[redacted]

Summaries of interviews conducted by LCDR [redacted]

16 Oct 2000

LTJG [redacted], USNR, was interviewed on 16 Oct 2000. He is the Fire Control Officer (FCO) onboard USS COLE (DDG 67). He explained that during sea and anchor detail, the SPY-1 Radar is normally secured five nautical miles (5NM) outside of land and when inport so as not to "fry" the surrounding communications circuitry. [redacted]

However, during the ship's recent Suez Canal transit, in order to increase the ship's capabilities, the SPY-1 was kept on low power during the transit but with the elevation up to avoid reflection from the sand dunes. [redacted]

LTJG [redacted] said that while the COLE was patrolling the Adriatic outside the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the ship was in Weapons Posture 1 for CIWS, 5" 54 and VLS. [redacted]
He said that when the ship left the Adriatic, it was ordered by CTF 60 to come down to Weapons Posture 2 and 3 for most systems for its transit through the Suez Canal. The ship's Weapons Posture remained the same the OPCON shifted to CTF 50. He noted that while inport in Aden the CIWS was in Weapons Posture 2 and the 5" 54 was in WP 2.

With regard to the "Med-Arabian University" briefings, he recalled that while in the Adriatic they were briefed that [redacted] would try to hit an unaccompanied ship with a suicide boat in the 6th or 5th Fleet AORs.

16 October 2000

OS2 [redacted] was the radar operator on the Bridge during Sea and Anchor detail on 12 October 2000. He said that the Pilot (Mr. Ibrahim) was very difficult to deal with. An example of this was that the Pilot insisted on mooring the ship port side to, but the CO insisted otherwise. He made the general observation that the Pilot just didn't want to be on the Bridge and after the first line was over was anxious to get off the ship.

[redacted]

Summaries of interviews conducted by LCDR [redacted]

17 October 2000

Quartermaster (QM) Second Class [redacted], USN, was contacted again (he had earlier provided a written statement and a short addendum to it) in order to obtain answers to a few questions. [At the time of this interview, he was the senior person from the Navigation Department on board, as the Navigator (LT [redacted] and Leading Chief Petty Officer (QMCS [redacted]) were escorting wounded shipmates.]

On the previous day he had provided the investigators with the ship's Bearing Log, had searched for the missing Deck Log pages (later found by the Navigator), and he had re-plotted the ship's track into Aden Harbor, Yemen. [He explained that after the ship's successful transit into port on 12 October, per standard operating procedures the QMs erased the track from the Navigation chart in preparations for their anticipated outbound track later that day.]

After he re-plotted the inbound track (based in part on the bearing log), he gave the chart to the Navy investigators. [On 17 Oct 2000 he also provided another short written statement to the effect that he had mis-identified where the Harbor Pilot was picked up by the ship. The ship had done a circular pattern for about an hour, and he placed the pickup point prior to the circular pattern. However, he noted that as the ship was doing circles while waiting for the Pilot, the pickup point was further into the channel.]

Additionally, noted the following points:

- QM3 [redacted] is the one who made the last entry (explosion entry) on the ship's Deck Log on 12 October.
- The "Sailing Directions" for Aden Harbor, Yemen, is unclear about the procedures for contacting the Pilot.
- He also noted what he felt were oddities, in that Aden signal station flies two vertical red lights at night and two vertical black balls during the day to signify it's okay to enter port. [Under inland and international rules a ship that shows "red over red" lighting at night or two black balls by day is not under command.]

[redacted]

Summaries of interviews conducted by LCDR [redacted] [redacted]

22 October 2000

On this date the Commanding Officer, CDR Kurt Lippold, USN, was interviewed by CAPT [redacted] the Investigating Officer, and LCDR [redacted] With regard to whether the inport watch team was briefed prior to taking the watch, he said that possibly Chief [redacted] (in Norfolk as a medevac) briefed the topside watches after sea and anchor detail. Later he said that his best guess was that the brief was probably not held because normally the inport duty section would meet and be briefed after lunch, but in this case the explosion occurred.

With regard to the COLE's Force Protection Plan for Aden, Yemen, he noted the following:

- He wasn't sure which refueling pier the ship would be moored to.
- His intention was to get out of Aden quickly.
- He verbally concurred with the FPO and waiyed certain measures from the approved Force Protection Plan.
- In accordance with ship's instruction, the ship should have produced an addendum implementation plan.

With regard to specific measures from the COLE's approved Force Protection Plan that were waived in Aden, Yemen, he noted the following:

- On keeping unauthorized craft away from the ship and inspecting workboats. He said that initially this provision (#18) was taken care of, when GM2 [redacted] put a shotgun in the face of a boat operator that tried to come alongside during sea and anchor detail. Later he commented, "How [are ship supposed to accomplish this]? At what distance? What's the ROE (rules of engagement)? How do you inspect workboats?" He acknowledged that the CO's ROE in the inport scenario are the self-defense provisions from the CJCS SROE (standing rules of engagement).

- On fire hose placement (Measure # 56): he said he wouldn't have known where to place the hoses.

- He said that FP measures # 6, 27, and 60 were waived, all others covered.

[redacted]

- With regard to garbage barges coming alongside, the CO said that initially garbage barges were not authorized. Then the Supply Officer told the CO that the barges cost only $150 per barge, which would also take the ship's plastic and hazmat. Since the price was reasonable the CO relented and allowed the garbage barges to come alongside.

The Co on the PQS (Professional Qualifications Standards) system:

- The PQS system is broken.
- The Relational Administrative Database Manager system, developed by SPAWAR to track PQS standards, is not fully developed.
- On Navy's IDTC (inter-deployment training cycle) initiative [designed to reduce paperwork load and number of inspections for ships] → it did away with some programs, such as PQS in some areas, but didn't give COs any substitute mechanism for determining when/how people should be qualified for various watch stations.
- CO attests to the qualifications of STG3 Davis (Internal Rover for ship's inport watch section on 12 Oct 00) as a Rover → "He was qualified." [Investigator comment: And [redacted] said he was qualified to stand the Rover watch, even though investigators could only find documentation that showed he was 90% qualified for the Rover watch.]

30 October 2000

On this date we (CAPT [redacted] and LCDR [redacted] interviewed LT [redacted], USN, the Combat Systems Maintenance Officer (CSMO) onboard the USS TARAWA (LHA 1). LT [redacted] is a Surface Warfare qualified officer and a Limited Duty Officer (LDO) whose technical specialty is combat and fire control systems. As he is stationed onboard the TARAWA, the ship from which we were temporarily working, LT [redacted] was an interviewee of opportunity whom we hoped could provide the necessary expertise to shed light on an issue for us.

The issue was this: what primary shipboard weapons systems, available on the USS COLE, would have been relevant/applicable as a defensive measure in a terrorist

small boat attack or a situation in which boarders would need to be repelled? Our working theory was that COLE's TLAMs, Harpoons, SVTT, 5" 54 gun, and CIWS (close-in weapons system) systems were:

a. Not applicable to inner harbor defense, because there was not a known air or large surface combatant threat to the COLE;
b. The primary shipboard weapons systems listed above are designed to counter major air or surface threats, and not to provide inner-harbor defense;
c. On the COLE, the SPY-1 Radar, which provides essential data to the ship's fire control system, is secured about 5 NM from land before the ship enters port in order to prevent it from disrupting/destroying local telecommunications networks. Consequently, the main systems couldn't be utilized inport even if they were appropriate for inner harbor defense; and
d. The lethal and non-lethal weapons available on the COLE that could be used in inner harbor defensive situations were the following:
    1) 50 CAL machine guns
    2) M60 machine guns
    3) Concussion grenades
    4) 12-gauge shotguns
    5) M14 rifles
    6) 9-MM handguns
    7) M79 Grenade launchers
    8) Fire hoses (non-lethal)
    9) Small boats (RHIBs)/with armed crew

LT [redacted] confirmed our working theory in all respects. He added that COLE's inport weapons posture (WP 2 or 3, depending on the system) for its primary shipboard systems was appropriate.

31 October 2000

After the USS COLE (DDG 67) was towed out of Aden Harbor, Yemen, to the M/V BLUE MARLIN, a docking ship that would transport the ship back to the U.S., on 30 and 31 October 2000 many of the crew from the COLE were transported to the USS TARAWA (LHA 1) for temporary berthing until they could be transported to Oman for

[redacted]

eventual return to the U.S. Accordingly, since I had a few unanswered questions concerning the COLE's OPS/INTEL briefs and "Med-Arabian University" briefs, I interviewed LT [redacted] USN, the Assistant Operations Officer assigned to USS COLE (DDG 67). Earlier in the investigation LT [redacted] provided investigators with a ZIP computer disc containing various computer files of several OPS/INTEL briefs, operations-related messages, and several "Med-Arabian University" briefs.

First, he clarified that the daily OPS/INTEL briefs were different briefs from the "Med-Arabian University" briefs, although sometimes both briefs would be conducted on the same day and sometimes even back-to-back, schedule permitting. Normally, however, the OPS/INTEL brief would be conducted around 0800 daily, and the "Med-Arabian," if scheduled, would be around 1300. [He said to check the previous Plans of the Day.] Second, he said that the briefs he provided on the ZIP disc were about one-third (1/3) of the total number of briefs given. He said that "Med-Arabian University" briefs were in full swing during the ship's TRANSLANT crossing, but when the ship became Air Defense Coordinator for the Battlegroup during their Adriatic patrol, then the Med-Arabian briefs were not being given.

With regard to the C5F AOR, he said that most of their OPS/INTEL and "Med-Arabian" briefs had been devoted to the C6F AOR, because the ship had been operating in the Med and Adriatic seas. He said that C5F AOR and MIO (Maritime Interception Operations) briefs were scheduled for the next phase, as the COLE had just chopped into the C5F AOR. He acknowledged that the OPS/INTEL briefs did not generally cover the operational THREATCON and Threat Levels for various sites in the AOR. He could not tell me what the THREATCON in the COMFIFTHFLT AOR was on the day the ship came to Aden, Yemen. Also, he was not able to distinguish the terms THREATCON and Threat Level.

<u>31 October 2000</u>

Two sailors on the USS COLE (DDG 67), who were on the ship's inport watchbill on 12 October 2000, answered questions about the duty section that day.

STG2 [redacted] USN, and GM3 [redacted] USN, were assigned to the Backup Action Force (BAF) on 12 October, and they both confirmed the following:

[redacted]

- The inport duty section was NOT mustered prior to assuming the watch in Aden, Yemen, on 12 Oct 00.
- There was NO BRIEF conducted prior to inport watch team assuming the watch.

Later on 31 Oct 00, I talked with FC2 [redacted] USN, who was assigned to the BAF on 12 Oct 00. He confirmed that the inport Duty Section was neither mustered nor briefed on 12 October 2000. He said it was unusual that the Duty Section did not muster after tying up, because that was what they usually did. He confirmed that inport briefs had been held with the Duty Section during previous inport periods in the Med/C6F AOR. The Section Leader (OSCS [redacted]) was usually the one who conducted the muster and brief. FC2 [redacted] has been attached to the USS COLE (DDG 67) since February 1998, and he' been in the Navy since August 1995.

01 November 2000

On this date CDR Kurt Lippold, USN, Commanding Officer, USS COLE (DDG 67), was onboard the USS TARAWA (LHA 1). In response to an earlier question, he called to inform the Investigating Officer (CAPT [redacted]) of the following:

- He attended CO Level III Force Protection/Anti-Terrorism training on 19-20 April 2000.
- The training was called "Maritime Group Inport Training," and was held at TACTRAGRULANT in Dam Neck, Virginia.
- The training was conducted by NCIS S/A [redacted]

[redacted]