014 and acknowledged by known military officials years later.
4. The information published was already open-source information published by the Army twice on the Army homepage, May 6, 2011 and again on May 9, 2011 during the course of then President Obama's visit to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to recognize the units involved within the high-profile raid.
5. Prior to the Army homepage story, Sean Naylor, an Army Times reporter, produced a story on the raid May 4, 2011, which was later used by the Military Times two years later in a follow-up story on March 29, 2013 highlighting the units that participated. Soldier magazine had even published the details of the unit's involvement in early February 2014 within another story honoring fallen Soldiers during the Operation Red Wings monument dedication written by DoD military-contracted reporters.
6. In the scope of already confirmed military and civilian media sources, I ask that you realize that SSG Branch was performing his tasks the way he was instructed within

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Public Affairs training. He safeguarded information from being released of which the command and the public already acknowledged to this day. Removal from service for doing his job would be unfortunate given the information already published by many reliable sources including military outlets.

8. Point of contact for this memorandum is the undersigned at 334-255-0009 or at david.b.rousseau.mil@mail.mil.

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