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SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: [REDACTED]

THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2015

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-205,
Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Representative Westmoreland.

Appearances:

For the SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI:

DANA CHIPMAN, CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

SHARON JACKSON, DEPUTY CHIEF COUNSEL

SARA BARRINEAU, INVESTIGATOR

SHERIA CLARKE, COUNSEL

KIM BETZ, MEMBER OUTREACH LIAISON

HEATHER SAWYER, MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

PETER KENNY, MINORITY SENIOR COUNSEL

For the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE:

AUSTIN EVERS, SENIOR ADVISOR

Ms. Jackson. We'll begin. This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED] conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks on the U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya in matters related to and pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Ms. [REDACTED], would you state your full name for the record, please.

Ms. [REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. Okay. We appreciate your appearance here today. Thank you for coming in. At least it's not 110 heat index today, so the humidity is down a little bit.

I've introduced myself before, but my name is Sharon Jackson. I am one of the counsels for the majority staff of the committee. I'd like everyone to go around and introduce themselves. You are accompanied here today by?

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers from the State Department.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

Ms. Clarke. Sheria Clarke, majority staff.

Mr. Chipman. I'm Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

Ms. Betz. Kim Betz with the majority staff.

Ms. Barrineau. Sara Barrineau with the majority staff.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. As with anything, we have some procedural issues that we have to go over with you first today just to make sure that you understand, I'm sure you've talked with Austin, who is here representing the State Department today as its counsel. But I'd like to go over the ground rules and explain how this interview will proceed.

The way we generally operate is that the majority staff will ask you questions for up to 1 hour and then the minority staff will ask questions for the next hour, and we'll rotate back and forth in that manner until each side has exhausted all of the questions that they have.

Under our rules, questions may only be asked by a member of the committee or a designated staff member. And I don't anticipate that we're going to have any members of the committee here today, but you never know. One or more might come in during the duration of your testimony or your statement today.

Unlike testimony in a deposition or in a Federal court, the committee's format is not bound by the rules of evidence. The witness or your personal counsel may raise objections for privilege subject to review by the chairman of the committee. If those objections cannot be resolved in the hearing, you can be required to return for a deposition or a hearing.

Members and staff of the committee, however, are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions. This has not been an issue that we've encountered in

the past, but I just raise it as it's one of our procedural rules.

This session is to begin unclassified. If any question posed by myself or the minority staff calls for a classified answer, please let us know, and we will reserve it until we are in a more appropriate setting. We do have a classified setting reserved for later this afternoon, and so we can move into a classified setting.

In preparation for today, I have limited my questions to documents that pertain to matters that have been marked unclassified, but again, if you feel that any answer you would be required to give moves into a classified matter, just let us know.

You are welcome to confer with Mr. Evers at any time throughout the interview, but if something just needs clarified, we ask that you ask the question to be restated or ask again in some matter. It is important to us that you understand the questions before giving your answer. But if you would like to confer with Mr. Evers, please just let us know, we'll go off the record, and you can have as much time as you need to consult with him.

We will also take a break whenever it's convenient to you. Generally, we do this after every hour of questioning because everybody needs to stretch their legs and things like that, but if you need a break before then, please just let us know. Again, we will go off the record and take a break.

We have water here. We have a coffee maker. I see you

brought your own form of caffeine this morning, but if you need another, just let us know, and we'll take a break so that you can do that. We are going to try and make this process as easy and comfortable as possible.

As you can see, we have an official reporter here taking down everything that is said, questions that are asked, answers that are given, so we ask that you give verbal responses to all questions, and we also ask, and I am to be blamed for this too, is to not talk over each other. I will try and be very conscious of letting you finish an answer before I go into the next question, and if you, too, could not start answering a question until the question is complete.

We also will take our time today. And again, if you need anything repeated or clarified, please let us know. We want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner possible. So we would be happy to clarify or re-ask.

We understand that there has been a passage of time and that memories are not as sharp, and I can say from given my age, my memory is not as sharp as it used to be, but we are asking that you give your best recollection of events.

Again, we are not bound by the rules of evidence, so we may ask your opinion or to speculate on something, but again, we want you to give us your best recollection of events that happened.

As I used to say when I was a trial lawyer, we were never there when the events unfolded, and so we have to bring in those

people who were there at the time in order to figure out what was going on. If for whatever reason you don't know the answer to a question but you know that someone else has the answer or might know the answer to that, we will ask that you give us the names of any person that might have that information.

This is part of a voluntary interview as part of a congressional investigation. Do you understand that you are required to answer questions truthfully from Congress?

Ms. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Do you understand that that applies to questions posed to you by congressional staff in an interview?

Ms. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Do you understand that witnesses who knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or making false statements? Do you understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to today's questions?

Ms. [REDACTED] No.

Ms. Jackson. Well, that's the end of my preamble.

Does the minority have anything that they would like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. Simply welcome. Thank you for being with us, and is there a time today by which we need to end? It just helps us make sure we are planning.

Mr. Evers. Sharon and I talked before we got started. Ms. [REDACTED] has some family obligations later in the day, wants to be cooperative and helpful, would appreciate the opportunity to talk to you guys in the afternoon about, you know, if we are getting tight on time, we can talk about it then.

Ms. Sawyer. Okay. Great.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. All right. I see that the clock reads now 10:09, so we will begin the first hour of questioning.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], how long have you been with the State Department?

A I joined the State Department as a foreign service officer in 2003.

Q Okay.

A In September of 2003, so almost ¹²~~13~~ years.

Q Okay. And what did you do prior to joining the State Department?

A A couple of things. Right after graduate school, I actually followed my husband overseas. He's also a foreign service officer, and I worked in our Embassies in Conakry, Guinea and Rabat, Morocco between 1995 and 1999.

Q So were you a civil servant before?

A No, I was an eligible family member employee. And then when we came back to the United States in 1999, I took positions

working in the private sector. I worked for [REDACTED] Associates for a year, and then I went and worked for a small e-commerce company called [REDACTED] for about a year, and then I went to go work for [REDACTED] Associates for 2 years --

Q Okay.

A -- prior to joining the State Department.

Q And just in general, what were the nature of your positions at those private sector industries?

A [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were both executive search firms, and Luminant was an e-commerce consulting firm, but I worked on executive search type work from the inside, from the corporate side, so working with the recruiters.

Q Okay. And since you've been with the State Department in 2003, can you give us an overview of the various positions and roles you've had as a foreign service officer?

A Sure. I'm a management-coned officer. My first tour, I worked as the desk officer for Tunisia from 2003 to 2004. Then I did a year of mixture of Hindi language training and public diplomacy training and consular training in preparation for my assignment in New Delhi, India from 2005 to 2008. Yes, that's right. Where I worked as the assistant information officer for 1 year, and then the nonimmigrant visa chief for a year, and there was some leave without pay mixed in there as I had maternity leave.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. When I returned back in 2008, I went to work at our Foreign Service Institute teaching a course called A-100, which is essentially boot camp for new diplomats. I did that for 2 years.

And then I went to work in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs as the post management officer for North Africa initially in 2010, and then by the time the Arab Spring happened in 2011, I shifted over to doing only Libya.

Then in 2012, June, roughly, I shifted to a new position in the bureau of human resources, office of career development and assignments. I was working with junior foreign service officers on how to find their next assignments and get them into those next assignments.

After 1 year in that role, I shifted over to work for the ^Ddirector ^Ggeneral of the ^Fforeign ^Sservices ^{as his Chief of Staff} ~~chief of staff~~ where I took care of the director general and staffed him in any way that he needed in terms of paper and travel and all those things that a chief of staff would do.

From there, after 1 year, I shifted to work for Deputy Secretary Higginbottom where I've been a special assistant for the last year up until 2 weeks ago, and I was focused primarily on similar issues regarding human resources mainly, and diversity issues as well.

And then I shifted over to -- back to the Near Eastern Affairs and South Central Asian Affairs executive office where I'm

now post management officer for Afghanistan.

Q And how long have you been with back with NEA?

A I'm actually in SCA. It's a combined office, Near Eastern Affairs and South Central Affairs, but I'm obviously working on South Central Asian Affairs because of Afghanistan, but I joined there 10th of July.

Q Okay. When you were in NEA, and as I understand it, it was NEA/EX?

A NEA/SCA/EX is one office that covers two regional bureaus, but it's the central management function for those two bureaus.

Q Well, that was --

A You can just call it NEA/EX, that's fine.

Q All right. And you went there in 2010; is that correct?

A That is correct.

Q Okay. Tell us just in general how NEA and SCA and then NEA/EX were managed, constructed, what were the roles and responsibilities of various people in the various sections of that?

Mr. Evers. Do you understand the question?

Ms. [REDACTED] Those are very big organizations. Could you be more specific what you're -- how you're trying to -- what you're looking for from me?

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q We see a lot of acronyms, in reviewing documents, so we'll see NEA, we'll see NEA/FO, we'll see NEA/MAG, we'll see NEA/SCA/EX, and so we're trying to get an understanding from someone inside the State Department as who was -- what were each of those directorates, office, whatever you call them?

A Sure.

Q What were their duties and responsibilities and how you all fit together?

A I will speak to it from my understanding of the structure of the Department. The assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs reports to the under secretary for political affairs who reports to the secretary.

Q Uh-huh.

A The office of the assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs would be what would be referred to as NEA/FO, the front office.

Q Okay.

A And within that office, you have an assistant secretary and you have a principal deputy assistant secretary, which is essentially the number 2 person in the office, and then deputy assistant secretaries. Different bureaus have different numbers. I couldn't begin to tell you just how many NEA had at that time.

Q Before you go any further, I would like to introduce Congressman Westmoreland from Georgia.

██████████ from the State Department. Thank you for

joining us this morning.

Ms. [REDACTED]

Mr. Westmoreland. Oh, okay. Great. Thank you being here.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And I'm sorry --

A Sure.

Q We were talking about the very -- the overall arching structure of NEA as it existed in 2010, 2011, 2012 when you were there.

A Sure. Generally speaking, each deputy assistant secretary has certain offices for which they are responsible for oversight. So in this case, Ray Maxwell was the deputy assistant secretary who oversaw the Maghreb office, which is NEA/MAG, and then there were others who had different -- sometimes one, they had one office reporting to them, sometimes they had two or three, depending on how they broke up the portfolios.

The office of the executive director for Near Eastern Affairs and South Central Asian Affairs, which is ^{NEA-SCA/EX} NEA/SCA/EX, it is the management, the logistics function of those two bureaus, and as part of the consolidation in the Department, many bureaus have begun to have these consolidated EX's, so NEA-SCA have a joint EX. EUR, our European Affairs office has a joint EX with the international organizations office, and there is many, many others that have this kind of joint ^{EX} ~~effect~~.

So you have one executive director who has a DAS equivalent

role in both of the bureaus that they work with, so they don't --

Q And by DAS, you mean deputy assistant secretary?

A Deputy assistant secretary, yes.

Q Okay.

A They don't -- the executive director doesn't usually sit in a front office of an assistant secretary, but they have, generally speaking, a deputy assistant secretary role. Some bureaus treat it differently than others. Different assistant secretaries treat it differently than others, but in terms of function, they tend to go straight to the front office, and EX is -- and I will refer to as the executive office and EX director repeatedly through this. They generally will report to the principal deputy assistant secretary or work directly with the assistant secretary.

I do not know exactly how the reporting structure was for our executive director during the time that I served in that office. I know that he had interactions with the whole front office as matters arose.

Q Would that have been daily interaction, multiple times a day or --

A Yes.

Q -- were more formalized into weekly meetings or something like that?

A All of the above. There's -- it's part of the way that the Department works. There is interaction as matters arise.

There is no one way to say how to characterize the interactions.

Q Uh-huh.

A Within the executive director's office, there is the domestic general services, so the people who handle things like moving furniture, buying toner cartridges, and all that kind of stuff. They are the people who deal with domestic human resources. They are the people who deal with budget and finance for the Washington bureaus but also for -- they deal with the budgets of our overseas posts, and then there are the people who deal with human resources related to our overseas assignments, and then there are post management officers who have broken up the world based on the region that they are working.

So within my portfolio, when I joined the EX, I was the post management officer for North Africa. I had Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, and then in January of 2011, they added Egypt to my portfolio because the person who had been covering Egypt had left to go overseas and they had to spread the wealth, so her portfolio was split among many people.

Q Okay. And then that structure that you've just described changed in early 2011, as I understand, with the onslaught of the Arab Spring and you began focused solely on Libya; is that correct?

A So at the beginning of the Arab Spring, I dealt with the Tunisia evacuation, and at the time that I was dealing with the Tunisia evacuation, the other portions of my portfolio were

managed by other people.

When Tunisia started to normalize and we had sent our people back to Tunisia, I took my portfolio back. When Egypt evacuated, I shed everything but Egypt and focused on Egypt. And when Egypt -- normalize is not the right word. When Egypt began to reach kind of a steady state, then I started to take back aspects of my portfolio.

And then when Tripoli started to blow up, I moved back into the task force room for the third time and shut all my portfolios other than Libya, and other than some incidental interaction, never took anything back because the workload was such that I had to keep just Libya.

Q And do you recall approximately when that shift occurred when you were solely focused on Libya?

A It happened -- I mean, it wasn't like a distinct flip the switch kind of thing. In February, when Libya went into crisis, I was focused solely on Libya. I recall coming back to the office and taking on some of my ancillary duties from the other countries that I covered, but at some point over early summer I said I can't do anything but Libya. It's taking up all my time anyway. It's not fair to the other posts. We need to pass them back out.

Q Okay. Who all within, let's just say NEA/EX --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- were dealing with Libya issues besides you, and

particularly in the -- all of my questions will focus about the 2011, 2012 timeframe.

A Sure.

Q So just -- unless otherwise stated, that's the timeframe that I am focused on.

A Sure. There is myself, [REDACTED], who was the post management officer for Saudi Arabia who took on some duties related to Libya as well as to backstop me so that I had a backup, but also to -- she had some very discreet issues she worked on.

We had myself, [REDACTED]. The supervisory post management officer was [REDACTED], and she was our immediate supervisor, and so she was, as part of that, looped into many of our discussions.

Q Did she have other duties and responsibilities beyond Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A All of the rest of Near Eastern Affairs and South Central Asian Affairs other than Afghanistan and Iraq and Pakistan. There was a separate supervisory post management officer for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and another one for Iraq.

And then [REDACTED] reported to [REDACTED] who was the deputy executive director for Near Eastern Affairs.

Q And then was there a man by the name of [REDACTED] who was your director?

A [REDACTED] was the executive director, yes.

Q Okay. You said [REDACTED] had some discreet areas that she was handling in Libya. What were those discreet areas?

A She worked on the air bridge support when we went back into Tripoli and we were using a State Department plane to get our people in and out. She also worked on the contracting issues related to the life support services for both Benghazi and Tripoli. She didn't write the contracts, but she interacted with our contracting folks to make sure that their questions were being answered and they had the information that they needed.

Q Okay. And what type of contracts would there be?

A We had a contract for life support services, so food, cleaning, laundry, things of that nature.

Q Okay.

A Trash removal, all that kind of stuff.

Q And we'll get to this a little bit.

A Yes.

Q But with respect to Benghazi, that also included the local guard force?

A That was a separate contract. That is something that diplomatic security does completely separate from anything else.

Q Okay. You mentioned that you moved back into a task force room --

A Yes.

Q -- when the Embassy in Tripoli was, in my words, shutting down. There was -- I don't remember all the terminology,

but there is like an ordered departure -- or an authorized departure, ordered departure, and then suspended operations.

A Yes.

Q Do I have those terms correctly?

A Yes.

Q Correct and in the right order?

A Authorized departure and ordered departure, authorized departure does not always precede ordered departure, but you cannot go to authorized departure after ordered departure has been put into effect.

You could have a case where a post would only go on authorized departure, which essentially means that people who want to leave can leave and there is the mechanism for them to get out.

Ordered departure says all people under chief of mission authority who meet this criteria of the order must leave.

Q Okay. And then suspended operations, as I understand it, means closing up the embassy?

A Suspension of operations means that we have not broken our diplomatic relations. It means that we are removing our presence, at least temporarily, from post. So we acquired a protecting power when we left and things like that so that we could maintain those interactions.

Q Okay. And looping back in, you mentioned that you moved back into a task force room. Was this a physical structure?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Could you describe it for us, and you said for the third time you moved in?

A Yes. Our operations center on the 7th floor of the State Department is the communications center for the secretary's communications. Next door to the operations center is the crisis management support division, and that's where we house all of our task forces and our crisis response.

So in the case of a crisis, the executive secretary of the Department would declare this is a crisis that requires the task force, usually in consultation with the regional bureau and that kind of thing, and then the crisis management support folks will stand up the task force.

This rooms are maybe the size of this room, which is not -- it's not large. I know you can't put that in the transcript, but --

Q Say 15 by 30?

A I mean --

Q Thereabouts maybe?

A Some of the rooms are larger; some of the rooms are smaller. They generally have a very long conference table and they have a computer terminal at every desk, and in some cases there are computer terminals at desks around the edges as well.

When the task force is established, all communications relating to that issue move to the task force and so the task force manages the process. It's meant to take some level of

stress off of the offices that are handling the crisis because it shifted into a 24/7 environment and people are staffed on rotating shifts rather than say one person who is the sole person responsible for dealing with these issues.

And many times bureaus that have individuals who are not as busy with a crisis right at that moment in time will volunteer personnel to help staff it.

Q And did that happen with respect to Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you recall approximately when that happened?

A It was sometime in February.

Q Did it happen before or after Tripoli went into suspended operations?

A Oh, we -- much before that. I mean, much before. At least a couple of days before that. You can't get to that point of crisis in a post without having a task force stood up to deal with it.

Usually you're going -- it's very difficult to get to that point without a task force.

Q Now, my impression of a task force, having worked with them, is that you will bring in people from different areas of expertise, different subject matter --

A Yes.

Q -- experts, and you will co-locate them in one place to

handle --

A Exactly.

Q -- the crisis. Is that what you're describing for us?

A That is correct. We had people from our Consular Affairs Bureau who were looking at American citizen services, how do we help American citizens depart Libya. We had folks from our family liaison office who were helping to deal with inquiries from family members as to how they could leave post but also the folks who were back here in Washington who wanted to know about what was going on with their family members in Libya.

We had diplomatic security. We had overseas buildings operations. We had the folks in transportation management who dealt with chartering of aircraft and ferries to get our people out. We had people from the political military bureau. I mean, I'm sure there's a list somewhere that has all of that, but I wouldn't have that information offhand.

Q Okay. And were there representatives from other U.S. Government entities that might have interest in, or personnel in what was going on in Libya, particularly the Department of Defense, the CIA, or was it solely a intra-State Department task force?

A I honestly do not remember exactly everyone who was in the task force room at the time. When I was on a Egypt task force just a few weeks previous to that, we did have DOD people involved in the task force. I do not recall specifically in the case of

Libya.

Q And how long did this task force operate with respect to Libya?

A I don't have a specific length of time to give you. I can tell you it stood up as things started to heat up at post, and it was definitely fully operational through the suspension of operations and the removal of our people. At that point, I went on vacation. I was sent to Hawaii! ^{on personal travel}

Q You were sent to Hawaii?

A I was.

Q By the State Department?

A I was ordered by my boss to leave town and not be seen for 10 days, [REDACTED], and we went to Hawaii, so I don't know exactly --

Q [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED] I don't remember exactly when the task force disbanded. Many times, in these kind of cases, the task force doesn't just have a hard stop. It goes to -- it will go to no longer 24/7, and then they will go to a virtual task force, and then eventually they will disband.

Q Okay. And did that happen with respect to Libya? Well, let me ask this first. Did the 24/7 task force disband while you were in Hawaii?

A I have no idea.

Q When you came back, did you go to the task force

office?

A No. When I came back, I came back to my office.

Q Okay. And to your knowledge, was anyone reporting into the task force at that time?

A Not to my knowledge.

Q Okay. Would you have been a logical person to have been up in a task force if it was still operational?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did it devolve, for lack of a better word, into a virtual task force upon your return from your vacation?

A I do not recall it having devolved into a virtual task force at that time.

Q I would anticipate that -- and I'm just assuming, that there was still heightened scrutiny of what was going on in Libya at that time; is that correct?

A Again, I ended up shifting all of my responsibilities, other than Libya, to others so I could focus on Libya because the workload was very heavy.

Q All right. And at the time you came back, would this have been the end of March? Do you remember when your vacation was?

A It was mid-March.

Q You were back by mid-March?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. When you came back, were there groups that had

been assembled within the State Department that were addressing Libya-centric issues?

A My memory of the timeline of when various groups were formed is very fuzzy, given that it's been many years.

Q Uh-huh.

A There were many attempts to bring people together to discuss issues related to Libya, which is natural as any post in any country is going through a crisis, there will be those kind of meetings. Whether there was a formal mechanism or a formal group established, I am unaware.

Q Well then let me take a step back. With respect to Libya and any other country that you dealt with within NEA/EX, were there standing groups or committees that met on a, you know, monthly, weekly, daily basis that dealt with certain issues? I mean, were there standing meetings with respect to Libya or other countries that you dealt with within NEA?

A My memory tells me that most meetings were ad hoc based on issues at hand. You know, we had our standard staff meetings that NEA held on a weekly basis. I would attend the Maghreb office meetings. I cannot think of specific Libya-centric meetings that I attended at that period of time.

Q Okay. So the office of Maghreb had a standard weekly meeting?

A Yeah. I mean, most offices have a staff meeting, and that's what it was. I wasn't specific to Libya. It was just

their standard.

Q Everybody go around?

A Everybody go around the room, say what you're doing and --

Q What's hot in your area, what they needed to know?

A Uh-huh.

Q Okay. Another name that has come up in some of the documents that we've reviewed is an [REDACTED]. Was she in NEA/EX at the time you were there?

A No. [REDACTED] was in NEA/MAG.

Q Okay.

A She was one of the Libya desk officers. At the time, she may have been the sole Libya desk officer. At some point, there was more than one. I don't know when they added.

Q And what would be her duties and responsibilities, as you saw them?

A A country desk officer is focused on, for the most part, policy issues related to the country that they are responsible for and interacting across the Department and across the interagency on those issues. The post management officer is essentially the management logistics version of a desk officer but on the management issues as opposed to the foreign policy issues.

Q Give us some examples of what those foreign policy issues would be?

A Things having to do with setting up the protecting

power when we suspended operations, looking at what policy statements we might have the Secretary or the President make about what was going on in Libya, things of that nature.

When I was a desk officer for Tunisia, I was looking at human rights issues, I was looking at economic and trade development issues, things of that nature. It's really responding to the foreign policy side of things.

Q Okay. Did [REDACTED] ever come over to NEA/EX?

A Physically?

Q In a position there. For example, did she replace you when you left in June of 2012?

A No.

Q Okay. Who did replace you when you left in June of 2012?

A That's a very difficult question to answer. There was a temporary replacement when I left in 2012 by the name of [REDACTED]. He was a first tour officer. I do not know who took over that role come fall.

Q Okay. All right. As we talked before, I have a series of documents. The first one that I'm going to hand you is from April of 2012. It is a --

Mr. Evers. You mean 2011?

Ms. Jackson. No, 2012.

Mr. Evers. Oh, 2012. Sorry.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And actually -- and it is document number C05394419 for purposes of the record. I do not see that you're on this, but I believe -- but first of all, I'll have you review it and see if you are familiar with the issues that are discussed in there, and it's -- we can go off the record for a couple of minutes.

[Discussion off the record.]

Ms. Jackson. Let's go back on the record.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q While you were reviewing that, it's come to our attention that you may wish to clarify a prior answer that you gave?

A Yes. When you asked me specifically about if there were standing meetings, I was answering specific to the early April timeframe.

Q April of?

A Of 2011. And at that point, things were still very fluid and very response driven as opposed -- and reaction driven as opposed to planning driven. We evolved, and I cannot begin to tell you when we evolved, but we evolved eventually into twice daily phone calls with Benghazi when we went into Benghazi, and that eventually went to once a day and then maybe once or twice a week over the timeframe of my time in EX.

There were also other policy planning meetings that NEA/MAG

coordinated in concert with the Bureau of Conflict Stabilization and Operations. Those were not meetings that I was regularly involved in.

Q Okay. Well, I think your clarification took care of many of the questions I had regarding this document, and again, I had said before we started that we were going to use a lot of documents.

A Yes.

Q Because a lot was going on at that time, and we want to get the best view of what was happening.

A Uh-huh.

Q And on page 2 of exhibit 1, under the bullet, "Libya," they talk about the Libya weekly meeting schedule is as follows, that there was a meeting on Mondays administered by NEA/EX, on Wednesday it was something called, "The Tripoli policy and planning meeting hosted by NEA/MAG," and on Fridays was the interagency Libya planning meeting hosted by NEA/EX, and you've just described that it evolved over time where there were these more standing committees or regular meetings regarding Libya-centric issues; is that correct?

A Yes. And the specific Friday meeting that is referred to here is one that evolved from our planning for our return into Tripoli, and that continued as an ongoing interagency discussion of issues related to our presence in Tripoli.

Q Okay. And did you attend that Friday meeting?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

Mr. Evers. All of them? This particular Friday meeting, or I'm sorry, I just -- I want the record to be clear.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Let me ask this. Did you generally attend those Friday meetings when they occurred?

A That is correct. I generally attended the meetings. I cannot speak as to whether or not I was present at every meeting.

Q Yeah. So I'm just asking generally what was this interagency Libya planning meeting?

A It was meant to hammer out many of the issues related to establishing a new presence in Tripoli. We had begun our return to Tripoli in I think it was late September of 2011.

But in terms of setting up the facility, there were many questions that arose as arises any time you have an interagency presence at post regarding who pays for what, how we're going to acquire leases and things of that nature, and we were trying to have a deliberate planning process, and by pulling the various interagency members into the process, we could have a more fulsome discussion.

Q Okay. And what were some of those other agencies that would attend these Friday meetings? Maybe not on every time, but generally, what were the other agencies that would be represented from the interagency?

A I am reasonably certain that USAID was there frequently. We had some sporadic participation from DOD. I don't know just how many times they came. I need to check something with Austin.

Q Sure.

[Discussion off the record.]

Ms. [REDACTED] And we also had various partners of the IC who were present at the meeting?

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Would anyone from the White House or the national security staff attend?

A To my recollection, no.

Q Okay. The Wednesday meetings were something called, "The Tripoli Policy and Planning," and it says it's hosted by NEA/MAG. Did you attend those?

A No, ma'am.

Q Okay. Do you know generally what they were addressing in that meeting?

A My understanding, from the information that I gleaned just by osmosis, was that they were trying to identify policy priorities and things that we would be focussing on from a foreign policy standpoint.

I was focused on needing to know what they wanted to accomplish so that my team and I could figure out what support platform we needed to establish to make sure that that could

happen.

Q Okay. So would you -- would there be write-ups or synopsis or meeting notes of these meetings that would be -- that you would review to know, or was it more informal of a discussions or both?

A What we were looking for that came out of the meeting was eventual policy determinations in the form of action memos to the assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs that would say this is the priority.

Q So, for example, like we need more USAID people in Tripoli, therefore, you would need to know whether you have space available?

A It wouldn't get to that level of granularity. It would say AID needs to focus on the humanitarian crisis of X, and then we would work with AID -- in my office in EX, we would work with AID to determine how many people that would mean and then what the support platform would mean for those people. Does that make sense?

Q Yes.

A Good.

Q And then just the last regular meeting that is identified in here is a Monday conference call --

A Yes.

Q -- with Tripoli, Benghazi administered by NEA/EX. Would you be a part of those calls?

A Yes.

Q And by this time in April of 2012, they were weekly calls, or at least at this time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did that ebb and flow over time, depending on the nature of the situation on ground in Libya?

A Yes. I mean, early on as we went into Benghazi and then went into Tripoli, there were few logistics people on the ground, and there was much need to work through many issues, so we had many meetings. We found that doing this by conference call and pulling in the people from the Department who needed to be involved in the discussion as well as the folks at post made the most sense.

We kind of followed a standard format, went through it on a regular basis, and as those two posts became more sufficient and able to handle a lot of those issues on their own, we didn't need as much coordination, and it became more of an ad hoc reactive discussion as opposed to a we are going to have our regular meeting, we are going to talk through all these issues at the meeting.

Q Okay. You said you had sort of a regular list of things. Was it like a checklist you needed to go through or were there agendas for the meeting?

A The agendas, no. I wouldn't say there were specific agendas, but we would talk through facilities, we would talk

through security, we would talk through budget, anything that was going on at the time, and we kind of -- I can't tell you exactly what the order was at this time, but it got to point where I just kind of knew this was the order, okay, this is now when DS is going to talk about their portion, this is when we are going to talk about this, that kind of thing, but I don't recall having specific agendas established.

Q Now, for --

Mr. Westmoreland. Sharon, could I?

Ms. Jackson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Going back to this, [REDACTED]. The last -- on the last page, mine's got a line through it, so it's a little bit -- but it says, "The main OBO project to upgrade the interim embassy residential compound," that -- was that in Tripoli or --

Ms. [REDACTED] Yes, sir, it was Tripoli.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q For these conference calls that occurred with Tripoli and Benghazi, would the various persons from Main State, State Department headquarters such as DS or CSO or other entities that might be involved, would you all be physically in one room or would you be on a conference call?

A It depended on the day, honestly. If folks from diplomatic security happened to be in the building when the call was happening at Main State, we would invite them to come up and we would do it in a smaller room but on speaker phone. But if

they were over in Roslyn, they would have dialed in. Overseas building operations generally dialed in from Roslyn as opposed to being physically present.

The conference calls that my office hosted were really focused on the management side of things, logistic side of things. CSO generally would not have been -- to my memory, I don't recall CSO being a part, and the Maghreb office, I don't recall being a regular part of the discussion either. They may have been present at some calls, but I don't recall exactly.

Q Once the Arab Spring occurred and Embassy Tripoli went into suspended operations, did the reporting or decisionmaking change in any way due to that emergency?

Mr. Evers. Do you understand the question?

Ms. [REDACTED] I'm not sure I understand what you're asking.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Let me ask this. Prior to the Arab Spring, who was authorized to make decisions about, for example, who could travel in and out of Tripoli?

A Prior to the crisis --

Q Uh-huh.

A Tripoli was a normally operating embassy. Chief of mission would approve the electronic country clearance process. I mean, it's delegated from the chief of mission, but it would be done at post. They would determine who could come in to visit.

Q Okay. And who made that decision if there wasn't a

post in a particular country?

A Whenever an embassy goes on authorized or ordered departure or eventually -- suspended operations is not a same status like ordered or authorized departures. Suspended operations is just an explanation that there is no one present at post, if that makes sense.

But when a post is in -- definitely in ordered departure status and there needs to be travel in and out, it's usually a discussion between the under secretary for management and post if the chief of mission is still at post. As to who would have that authority, usually it stays with the under secretary for management to determine who's allowed to go in and out of post.

Q Okay. And that was for countries other than Libya?

A Yes.

Q What other countries have you seen that occur?

A Egypt, Yemen. I'm sure at some point Lebanon, for example, as well.

Q Okay. It's my understanding that when -- when the U.S. State Department personnel were removed from Tripoli, that at Main State you had something that was called "Tripoli In Exile" or "Embassy Tripoli in Exile," or something like that. Can you explain what that was?

A When our team was evacuated from post, the expectation is that all employees of the State Department will continue to work when they leave post. They are not on vacation. So they all

came back to Washington.

In evacuations where some of the embassy remains and some of the embassy leaves, it's very easy to absorb those individuals into the regional bureau usually supporting the desk that deals with those issues.

In this particular case, because all of Tripoli had left, it made most sense to keep them all together and have them all work as -- continue to work as a unit, and that lasted for the duration of the order of departure. Once --

Q So from the end of February to September?

A Six months. One hundred eighty days is the maximum length, according to the foreign affairs manual, of an ordered departure.

Q Okay. What happens after that? You close the post?

A It depends. That's kind of the standard State Department answer. If this had been a different type of evacuation, like the Egypt evacuation, people remained at post. At the end of 6 months, if the security situation is not sufficient to permit the return of those who had been evacuated, the post becomes an unaccompanied post. So family members can no longer be at post, employees would be -- there would be a -- generally an evaluation of whether or not the employees who had been evacuated needed to be returned to post or whether those positions needed to be eliminated, because at the end of that 6-month period, the decision is made as to what the footprint is

going to look like moving forward.

In Tripoli's case, because we had suspended operations and there was no one present at post, we had to look at it and make the determination, well, the security situation does not permit returning to post, the evacuation status can no longer continue, what are we going to do.

And the bureaucratic process of what to do with those positions became a question because there is a desire not to continue to spend money on positions that are not going to be resident at post, and so we had to figure out how to manage that transition.

Q Okay. So the Tripoli personnel came back to Main State for that 180-day period; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And they were -- were they put in a room all by themselves? Did they -- how did they continue to work on Libya-centric issues while they were not in Tripoli?

A There was a mixture. A couple of folks I recall being sitting in MAG on the desk, but a lot of them sat over on Navy Hill, which is an annex facility very close to the State Department, and they were all physically co-located together. We called it Tripoli on the Potomac.

Q And what did they get to do on a day-to-day basis?

A The management folks, and that's who I was primarily focused on dealing with, they were looking at how do we continue

to pay our local staff who were on the ground. There were still bills that had to be paid, there were still employee evaluations that had to be written, so they were working through a lot of those issues.

Our general services officer was looking at how we could ship people's personal effects out once the security situation resolved enough that we could actually have movers go into people's houses and box stuff up so it could be shipped out, things like that.

Q What about the foreign service officers such as the Ambassador, the deputy chief of mission, were they physically located at Tripoli on the Potomac or were they at Main State?

A I don't recall.

Q Okay. You've described that when we have gone out of the country through an ordered departure, that the under secretary for management will take over the decisionmaking regarding that country. Does that --

A Regarding the arrivals and departures of individuals going in and out of the country.

Q Okay. Does the under secretary for management take over other decisions?

A Could you be more specific?

Q You know what, I'll just reserve that, and I've got a series of examples that we can go through.

A Sure.

Q Does NEA/EX's relationship with the under secretary for

management's office change? Does it become more robust under circumstances in which there's an ordered departure?

A I do not -- let me think about how I want to say this. It would not be limited to posts in a ordered departure status. If there were a -- when there was a crisis, there would be interactions with the under secretary for management on those issues.

And a crisis could be anything from the locally employed staff in Morocco wanting to have the U.S. Government take their income taxes out and pay them directly to the Moroccan government, as much as it was our people are under attack, you know, so there were many different issues through which we would interact with the under secretary's office.

Q Okay. And when those crisis issues arose, the interactions would be more robust or just more?

Mr. Evers. Is there a difference?

Ms. [REDACTED] Yeah, I'm not sure that there's really a difference?

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. When there is a crisis situation, is it the under secretary for management's office that is the decisionmaker, becomes the decision maker?

A The under secretary for management's office is frequently the decision maker on management issues, especially crosscutting management issues that hit many of the bureaus that

he oversees.

Q All right. I want to turn now to the spring of 2011 when Chris Stevens was sent into Benghazi as the Envoy, and let me ask this. Prior to your trip to Hawaii, I love that marker, were you aware that Mr. Stevens was going to be sent in as the Envoy?

A No, ma'am.

Q Okay. Were you aware when you returned?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. Was your understanding that that decision had been made while you were gone?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you know who made that decision?

A No.

Q Okay. What did you learn upon your return?

A That we had to figure out the logistics of how to get a Special Representative into Benghazi, and we had to figure out what that would entail, everything from IT, to transportation, to lodging, to everything.

Q Where was Mr. Stevens physically located when you started undertaking the logistics?

A He was somewhere in the T bureau family. I don't know which -- which assistant secretary he was in, but he was somewhere over in that world.

Q And T is training?

A No, T is arms control and disarmament.

Q How did they get the letter "T"?

A I have no idea.

Q Okay. Was he physically in the United States?

A I believe so.

Q Okay.

A I saw him at some point. I don't know when. When I saw him, I didn't know if he had come from somewhere.

Q Okay. Do you know how and why he was selected?

A No.

Q Were you aware that he had gone to Paris to meet with the Secretary and Mr. Jibril from the Transitional National Council?

A No.

Q Or what would become the Transitional National Council?

A No.

Q Okay. So you played no role in the logistics of that trip?

A No.

Q Okay. You stated that you were not aware of why he was selected or when he was selected. Who would know that?

A I really have no idea. I don't know where the choice came from. I was vaguely aware that he had had some previous role in Libya. I was just told that he was going, and I needed to figure out how to get him there.

Q So you were not privy to any of the conversations or

learned about any of the conversations as to how high up in the department or interagency that that decision was made?

A Not to my memory.

Q Okay. Were you ever told that the White House wants someone to go to Benghazi?

A Not to my memory.

Q Do you recall were there any deputy committee meetings or IPC or sub-IPC meetings regarding going into Benghazi?

A Honestly, I don't have specific recollection. My understanding of the way the interagency works, there likely were. As a post management officer, I would not have had much dealing with those other than to be asked to provide specific logistics information that would have been included in something that the policy office would have been dealing with.

Q That was going to be my followup question, and did you have to prepare any briefing papers or provide any information for any such meetings?

A They would have asked us, you know, what are you working on, and they might have added some of that information into say an annotated agenda, but it's not something that we would have specifically drafted.

Q Were you privy or part of any conversations on what were the policy reasons for going into Benghazi at that time?

A There may have been some general discussions, but it was not something that I was deeply briefed in.

Q Do you recall what those were?

A There was a desire to have interaction with the opposition that was rising to counter Qadhafi, and there was some belief that they could potentially become the new government, and it made sense to have some existing relationship with them.

Q Okay. So when you came back in mid-March, you were aware that Envoy Stevens was -- Mr. Stevens was going over as the Special Representative or the Envoy; is that correct?

A I don't know if we had the title of that at the time. I was told that Chris Stevens needed to go to Benghazi.

Q Is "Special Representative" a specialized title within the State Department or "Envoy"? Does it take a like formal memo to make him that?

A I am unaware of the bureaucratic logistics related to determination of that title.

Q Okay. What was your understanding as to the length of his initial trip to Benghazi?

A We had kind of mental markers along the way. I think the initial determination was for perhaps 30 days is my memory, but we were also looking at, you know, the first 2 days of whether or not he could stay and then whether or not he could be there a week and that kind of thing, but my understanding was it was about 30 days was where we were looking at.

Q Okay. What do you recall about when he went in, did he try and get in before he actually went in? Were there security

concerns that prevented his going into Benghazi early on? What can you tell us about that, up until the day he actually arrived?

A There were a lot of moving pieces. Can you be a bit more specific?

Q Well, can you describe what some of those moving pieces were? That's exactly what I was trying to get at.

A As I mentioned before, we were looking at the logistics of how to physically get him in there. Flights were not flying. We couldn't charter a plane because no charter company could get ~~more~~^{war} risk insurance, for example. We looked at the potential for driving in. We looked at the boat situation. We looked at many different options for how to physically get the team in.

We also looked at money, how we were going to get him money. I recall that he was going to Europe to have various meetings before going into Benghazi. We had to move him a couple of different times to get him to the same place where we ended up having him get on I think it was a ferry or freighter or something like that that USAID ended up chartering to get him and the security and the armored vehicles into Benghazi.

Q Do you recall where everybody was located before they got on that freighter or ferry?

A I feel like it was probably Malta or Greece or somewhere like that, but I don't have a specific recollection of the location. There were a lot of different things going on.

Q Okay. Yes, getting armored vehicles to a location, he

had a security detail, did he not?

A There were security who were working to protect him. I wouldn't necessarily call them a security detail.

Q What's the difference?

A When I hear the term "security detail," I think of the people who were assigned to protect the Secretary. It's a very discreet thing that's really about personal protection. The security individuals who went with him were looking overall at security of the group and how that was handled, so it was a security team, but I wouldn't necessarily say it was a detail -- security detail class that was only necessarily security for him.

Q Okay. And so they were -- his security team then was charged with assessing the security in the country or at least in Benghazi?

A They were looking at -- and DS would have the specifics about what they were charged with. My understanding was they were looking at how to secure our presence in Benghazi.

Q Okay. So --

A And they were assessing whether or not, from a security standpoint, it was doable.

Q Who was make -- who was the day-to-day decisionmaker regarding the logistics of getting Envoy Stevens and his team into Benghazi?

A In what sense?

Q As to when he would actually go in, what day he would

go in, did you have to write action memos to [REDACTED] or other people to get the permission to use the freighter or the ferry?

A We likely did have to write action memos because this is a bureaucracy. You have to memo everything. There was a lot of logistics involved in negotiating with AID, the use of the freighter and what that meant and what their presence would look like and those kind of things. It is ^{entirely} ~~entirely~~ likely we had to do memos regarding that.

It would make sense that those memos would go to the under secretary for management. I don't recall exactly who signed what. Sometimes some things would go to the assistant secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, sometimes things would go to the under secretary for management. It depended on the content of the individual thing that needed to be papered.

Q Do you recall the there was an overall, for lack of a better term, like Benghazi mission plan for the initial foray into Benghazi?

A As a group, we were looking at what the operation would look like, how we could get in there, what we could do. There may have been various working documents as to how that worked. We may have memorialized that in a memo. I don't recall specifically, though.

Q Okay. If it had been memorialized into a document, where would that document reside these days?

A Likely in NEA, but again, I'm not sure. It depends on

who had the pen for said document.

Q Oh, I'm out of time. I'm out of time. For what -- we can go off the record because my hour is up.

[Recess.]

RPTR DEAN

EDTR ROSEN

[11:15 a.m.]

Mr. Kenny. Time is 11:25, we will go back on the record, Ms. [REDACTED], on behalf of the select committee, minority staff, I just want to thank you again for being here, and take a moment to reintroduce myself. My name is Peter Kenny, I am counsel with the minority staff. I am joined here by our chief counsel, Heather Sawyer. We, again, just want to thank you for your service, your continuing service to our country. And want to share that we understand that appearing before Congress can seem to be a daunting experience, so we want to work with you to make this process as straightforward and as simple as possible. So with that, again, thank you for your time.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. KENNY:

Q I would like to take a little bit of a step back, return to the discussion we were having at the beginning of the last hour about your role, your responsibilities as a post management officer, maybe walk through that a little bit again. You had mentioned that you became the post management officer for Libya in 2010; is that right?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall exactly when in that timeframe that you became the PMO?

A I am trying to think, it was June or July of that summer.

Q Okay.

A Unclear on exact dates, it was all a little -- it is 5 years ago now, so --

Q Okay. And in the last hour you described for us, and it was helpful, you characterized some of the responsibilities of a PMO. I think you described yourself as a logistics person.

A Yes.

Q I was wondering if you could just give us some examples, perhaps, with specific reference to Libya about what types of logistics you would work.

A The management world at the State Department really has to do with facilities, security, human resources, budget, procurement, vehicles, all of those things. And those are the things that I was watching. Security no longer officially, at a mission overseas security no longer officially sits under the management officer at post. Security now reports directly to the deputy chief of mission and the Ambassador, but it is still something that we watch because it has an impact on resources, among other things, so we want to keep an eye on where things are. So in my role as a post management officer, I was -- I would watch these issues.

Q Okay.

A Yeah.

Q During the relevant time when you were post management officer, did security ever report into management? You described it changed at some point, and security now reports to the DCM and the chief of mission?

A This is something that evolved over many, many years at the Department. I don't know the exact time line of when it changed, but at some point over the last decade --

Q Okay.

A -- it has moved. It was not a sudden change.

Q Okay.

A Yeah.

Q Thank you, that is helpful.

Ms. Sawyer. And had that change already taken place by the time you were --

Ms. [REDACTED] Yes, yeah. It changed, it may have been even further back than a decade of time ago. When I first worked in an embassy in 1995, the security office was under the management office. By the time I went back overseas in 2005, security was separate and reporting a different change. I don't know exactly what that change took place.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q You said security office?

A The RSO.

Q The RSO shop. And so, at some point in time, the RSO shop was within the management cone, but then that was broken out

and placed under the Bureau for Diplomatic Security; is that accurate?

A Diplomatic Security has always overseen security functions to my awareness. This was just within a structure at embassies overseas. My recollection is it may have had something to do with the embassy bombings in 1998, but I am not --

Q Okay. But at the time you assumed your position in June or July of 2010, did you have any direct responsibilities for security, security posture, security resources at post?

A No.

Q Thank you. That is helpful. I think it would just be helpful to revisit the role of EX within the regional bureaus. You described a few moments ago some of the duties, some of the tasks that you would have performed as a post management officer. We talked about the structure of ^{NEA-SCA/EX}~~NEA/SCA/EX~~ in the last hour and some of the different offices there.

A Uh-huh.

Q I think it would be helpful just to hear what the role of EX, how you viewed the role of EX within the regional bureaus. What was their role in supporting the bureaus?

A The EX is the management arm of the regional bureaus. Just like at an embassy, you have a management section, within a regional bureau, the EX would be the equivalent of the management section, and it would oversee all the same kind of functions as it relates to the posts overseas as well as to those functions that

are necessary within the Washington context.

Q Okay. And I apologize, I know some of these questions appear elementary or fundamental, but for those of us outside the State Department, when you refer to, say, the management cone, I think it is just helpful for us to get a better appreciation of what that means or what that entails. So thank you, that is helpful.

And you discussed the reporting structure within your office, how you reported up through a supervisory post management officer, and then to a deputy director and on to an executive director; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Who, at that time, did the executive director report to?

A I believe he reported to the principal deputy assistant secretary, but I am not 100 percent on that.

Q Okay.

A I wouldn't have had reason to specifically know his direct reporting chain.

Q Sure. And, again, just to your understanding and your recollection, because of the unique structure of the EX was consolidated, would he have reported to a PDAS in one bureau as a PDAS in another bureau?

A Yes.

Q So he would have had two reporting structures?

A Uh-huh.

Q In carrying out your duties as a PMO, would you have occasion to interact with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security?

A Yes.

Q Okay. With respect to Libya, did you have a primary contact in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security?

A Yes.

Q Who was that?

A [REDACTED]

Q And what was his role?

A He essentially was my counterpart in the EX side. We both filled action officer roles, and he was the DS desk officer for better -- want of a better word for several countries within the region, one of which was Libya.

Q Okay. And do you recall at all anything about his reporting structure or where he sat and what his position title may have been?

A He was in DS/IP/NEA. When I first came into the position, I know his division director was [REDACTED] and I think [REDACTED] was maybe the deputy. And then when [REDACTED] retired, [REDACTED] took over that role. And then [REDACTED] retired, and then I think [REDACTED] came in at that point, but there may have been somebody in between there.

Q Okay. Do you roughly recall the dates that those transitions may have taken place?

A No.

Q No?

A No.

Q Okay. We may revisit this again at a later point, but would just like to ask now at a general level, how would you characterize that working relationship with [REDACTED] in DS/IP/NEA?

A I had a very, very good working relationship with [REDACTED] specifically, but also with his DS/IP/NEA office.

Q Okay. Did you find that he was generally helpful to you and EX?

A Very helpful.

Q Okay. I would like to ask -- this question may have been posed to you before, but in a slightly different way, what is NEA/SCA/EX's role with respect to providing security resources for posts around the world?

A DS has primary responsibility for security and providing security resources around the world. The role of NEA/SCA/EX -- let me take a step back. As a post management officer, picture a funnel with cones at both ends. You have got information coming from post, and information coming from Washington. Basically, what I heard from post, I would then funnel out to the Washington fundamentals and vice versa. So when post had been -- had concerns or issues that they wanted to make sure were addressed, they would generally take it back to the

regional bureau and ask the regional bureau to reach out to the relevant functional bureaus. That meant working with the overseas building operations folks, the administration bureau, the Diplomatic Security Bureau, the Consular Affairs Bureau, any number of bureaus on those issues.

Q Okay.

A So carrying water for post and on behalf of post would be how ~~NEA/SCA/EX~~ ^{NEA-SCA/EX} would be interacting with DS on security issues.

Q Okay. The funnel that you described of information you would be received from post, who would you primarily be interacting with at post?

A I interacted with everyone from the deputy chief of mission, the management officer, the financial management officer, the human resources officer, the general services officer, the information management officer. Everyone within the management section, the deputy chief of mission and the Ambassador when the situation required it.

Q Okay. And during this period, was it your understanding that the diplomatic security staff at post in the RSO shop would have had their own reporting structure to feed information back to Main State?

A Could you be specific about the period you are discussing?

Q So from December 2011 through September 2012, would the RSO have been able to report or had the ability to report

information back to its chain of command in D.C.?

A My understanding is yes.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Can I ask -- I think it is clear but I want to make it perfectly clear in your explanation. With regard to all the individuals in that funnel that you would hear from on the ground at post?

A Uh-huh, right.

Q So DCM, is it MO, FMO, HRO, GSO?

A I also heard from the RSO, so yes.

Q And the RSO. With regard to whatever the discreet information they were passing on, or requests they might be making, they were the ones making the actual substantive determination as to what they were requesting?

A Yes.

Q And you were just then passing that information. So you weren't in a role, just so we understand it, of actually making the substantive determination as to what they were requesting?

A No. What I did was I could sometimes help translate for them the Washington context for things. And I could help translate what they were looking for into something that Washington could understand. So facilitator kind of role was the primary function.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Can you elaborate a little bit on that? So, for instance, people in the field, would there sometimes be difficulty in translating or communicating their needs back to Washington?

A I am going to give a non Benghazi example here just to make it a bit easier to comprehend. One of the issues that we had in Tripoli prior to the Arab Spring was that when we reestablished relationships with the Libyan government, they declared a cemetery in Tripoli as U.S. diplomatic property. This cemetery was a Protestant cemetery in which five U.S. servicemembers are buried who died during the Barbary wars, as well as former consul generals and other U.S. diplomats, but there were also British diplomats and Dutch diplomats, all sorts of things, buried in this very small cemetery that is maybe 10 foot by 10 foot, 10 foot by 15 foot, it is a very small cemetery.

Post knew that there needed to be some way to care for this facility, but they couldn't figure out how to do it based on the budget that they had and the resources that they had and the personnel that they had because it didn't fit neatly into the definitions of things that the State Department handles. The State Department doesn't do cemeteries. So they came to me and they said can you help us figure out what to do with the cemetery? So then I started reaching out to overseas building operations, the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and others to try to talk through what we were going to do with this cemetery.

Q Uh-huh.

A And so post wouldn't have to figure out exactly who to talk to to try to make this work. But when the deputy chief of mission came back to Washington for consultation, I teed up meetings for her that I thought would be useful for her to be payable to make the case for post needing those resources to take care of the cemetery. So that is just one example, but that is kind of I think the best way to describe my role.

Q Thank you. That is helpful. So would you describe yourself professionally as a professional problem solver?

A That is what most management officers are, yes.

Q Okay. And again, I will ask a few more specific questions to flesh this out, I appreciate your patience and your indulgence in this. Does ^{NEA-SCA/EX}~~NEA/SCA/EX~~ have any specialized knowledge or expertise when it comes to securing, inspecting people in facilities overseas at post?

A I am not sure I am understanding exactly what you are asking.

Q Does the executive office have specialized individuals with security experience, for instance, who have knowledge, expertise, when it comes to securing facilities overseas?

A The Bureau of Diplomatic Security has the responsibility and the expertise to determine security for our overseas missions.

Q Okay. So does -- again, I will ask it a slightly

different way, but does NEA/SCA/EX have any direct responsibility for determining the appropriate security posture at overseas posts?

A No.

Q Who in the Department has that responsibility?

A The Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Under Secretary for Management.

Q Does ~~NEA/SCA/EX~~^{NEA-SCA/EX} have any direct responsibility for providing physical security upgrades at overseas posts?

A No.

Q And who in the Department has that responsibility?

A The Office of Overseas Buildings Operations in conjunction with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

Q Okay. Does ~~NEA/SCA/EX~~^{NEA-SCA/EX} have any direct responsibility for providing diplomatic security staffing in overseas posts?

A No.

Q Okay. Who within the Department has that responsibility?

A The Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

Q So what we would like to do at this point, we will also introduce a series of documents to help aid our discussion. We are going to fast forward, we spent quite a bit of the last hour talking about April 2011 and the decision to insert the special envoy and the establishment of that mission. What I would like to do is fast forward to the November, December, 2011 time period.

A Okay.

Q And focus on a key decision point at the end of 2011, and at that time, the Department decided to extend the Special Mission presence through 2012. Do you recall that?

A Yes.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q At this point, I will mark as exhibit 2 an action memo for Under Secretary Kennedy, dated December 27, 2011, from NEA Jeffrey Feltman, with the subject, quote, "Future of operations in Benghazi, Libya." The document number is C05261557. I will just provide you a moment to take a look at that document.

The bottom of page 3, you will see a reference to an attachment, it says tab Benghazi proposal. What I'd like to do, I would like to enter into the record what will be exhibit No. 3.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q This is a set of documents discussing facility proposals in Benghazi, the document number for this particular document is C05391931. For our purposes here, I am going to be primarily referring to the first two pages of the set of documents.

A Just glancing through it to make sure.

Q Ready?

A Yes.

Q I will just begin by asking do you recall both of these documents, exhibit 2 and 3.

A Yes.

Q I mentioned just a moment ago that Benghazi -- exhibit 2 included as an attachment the Benghazi proposal, does exhibit 3 appear to be that attachment?

A Roughly, yes, but without seeing them connected, I am not 100 percent certain.

Q Okay. That is helpful. But it appears to be substantially similar --

A Yes.

Q -- to what you recollect what is the Benghazi proposal? Okay. Return to exhibit 2, we will come back to exhibit 3 in a moment. Just to take a step back, this is an action memo, and there was a discussion in the last hour about action memos within the Department. I think at this point, it would be helpful for us to understand just what this action memo is, and what it accomplished if you could walk us through that, that would be helpful.

A An action memo such as this, its purpose is to establish the policy priority, that this is what we are going to be doing, and this is what we -- we need to make it happen. So this memo says that the presence is approved, and that some of

these issues were dealt with to deal with the change in the presence.

Without specific budgets dedicated to these facilities and to this process, there needed to be some sort of mandate to declare this is what we are doing, so that then, the relevant functional bureaus and regional bureau could then say, hey, we have this approval -- I am waving my document -- we have this approval, we need to find money to make this happen.

Q Okay.

A And so that is why this would have been drafted.

Q And why would it be important to have a memo like this that seeks the authority of the Under Secretary of Management? Or would it have been helpful to have his imprimatur on a decision such as this?

A The decision to remain open in Benghazi affected many, many parts of the organization, not just Near Eastern Affairs. It affected our leases for our facilities which is something run and paid for by overseas building operations, it affected our security footprint, it affected vehicles, it affected many different aspects of that. All of the functional bureaus that dealt with these issues, or most of the functional bureaus that dealt with these issues, fell under the umbrella of the Under Secretary for Management. Whenever you have crosscutting issues such as this, it makes sense to have the person who oversees those bureaus be the one to approve it from a bureaucratic standpoint.

Q Okay, okay. I think that makes sense. Then, if your notice comes from NEA, that is the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, a document such as this would have been helpful in going to different offices within the M secretariat in order to obtain resources. Am I to understand that correctly?

A Yes, yes. If you see the second recommendation specifically references changes to the leases, and that was such that the overseas building operations folks could do what they needed to do with the leases.

Q Okay. And do you recall whether this memo was successful in persuading the Office of Building Operations to fulfill this mandate?

A I do not recall them being resistant to it. It was that, generally speaking, at a post that operates it under normal circumstances, a chief of mission would be the one who could approve a change of this nature in consultation with overseas building operations. There needed to be someone who could bless the decision to change the leases around. And it was to provide the imprimatur that OBO needed in order to make that happen.

Q Okay. I would like to return to what you described as the process that involves many entities, return to that in a moment. I would just like to ask you, did you have a role in this process?

A Many people had a role in this process.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

Q Okay. What was your role with respect to this action memo?

A I was the initial drafter of this document. To be clear, that means that I put together a straw man version of this document that then got circulated out to a wide range of people who provided very substantive edits to the document over the course of the clearance process. And I married all of those changes together to create the final version.

Q Okay. Just so I understand, it sounds like you put together a structure or a skeleton of a memo, and then the various relevant offices would have flushed out the substance, is that generally a fair characterization?

A I can't specifically to how I structured this memo. It has been a long time. What I can say in general is I likely would have laid out a document with words in it that said, you know, this is our general understanding of what this should be, and put it in front of the experts and said, am I right or am I completely out of it here? And then they would make the necessary edits. That is generally how the clearance process works across the Department when it works properly.

Q Okay. You mention at the outset of our discussion on this memo that one of the purposes was to establish the policy priorities. If you turn to the second page, there appears to be at least one paragraph that deals with the detail, some of that

policy justification.

A Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Q Was that something that you were involved in the drafting of?

A Likely not.

Q Okay. And who would have been responsible for that?

A I likely would have asked the folks in the Maghreb office to contribute. They may have consulted others within the Department in USAID on the content therein. Generally, I probably would have said insert justification here, or I would have said this is where we talk about X, or I might have even laid out a small paragraph. But I don't recall exactly what I did in this particular case.

Q Okay. In some of the justifications here, were these things you would have been privy to or heard prior to the drafting this memo? Were these things being discussed within ~~NEA/SCA/EX~~^{NEA-SCA/EX}, for instance?

A I probably would have heard about them at the regular staff meeting in NEA or in NEA/MAG, this is not something that EX generally would be discussing on a regular basis.

Q Do you have any specific conversation with a special envoy about this policy justification?

A Just as a clarification, I never refer to him as anything other than the special representative. A special envoy is a different beast all together. I know some people did call

him "envoy." Special representative is someone who is designated by the Secretary. It is a different beast.

I spoke with Chris Stevens on a regular basis. It is entirely possible that we had discussions about this. I can't tell you specifically.

Q I think we are trying to get a sense of how widely shared these views were within the Department at this time, or whether this was a policy justification that was new to people who would be reading this document.

A Uh-huh, no, I mean it addressed things that everyone was generally aware of.

Q Okay. Thank you, that is helpful.

We would like to turn now to exhibit 3, which --

A That is this one, not page 3, exhibit 3, okay.

Q -- you identified as substantially similar, if not the same as the Benghazi proposal that accompanied the action memo. Can you describe for us what this document is?

A This looks like something that I received in an email, likely from Benghazi. I am not sure who was sitting in the principal officer seat at the time. I think it may have been [REDACTED], but I didn't know for certain.

Q Okay.

A And it basically details what they think the options were in terms of continued presence from a logistics standpoint.

Q Okay. Do you recall whether this was something that

you had requested post in Benghazi to prepare for you?

A I don't recall.

Q Okay. And you mentioned that the principal officer at that time was [REDACTED] --

A Potentially. I am unclear exactly on the flow. There was a lot of transition out there, so --

Q Okay, that is certainly fine. Was it your understanding, though, I will just read the first sentence it reads, "[REDACTED], here is our best effort to spin out a few more detailed options for a contraction of our footprint here in Benghazi." And it goes on to discuss a series of issues here, but when they say "our," in this sentence with the understanding that this document was being prepared with the input of everybody who was at post at that time to include, for instance, the RSO.

A It is entirely likely, I can't speak specifically to who was involved in the decision-making process at post?

Q Again, this first sentence reference to a contraction of the footprint.

A Uh-huh.

Q And I apologize for jumping forward --

A No problem.

Q -- in time, but we by passed the opening of Embassy Tripoli. I was wondering if you could help set the frame for us so we can understand generally the context of what was happening at this time with the discussion about extending Benghazi the

Special Mission into 2012 with respect to what had happened in Tripoli, at that time, perhaps, the successful reopening of the embassy and the attempts to staff up there, were these things that were being balanced in your mind?

A As we shifted to a renewed presence in Tripoli, personnel who had been deployed in Benghazi, such as the consular/reporting officer extraordinaire were shifted to staff up Tripoli. And Benghazi started to naturally shrink in size because of a government and a presence in Tripoli.

As you could see in exhibit 2, there was a desire for a continued presence in Benghazi for political reasons in terms of interacting with the people of Benghazi, but also the government and business in Benghazi. And if you go back in history many, many moons ago, we had a consulate in Benghazi. So it is not completely unexpected that there might be some discussion of having presence in Benghazi, and that is my editorializing, which is an editorializing.

As we were standing up Tripoli, we needed to have a way to kind of define what Benghazi would look like, and exhibits 2 and 3 are talking about what that meant from a facility standpoint, from a footprint standpoint, so that is really what we were looking at.

Q Okay. So I hate to use a loaded term here, but was the action memo and the staffing pattern that they laid out there, and what was potentially being approached here for a contraction, was that part of an attempt to right-size the Special Mission of

Benghazi based on what was the identified policy to be there?

A I am not clear exactly on my time line of when Chris Stevens became the nominee for Ambassador, but at some point, Chris was no longer going back to Benghazi, he was shifting to Tripoli. We had a more robust presence in Libya overall. Right-sizing is probably a good term ~~that~~^{but} we didn't use that term at the time.

Q Okay.

A But we were looking at ways that the presence in Benghazi would be more logical, based on the requirements at hand.

Q Okay, that is helpful. Thank you.

We would like to spend a little bit more time with exhibit 3.

A Sure.

Q As you can see, the document, it appears to lay out four options for what the future of the Special Mission Benghazi will be. First, it discusses condensing to Villas B and C; second condensing to Villas A and B; third moving to Villa D, and fourth moving to Villa E. Beginning on the second page of the proposal discusses and lists advantages and disadvantages for each of the options.

A Uh-huh.

Q The first page provides a little more context, I would like to read just the beginning and the middle of the page there, it says, "Given the uncertain future for this place and the security environments evolution over time, we did our best to

consider all relevant factors. We had several key factors in mind when ranking our recommendations to include current and likely future security posture, security enhancements at all sites, including the possibility of requesting reasonable waivers, other costs all of them from security, to set up, to breakdown, to moving, upgrades, equipment/furniture and life services, general quality-of-life issues."

Of the four factors that are listed here that were evidently part of the recommendation that was sent to you, three of these refer, or include the term "security." Was it your sense that the drafters of this document that they took security seriously when evaluating the various proposals?

A Yes.

Q Did you have any reason to discount the drafters' opinion on security matters --

A No.

Q -- on the Special Mission?

Okay. Do you recall at this time whether post received any additional assistance from, say, security specialists who would come in to assist them during this time?

A Again, I am not overly clear on the time line. We had a series of TDY personnel come through to do various physical security upgrades at post -- in Benghazi. I am not sure exactly when they came through and in relation to this document.

Q Sure. So that is on the upgrade side.

A Uh-huh.

Q Sure. That is on the upgrade side. But prior to that, do you recall any persons from Tripoli or regional engineering security office whether they had traveled to Benghazi to help evaluate this, various proposals to help generate new ideas for --

A It is entirely likely that they went out. Again, in terms of time line, I don't recall exactly, but people were aware. This particular document references [REDACTED] coming to visit, he was the facility manager and he was looking at a lot of issues related to these things as well.

Q Okay. And was he a management officer in Tripoli?

A He was a facility maintenance specialist, a facility manager specialist, a foreign service specialist on long term TDY in Tripoli. I am not 100 percent certain if he was a full-time employee or a retiree or actually employed status, I don't recall that.

Q And would his responsibilities have included physical security or was he more focused on whether or not logistically a building would work in terms of size and --

A Primarily he would have been looking at size, water, electrical posts, occupational health and safety issues. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was a physical security specialist in the diplomatic security bureau. I believe he was a contractor. He traveled out to post on several occasions. I don't know the time line of when he was out there, but he was looking specifically at physical

security.

Q Okay. You turn to the second page, we start to get into the discussion of the various advantages and disadvantage. I would like to direct your attention to the top which is option 1 for Villas B and C. Under advantages, it states the following about Villas B and C, quote, "Best option from a security perspective multiple ingress/egress, that's footprint and setback of the available options, a combination for ~~the~~^{TNC} guards, reasonable upgrades will help harden." Do you see that?

A Yes, I do.

Q Do you know how the drafters of this document arrived at that determination?

A No.

Q But again, did you have any reason to doubt the expertise of the person who advised or help draft this document when they made a recommendation such as that?

A No.

Q Now, if you turn back to page 1, at the bottom, you will see that it states, "Weighing all these things, our rank order preferences for the new home are as follows: Number one, condense down into Villas B and C."

A Uh-huh.

Q And then it lists the other options --

A Right.

Q -- in their respective order. Just to connect this

document, this proposal back to the action memo that went to the Under Secretary, is this recommendation here, is that the same as the recommendation that was included in the action memo to the Under Secretary for Management?

A From what I am seeing, it looks like it is the same.

Q Do you know whether the drafters of this document, whether this recommendation helped inform the recommendation that was included in the action memo?

A It is likely that it did.

Q Okay. Just real briefly, I would like to touch on this, one of the options that is discussed here is a move to a facility referred to as Villa D.

A Uh-huh.

Q And we understand at some point that may have been a facility that was under serious consideration by the Department. Do you recall those discussions?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall the advantages, disadvantages of the proposal to move to Villa D?

A It would be my preference to continue this discussion in a classified setting.

Q Just to close this out, if I may, if you are uncomfortable, that is fine, we can decide how to proceed, but this document does discuss the Villa D option?

A Yes.

Q And if I could just turn your attention to the fourth page, it lists out some of the disadvantages and the fourth bullet from the top reads, "Lowest quality of life and likely the least secure among the four options, even with all the requested upgrades."

A Yes.

Q To the extent you feel comfortable, can you help us understand, was this one of the reasons why Villa D was not selected?

A Yes. My recollection is that when [REDACTED] went and visited Benghazi, he went and looked at Villa D, specifically, and determined that the occupational safety and health aspects that would need to be addressed in order to make it habitable essentially ruled it out.

Q Okay. That is helpful, thank you.

Just to now step back, again, you are a post management officer, I would like to ask just based on your experience in this process, and perhaps in other posts, what was your understanding of how easy or difficult it was for the U.S. Government to find suitable properties in Benghazi specifically that would meet the U.S. Government's needs?

A It was very difficult to find properties in Benghazi, had many phone calls with the folks who were looking for properties in Benghazi when they were on the ground there, as well as when they were looking from here, talking to folks at post.

Finding a place that met our security needs, where the rent was not completely outrageous due to the fact that we were in a war zone, that had required ingress and egress that met what security wanted, and that had sufficient clarity on title ownership of the property, such that we felt confident to lease it were all significant issues that had to be overcome in order to identify properties.

Q And was the title issue, had that come up before in discussions about properties in Benghazi?

A Yes. There had been a previous property that we had come very close to signing the lease on. We had given permission to sign the lease, and then we discovered there was quite a bit of murkiness about the title, that the original ^{owner} ~~owner~~ had had -- the property had been seized from the original owner by Qadhafi, and then Qadhafi had either gifted it or sold it at a low price to the current owner who was the one stating they would lease to us, but there was some question as to whether or not it could later come up as a legal issue that could theoretically put us out of the property. And so we ended up not going with that property because of that issue.

Q Thank you. In discussing some of the difficulties in locating a suitable property, you had mentioned the ingress and egress requirements that were identified by the security professionals. And I would just like to ask throughout the process of this selection, were the security professionals

involved in either evaluation in consideration whether this property was suitable for specifically those requirements?

A Yes.

Q I would like to return just to our discussion earlier where we talked about the Under Secretary for Management and the various offices that reside under the Under Secretary, you had indicated that this memo implicated some of those office's interests. I would just like to talk about when putting together a memo like this, how is it that you go about obtaining the various approvals of those offices? Is there an interdepartmental process through which you work that process or those clearances?

A The clearance process in the State Department is one of the most convoluted and painful things on the planet. It can take a very long time, and I remember this particular memo took many weeks to clear, because there were so many different pieces to the puzzle. In general, one office has to have the pen because you can't have multiple drafting offices, it makes it too complicated. One office starts, and then you send it out to people at your level to get input on the document. Some offices can't approve laterally or clear laterally, so they then push it up their chain of command until they reach a sufficient level that that particular bureau feels comfortable giving their clearance on the document.

Q Okay.

A So some bureaus, you move it laterally for comment and

then it goes up before it comes back down -- it goes up and over for approval.

Q In this instance, were you the driver of, so to speak, of the clearance process for this action memo?

A Yes. Others may have assisted, but yes. If I wrote it, I likely pushed it through.

Q So unfortunately, exhibit 2, which we have been speaking about, is a three-page document and it doesn't appear to have a clearance page with it. What I would like to do at this point is introduce exhibit 4.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q It appears to be the same action memo for Under Secretary Kennedy, the subject "Future of operations in Benghazi, Libya," and there is no document I.D. to this document, this was a document that was part of a public disclosure of internal State Department documents in October of 2012. I would just like to direct your attention to the last page there.

A Yes.

Q Does this last page appear to be the clearance of page for the December 27, 2011 action memo to Under Secretary Kennedy to extend the Special Mission into 2012?

A Yes. If you look at page 1 of exhibit 4, the tracking number at the top, the 201123787, that is a tracking number

assigned by the line at the Department when you are entering something into the formal process. That is the last thing before it goes for signature, so it is the same document.

Q Okay. That is helpful. I think we just wanted to make that the final page that doesn't appear to have that same marking -- to your belief, is the same or part of this?

A Yes.

Q So just note here that there is an approval line, a drafted line, a cleared line?

A Uh-huh.

Q On the drafted line, appears your name?

A Yes.

Q I think you had mentioned before that you drafted this document, and I think you explained it, but I would like to be as clear as I can on this. Does this mean you personally authored all the content for this memo?

A No, it does not mean that I authored all content for the memo. It means I put together a structure and some content, and then many of those who are listed on the clearance line provided additional edits, comments and substantive information to said document.

Q Okay. That is helpful.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q At the point, it then gets sent out for clearance, that cleared line, you, with regard to this particular memo, had

incorporated edits that you had received from the various individuals and agencies that is had provided the feedback?

A The clearance process where you are going around getting the okays is where the information is provided. The point at which all that information is assimilated into the document is between getting those okays and sending it to the approver.

Q So the document that precedes this, the document that you indicated bears the 201123787 stamp, does that document then reflect all of the edits --

A Yes.

Q -- that you received from the various folks who had signed off?

A Yes.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And so when we see various offices and names listed here, just to be clear, when you would send a document around initially, would you be sending the document to these people in particular, or to, perhaps, their assistants who review that document for them and provide edits back to you?

A It depends on the particular office that is represented, for example, DS. I would have sent it to [REDACTED] in DS/IP/NEA, or whoever was sitting in the desk at the time. He would have looked at it, he would have run it up his chain of command, [REDACTED], who is here would have been the final DS clearer. His office would have sent it back saying

██████████ clears for DS, but DS would have had i██████████ own internal process to get it up to ██████████.

Q Sure.

A But, for example, like the NEA/SCA/EX budget person, that would have been the person to whom I would have sent it for edit. So it depends on the bureaucracy. If I listed every single person that touched a document, the clearance page would be four pages long in some cases. So generally speaking, the highest ranking person in a particular bureau would be the one who is listed as the clearer.

Q I see. But in the instance of the Under Secretary for Management, for instance, there is an ██████████ is listed here.

A That would be his special assistant who had responsibility for this, because he, in this case, it is a memo to him for approval. Someone from his office was given initial clearance on the structure, the substance, the format, those kinds of things. You see here there is a staffer from Deputy Nide's office, from Deputy Burns' office, from the Under Secretary of Political Affairs Office. Those are all special assistants.

Q And you had actually noted that the DS is listed on this line. Your understanding that is diplomatic security; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Why would they have been included on this memo?

A Looking back, we make reference to diplomatic

security's current presence. We are talking about the footprint, we are talking about the full complement of agents at the post, we are talking about the need to be there, the facilities. And then the attachment makes reference to security considerations of those facilities. So it would make sense that DS would be involved in the clearance process.

Q Okay. And the other offices and individuals that are listed here, can you explain maybe not walking through individually, but just collectively, would these have been -- would you have come up or populated this list of the people who needed to clear on a memo like this?

A When you are writing an action memo to, say, the Under Secretary for Management, you need to think about which offices or bureaus have equities in a particular document. So if you talk about facilities, you need to make sure that the overseas building operations clears on the document. You can't just send something forward without their input if it is talking about their area of responsibility.

So looking at the content of the action memo determines who should be the clearers. Sometimes during the clearing process, others are identified as the process is going forward. If it is going to be Under Secretary for Management, the Under Secretary for Management special assistant would be listed as a clearer in this particular case because it had all sorts of implications we added in ~~DN, DBNP~~ ^{D(N), D(B) and P} as well.

Q Okay. An if an office or person is not listed here, is that because their approval would not be required for a decision such as this?

A As I mentioned earlier, if a particular bureau went through a many -- multilayered process of determining their clearance on a document, we would only list the most senior person to provide clearance on the document. If others are not included -- if specific bureaus or offices are not included, they would not have been sent this document for clearance.

Q So notice I just have a few minutes here, so I would like to just quickly continue, if I could. I notice on the DS line, there is an okay listed in the right-hand column?

A Uh-huh.

Q What does that notation mean? Does that mean that they cleared on this memo?

A That means that they provided clearance, yes.

Q Okay. And did diplomatic security, would they have had the option of not clearing on this memo?

A Yes.

Q And if they did not clear on this memo, how would that appear on this page?

A It would be listed either as info, and sometimes if a bureau doesn't feel that they have a substantive need to clear a document, they may ask to be listed as info, or it could actually say, did not clear this document.

Q Okay. Did diplomatic security issue a dissenting or non concurrence memo in reference to the decisions of this document?

A To my knowledge no.

Q We have heard the term "split memo" be used --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- as indicating another way that disagreements can be expressed. Is that something you are familiar with?

A Yes.

Q With regard to this memo, did diplomatic security issue a split memo to express any non concurrence with this -- these decisions?

A To my knowledge, no.

Q Okay. Do you have an understanding of why they did not do that?

A No, that would have been something that DS would have dealt with.

Q Okay. We have heard the diplomatic security expressed some concerns that extending the Special Mission was "unfunded mandate." Do you recall any discussions about that?

A As I mentioned earlier, there was no specific budget allocated for the purposes of the Benghazi presence. This document was intended to help push for resources. By stating this is the priority, this is something that we were doing, this is the approved presence, that would have, in some sense, been the

leading document that ^{let} ~~put~~ them push for resources.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So just so I understand it, you at one point had actually picked that document up and waved it around.

A Yes.

Q So kind of as a dramatic practical matter. In some ways, someone was in any of those there, including DS could then use this document and kind of wave it around to obtain funding to meet the policy priority and resources that it talks about; is that accurate?

A This document would provide the justification to be able to push for financial resources.

Q And did you, yourself, ever use it in that regard?

A It is likely that I did. I don't specifically remember instances.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So the concerns about there being an unappointed mandate, did you feel that this document, in fact, addressed those concerns?

A This document laid out what the plan was, what the intention was, what the desired footprint was, and it was meant to lay the groundwork for getting the additional resources. Resource management was one of the offices that we asked to clear, they were the budget people. So it was to make sure that they were aware that this is what we were looking to do.

Q Okay. And just to close out, I see I am just about out of time here, but diplomatic security did, in fact, clear on this memo; is that correct?

A If there is okay here, to me, that indicates to me that they cleared the memo.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And resource management also cleared?

A If there is an okay, yes.

Q And then I just had a quick question before we left. You had indicated early on in the last round of questioning that you had been involved in -- considering the presence, and I think evacuation or some mode of evacuation, I think you said Tunisia, Egypt, as well as Tripoli.

A Yes.

Q Were there task force -- was a task force stood up in each of those circumstances?

A In the case of Tunisia, it happened over a holiday weekend, there was not, to my recollection, a specific task force, but we convened a virtual version of a task force maybe without the name complete with 2:00 a.m. conference calls via BlackBerry and things of that nature to get to the decision to evacuate personnel.

Q What about for Egypt?

A For Egypt there were two task forces, actually three simultaneous task forces. There was the foreign policy focused

Arab Spring-related task force; there was the Consular Affairs American Citizens Services task force; and then there was a separate management issues task force looking at the sheer logistics of how we got around 3,000 people out Egypt quickly.

Q It is fair to say it sounds like you did your best with respect to Tunisia, and by you, I mean the State Department. And you probably also individually requested to have an ad hoc?

A Yes.

Q So is it fair to say that the preferred mechanism model for helping in that crisis management situation is to be able to convene a task force?

A Yes.

Q So this wasn't a mechanism created specific for Libya?

A No. The task forces have been in existence for as long as I have been around in the State Department. I don't recall when they first started. In the Tunisia-specific situation, that was the beginning of the Arab Spring, by the time Cairo started to really get hot, for want of a better word, people were more aware that this was something that was spreading and task forces were much more necessary.

Mr. Kenny. Thank you. Off the record.

[Discussion off the record.]

[Recess.]

RPTR HUMISTON

EDTR HUMKE

[1:22 p.m.]

Ms. Jackson. We'll go back on the record. It is 1:22, p.m.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], thank you for your patience with us today and your willingness to be here. Prior to our resumption, I provided you with several documents, many or all of which you are on, and you've had the opportunity to review those documents. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And for the record, I would note that one of the documents is an email exchange on April 5th, 2011, bearing document number C05395446; another one is an email exchange at the top that's dated April 10th, 2011, and it bears document number C05396329; another document is an action memo for the Undersecretary Kennedy dated April 15th, 2011, bearing document number C05390734.

What appears to be an email with perhaps a cable cover dated April 19th, 2011, bearing document number C05390733; an email dated April 19th, 2011, from [REDACTED] bearing document number C05395482; an email dated May 12th, 2011, bearing document number C05394877; and another email exchange dated May 18th, 2011, bearing document number C05391797.

And you were provided these for review because they may or

may not be used as exhibits during this next hour and hopefully to expedite to get you out of here as soon as possible. So, have you had an opportunity to review those documents?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

Mr. Evers. And just for the purpose of the record, I'd like to say thank you for doing that. I appreciate it.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q So, before we get to these documents, I had a couple questions from the follow-up of the last hour based on the questions the minority asked. You had stated that you knew Chris Stevens as the Special Representative and that you did not refer to him as envoy. Can you just elaborate on that or clarify for me what the distinction is, in your mind --

A Sure.

Q -- or within the State Department?

A Sure. I would like to clarify that we went through many iterations of what we were going to call Chris Stevens, what we were going to call Benghazi, because it was not very clear. And from the documents you gave me to pre-read, I see that we did indeed use "Special Envoy" at some times. Generally speaking, a Special Envoy, in my thinking, is someone who has been designated by the President as an envoy. It is a presidential appointment, for want of a better word. And "appointment" may not be the right word there, but it is a presidential designation, whereas a

Special Representative is someone selected by the Secretary to go and do something to -- generally speaking, a Special Representative might be somebody who represents us in negotiations or in a very short-term kind of process, whereas an envoy might be a more lasting presence, if that makes a little bit more sense.

Q Okay.

A So at least as I left EX, we were using the term "Special Representative" more than we were using the term "Special Envoy."

Q Okay.

A But others used those terms interchangeably.

Q And was your understanding that Chris Stevens being sent to Benghazi was at the direction of the Secretary, not the President?

A I did not have specific direction one way or the other --

Q Okay.

A -- as to what it was. Again, we had a mixture of discussions about what we were going to call him.

Q Okay. Do you know whether there was a presidential designation or a --

A No, I --

Q -- presidential direction to go to Benghazi?

A I have no memory of specifics.

Q Okay. If you still have before you the exhibits from

the last hour, number 4, which was the action memo for Undersecretary Kennedy from December 27th, 2011, and it had the clearance page --

A Yes, ma'am.

Q -- on the last page, I have a couple of follow-up questions to that. You had stated in the last hour that this took a long time to work through before it was signed. Is that correct?

A Uh-huh.

Q Do you have an estimate, of was it weeks, was it days, was it months? Was it from the time Chris Stevens went in as a Special Representative?

A No. My recollection was that I started drafting somewhere around Thanksgiving. I don't know if it was before or after Thanksgiving, but -- and it's dated December 27th, so it took weeks.

Q Okay. And you described this as a -- I believe in the last hour we talked about three different aspects of this document. One was the policy justification for being in Benghazi. That was one aspect of this memo. Is that correct?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And the other one was what I would deem the real estate aspect for this memo, you know, where they were going to live, you know, what was going to be leased, what wasn't going to be leased.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And then was the third part of this sort of the -- I believe you discussed the staffing or the footprint of that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And one of the purposes of this memo was to use it as a mechanism to go to various bureaus and stuff to get funding for this project, this mission?

A The clearance process was part of the process to get the funding and what we needed, because we required input from all of the various offices that had equities in what we were proposing to do.

Getting those offices to agree to the language that was used in the memo that then went to the Undersecretary for Management for approval was in a way getting their agreement that they would make this happen.

Q At these levels?

A At these levels.

Q All right. And then I just have another follow-up question on the clearance page. There appears to be two names, R. Maxwell and [REDACTED], that don't have okays, but there's either initials or a comment, and I cannot read the comment. Do you know what that comment says?

A It looks like it says, with edits and suggestions, and then his initials, RM.

Q Okay. Do you know what those edits and suggestions were?

A No. When the paper is substantially cleared, except for -- if NEA/EX was the drafter, once all of the lateral offices had cleared on the document, before it went to the NEA front office, it would go to [REDACTED] for his approval of the version that NEA/EX was moving forward to the NEA front office. So that's why his initials are written here instead of there being a typed "okay," because he saw the final version that we were physically taking to the NEA front office.

When you take the final version that comes out of the drafting office to the front office, we were asked to provide an electronic version of the document as well so that when the front office put it through the DAS and the special assistants, there were changes. Those changes were made and then it went to the assistant secretary for approval --

Q So --

A -- but we would not necessarily have seen the changes, but we would have then gotten the final document back.

Q And because this document is signed means that those edits and suggestions have either been incorporated or rejected, but this is the final document?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So that comment doesn't mean that there were yet other edits or suggestions out there?

A No.

Q Okay.

A This is the final version as it went to the undersecretary, because this is the one the undersecretary signed.

Q Okay. So when DS cleared on that memo, they were committing to having five diplomatic security agents in Benghazi?

A When DS signed the memo, they agreed to the language that was included in the memo.

Q Okay. And that included a footprint of five DS agents?

A That included the language that specified the number of DS agents in Benghazi.

Q I want to take a step back in time, because you've talked about how this memo took weeks to get through the clearance process. Do you recall how long the discussion had been ongoing as to whether to extend the mission in Benghazi past its initial 30 days and through the end -- throughout 2011 and into 2012?

A I don't have a specific timeline in my head. My memory says that we were continually looking at the presence and whether or not to extend it and what we were doing with the presence. It was an ongoing discussion.

Q Because we know in reality it was there through 2012, but can you take us through sort of the timeline of events that occurred in 2011 regarding the extended presence in Benghazi?

A That's a very broad question. Can you be a bit more specific?

Q Okay. Do you recall that within a few days of Stevens -- I'm just going to back up and take a different tact with that.

Do you recall that within a few days of Stevens being in Benghazi, that there was discussion that they would have to leave and depart?

A There was discussion about whether or not the security situation would be conducive to remaining.

Q Okay. And --

Ms. Sawyer. Sharon, just to be clear, he arrived in Libya a couple times, so I assume you're talking about --

Ms. [REDACTED] The initial arrival?

Ms. Jackson. Yes.

Ms. Sawyer. Initial in May.

Ms. Jackson. April.

Ms. [REDACTED] April.

Ms. Sawyer. April.

Ms. [REDACTED] The other thing that I would note is that the security situation on the ground in Benghazi was under constant scrutiny to determine whether or not it was safe for the group to remain during that initial period when they first arrived.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 5

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Let me take what you've previously reviewed as an email chain on April 10th, 2011. It appears to be from you to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I've marked it exhibit Number 5. And, again, it would be document number C05396329. This is an email exchange that you reviewed and took some action with. Is that correct?

A I received this email and I forwarded it to the M special, because I noticed that the M special assistant had not been included on the initial -- one of her colleagues had been included on the initial email.

Q Okay.

A Her colleague was [REDACTED], who may have been the duty officer over the weekend. [REDACTED] was the person who had the NEA portfolio.

Q I believe there was a name that we discussed in the last hour on the sign-off on the paper of [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED] replaced [REDACTED].

Q Okay. That explains that. So [REDACTED] had the NEA portfolio in the undersecretary's office at --

A Yes.

Q -- at this time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And so you were notifying her of what was going on?

A One of the things that I did on a routine basis was when I saw people with whom I was routinely in communication about

the situation, if I saw that they were not included on an email chain, I would forward it to them so that everybody had the same information.

Q Sort of that funnel that you --

A Yes.

Q -- described before?

A Exactly.

Q You funneled information to all the relevant people?

A Which is why in this case there was no message in the body of my email. It was more for her situational awareness.

Q Okay. And do recall that Stevens had gone in on April 5th, and so this was approximately 5 days later?

A I recall he went in in early April. I don't have the specific dates.

Q Okay. In the initial email, there's a bunch of distribution lists in the to line.

A Yes.

Q SES duty deputies, S underscore special assistants. And then on the S -- on the cc line, there's SES dash O underscore SWO, and SES dash O. Can you tell me what those signify?

A They're distribution lists within the Department. I can't speak to specifically who is on the list, but I can tell you SES dash O is the operations center of the department; the SES dash O underscore SWO, that flags it for the senior watch officer in the operations center; the S special assistant -- S underscore

special assistants would be, I presume those in the S bureau who are the special assistants.

Q Is it the S bureau or the Secretary?

A The Office of the Secretary.

Q Secretary.

A Yes.

Q That is the S bureau?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A Sorry.

Q We just need to understand --

A Yes.

Q -- the State Department lingo.

A Sorry. And then SES duty deputies, the deputies referenced in that particular thing would likely be the deputy executive secretaries, but, again, this is me making a presumption based on what I'm reading on this piece of paper.

Q Okay. But that's -- yes. Thank you very much for that. That's helpful to our understanding.

Do you recall that -- well, obviously the Special Representative, Mr. Stevens, did not leave Benghazi. He stayed throughout this. Do you recall that one of the issues was to send him even more security to Benghazi?

A It is possible. I don't have specific memory of --

Q Okay.

A -- of that.

Q Let me show you what you've reviewed just a few minutes ago, but I'm going to mark as exhibit 6. It's an April 15th, 2011, action memo for the undersecretary bearing document number C05390734.

██████████ Exhibit No. 6

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And is this an action memo that you would have participated in drafting?

A It is possible. Without seeing the drafting clearance page, I would not be able to tell you specifically if I wrote it. Things were moving pretty fast at this period of time, so it -- this was one of the documents that was a regularly occurring memo. It is possible. I recall that others in my office also generated these memos for Libya at periods of time.

Q Okay. Were you the primary drafter of these type of documents?

A At a period of time, I was, but at a certain point, because my workload became quite heavy, the duty for the routine -- not routine, but the regular memos to the undersecretary about movements in and out of the country, those memos were generated by someone else, and I don't know at what point in time we shifted that.

Q Okay. But I notice that this is 5 days after there was

consideration of the Stevens mission leaving Benghazi, and two additional security agents are being sent there. Do you recall if that was pre-planned or if that was in reaction to the security situation on the ground?

A I do not recall.

Q And then I'm going to mark as exhibit 7 the email from April 19th.

[████████ Exhibit No. 7

Was marked for identification.]

Mr. Evers. There's a couple.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Yeah. The one that is M approval, DS, SE Stevens, and it's bearing document number C05390733, and that's exhibit Number 7.

Is that how this information gets communicated throughout the State Department? Or can you tell me what the purpose of that document is, what I'm seeing there?

A This document is an archival record email. In the case of Benghazi, they did not have the ability to receive cables very easily, because of their limited technology capability. We had to have some way to convey the information to them at post, so we sent it in this manner so that they could have that record and the Department had an official record of who had been approved.

Prior to this, I do not know if in other cases the same type of method of communication was used. I know cables were sometimes

used, emails were sometimes used. In this particular case, we made a decision to transmit it by record email.

Q Okay. So this is an unusual way of communicating within the State Department? Just trying to get a sense of --

A I wouldn't say it's unusual. SMART, the -- I don't even know what it stands for. It's a messaging archival retrieval toolkit. I think that's what it stands for.

Ms. Betz. We were smiling back and forth.

Ms. [REDACTED] It came into being shortly before all this happened. It was a new way to transmit the cables, but it was also recognizing that many emails were sent that never made it into cables, and record email was one way to capture that in an archival way.

Not a lot of training had been done by most people on how to use it at this point, but we made the conscious decision to attempt to use this as our means of capturing the information.

Q So then, as I understand it, this was a way to communicate with Benghazi what had been approved at Main State?

A With Benghazi and with the official record.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

Q You've described previously sort of the nature of the calls that -- I would assume at this time in early April of 2011 you were having daily calls with Benghazi, twice daily calls, more often than that?

A We may have even had round-the-clock calls at that point. It's hard to say exactly when it all changed. In the initial insertion period, we were speaking to the team on the ground on a regular basis, and we would say we will touch base with you again in X number of hours and have another phone call.

I don't know when we shifted to a regular schedule versus when we were just saying, okay, we've heard from you now. Okay. Let's talk again in 6 hours once things have gone on. We'll give you 8 hours and let you sleep, and then we'll talk to you again, kind of thing.

Q Were you and others working around the clock?

A Yes.

Q You were on a 24/7 --

A We weren't on duty, but we were working.

Q I understand that.

A There was a period of time during the evacuation from Tripoli and the insertion into Benghazi where I was sleeping with my BlackBerry in my hand and I would wake up when it would buzz. I would have 2:00 a.m. conference calls on a regular basis throughout the Arab Spring, be it on Tunisia, on Egypt, on Libya.

It was kind of -- it's how it worked. I mean, there was no way to spread the wealth and share, because everyone had to have the information together, so we all kind of just did it.

Q When you would have these conference calls routinely early on, how many people would participate from within the State

Department?

A It depended on the nature of the call and what the subject matter was and, frankly, what time of day it was. I'd say the 2:00 a.m. calls had a much smaller participation rate than the 2:00 p.m. calls. There were some calls where we had 15, 20 people on the line, there were other calls where there were five.

Q Did you routinely have other agencies involved in any of the calls, such as DOD for extraction issues or the agency or -- I'm trying to think of others -- the White House, NS -- the national security staff?

A It is likely that we had USAID involved in the phone calls. There may have been points in time when it made sense to have DOD on the phone calls. I don't recall specifics as to who else might have been involved in various phone calls.

Q Would there be some sort of record of these calls?

A At a point in time, I did sometimes take notes as the calls were taking place. There was not an expectation or a requirement that there be notes for every single phone call. When I had availability for a keyboard and the ability to take the notes, I would take the notes and share them with whoever had been on the call, by email.

Q Did you create, like, distribution lists for sending out the summary of the calls?

A There was one distribution list that was Libya management issues that was internal to NEA/EX. If there were

others, I don't recall them off the top of my head. It's possible there were. I just -- I don't recall.

Q Do you recall a Benghazi update one?

A Yes, yes. See.

Q Recognition is so much better than recall.

A Yes.

Q Do you recall who was on the Benghazi update distribution list?

A No. It was a wide cast of characters.

Q Was it State, internal State only?

A I don't remember. And I don't think I actually created that. I think that was something that came out of either Benghazi directly or the Maghreb office or even Tripoli in exile. I do not recall creating that list.

Q Do you know if there would still be a record of who was a participant or included on that distribution list?

A I'm not an expert on IT. You'd have to ask the IT experts within the Department that question.

Q Okay. At some point the Stevens expedition, or Benghazi expedition, as I've seen it referred to, moved from the Tibesti Hotel where they were initially staying into a villa. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall that was in or around June of 2011?

A That sounds familiar.

Q Okay. And do you recall why they needed to move out of the Tibesti Hotel?

A There was a security incident in or near the Tibesti Hotel. I believe it had something to do with a vehicle. I don't remember the specifics of it.

Q Okay. Do you recall that even prior to that time, prior to them leaving the Tibesti Hotel, that there was discussion of the group moving to a villa compound?

A My recollection from the various conversations that we had with the group was that the Tibesti Hotel had a lot of entrances and exits, there were a lot of people coming in and going out. From a diplomatic security perspective, the agents on the ground felt like they could not -- they expressed in phone calls that I heard that they could not control the access sufficiently to guarantee full safety of the group. There was discussion about how we would get them into a place where they could be more secure.

Q Okay. And did that occur from essentially the beginning of the time that they were there?

A To my recollection, yes. And just one clarification on that. The Tibesti was never seen to be a permanent solution. The presumption was that we would use the Tibesti when they arrived as a place to find a more static location.

Q Okay. And I just want to clarify something. I believe

that you -- when you say, "more static," I believe you had told us earlier today that you thought the initial mission was only going to be for 30 days?

A But even for 30 days, the presumption was they wanted to be somewhere more secure than the Tibesti, so they were looking for some place to be able to put our personnel while they were working things out.

Q Okay. Okay.

A The initial discussion was they were arriving on the boat, they were going to go check out the Tibesti Hotel, see if the Tibesti Hotel would suffice. If it didn't suffice, they were going to have to find something that would.

Q Okay. So let me hand you --

A That's what I understood.

Q I'm going to hand you what I've marked as exhibit 8.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 8

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q It is a May 12th -- or May -- yes. I can read that. May 12th, 2011, email, document number C05394877. And I would like you to -- first of all, the subject line of this memo is, Seventh Floor Guidance on Mission Benghazi, and the first sentence says, quote, "the deputies met today with Pat Kennedy to discuss the Benghazi staffing memo," end quote. And then the third paragraph, it says, quote, "staffing should remain at current

levels, paren (which will be 17 once the plane lands.)" End paren.

So I just wanted to ask, what's going on in May of 2011? Do you recall what staffing memo they were talking about?

A I do not recall what staffing memo they were specifically talking about. There were -- I mean, lots of different things were generated. I don't know in particular which one this is referring to.

Q Was it --

A It likely had to do with establishing what a standard footprint would be.

Q It appears to me that this is indicating that we're going to have a longer-term presence in Benghazi. Is that how you interpret this discussion?

A I interpret this discussion as there will be no more than 17 people on the ground. I do not see it specifically setting any kind of time limit.

Q Okay. I'm going to hand you what I'm going to mark as exhibit 9.

[████████ Exhibit No. 9

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Which is a May 18th, 2011, email exchange bearing document number C05391797. And I want to specifically direct your attention to the last page under Administrative Issues. First of all, is this something that you know to have been written by ██████████

██████████?

A It appears from reading the email that ██████████ and her team drafted it.

Q Okay. And was she in Benghazi at the time?

A If the email that I'm looking at refers to her as the acting Special Envoy, that would indicate that she was in Benghazi at that time.

Q Okay. So --

A I'm looking for my eyeglasses, if you're wondering what I'm doing.

Q We'll give you that -- the print is very small on this exchange.

A Okay. I have my eyeglasses. Okay.

Q Okay. And on the third page under Administrative Issues, it says, quote "██████████; acting envoy and DS team looked at three furnished compounds today that could potentially be developed as office and residential space should the decision be taken to move out of the hotel," end quote.

So as of May 2011, there is an active and ongoing effort to identify a villa location?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did that come to fruition?

A Considering they moved out of the Tibesti Hotel, I would state that yes, it --

Q Okay.

A -- it did.

Q On page 1 of this, it says at the very first line, Note, Pat does not believe post opening would be required, as the Hill knows we are there. Can you tell me what that sentence means?

A As I was not copied on this email and I have no idea who this person is who sent the email, I can't really speak to this.

Q Could I have you, then, go back to the prior exhibit that we had, number 8, which is the May 12th. The second sentence of the May 12th email reads, quote, "as Deputy Steinberg was just on the Hill to discuss Libya, he is acutely aware that the Hill is watching what we're doing in Benghazi, particularly with regard to our footprint. There is no appetite on the Hill for a large presence or a nation building effort," end quote.

Can you read these two emails together to make sense of what is said in the May 18th email where it says, Note, Pat does not believe that post opening would be required, as Hill knows we are there?

A I don't see my role here as to speculate what other people believe or what they say. I think that the sentence speaks for itself based on the previous message. I know nothing more than this based on this. I was not part of that discussion.

Q Who would know something about this?

A I presume the people on the email.

Q Well, what types of notifications are required to Congress when you open a post?

Mr. Evers. If you know.

Ms. [REDACTED] I don't know that answer to that question. I have not had to be part of that discussion.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Do know that there is some sort of notification --

A Yes.

Q -- that is required?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And obviously there is no notification that is required when you just send the Secretary into the country for a meeting or a visit or something, if you know?

A I'm not an expert on those matters.

Q Okay. Do you know if there was any type of congressional notification for when you moved into the villas in Benghazi?

A I am not in a position to know that information.

Q You weren't part of preparing any packages --

A No.

Q -- or any responses to Congress --

A Not --

Q -- or any --

A Not to my memory.

Q Okay. When the Special Representative went into Benghazi, he went with first eight and then it was upgraded to ten diplomatic security agents. I believe there was a reporting officer that accompanied him. Do you recall that?

A I don't recall when the reporting officer joined him, but yes, he had another person with him.

Q Was that an individual by the name of [REDACTED]?

A Yes, it was.

Q Okay. And then were there some USAID personnel that also went along?

A I believe there were two, maybe one. I can't remember. Again, my memory of the timeline of when people joined is fuzzy, given that it was 4 years ago.

Q Okay. Do you recall there was a discussion about using any of the Tripoli locally employed staff to support Representative Stevens in his mission?

A We looked at many ways to support what Chris Stevens and the team were trying to accomplish. Some of that was looking at locally employed staff, it was looking at people physically present in Benghazi that we might be able to use, it was looking at who we could send in TDY to support. There were many discussions looking at every possible angle trying to figure out how to work these issues.

Q Do you recall that there were actual locally employed staff hired from Benghazi to assist in the mission?

A There was one individual that we had on a Blanket Purchase Agreement who had been some sort of grantee for us under a public diplomacy program back when Tripoli had been open, who was friendly to the U.S., and he served kind of a translator/fixer role for us.

Q Do you recall who that was?

A [REDACTED] was his name. And then much, much later, we began to hire a couple of people to help out in doing, like, administrative things and I believe we hired a couple of drivers as well.

Q Okay. You said a Blanket Purchase Agreement --

A Yes.

Q -- for, was it Mr. [REDACTED]?

A I believe -- Mr. [REDACTED], yes.

Q [REDACTED] was not his first name?

A Yeah. [REDACTED]. That's all I know him as.

Q We'll say Mr. [REDACTED].

What's a Blanket Purchase Agreement?

A A Blanket Purchase Agreement, or a BPA, it's an acquisitions framework that is used for services, and it's something that's set up under the Federal acquisition regulations, it's part of the simplified acquisitions procedures, and it's one way where you can procure discrete services on an ad hoc basis when needed.

Q Okay. What type of paperwork is involved in that? Is

there, like, a scope of services that's written? What type of document trail would we expect to find?

A That's a very good question to ask. I am not an expert. I just took contracting last month. This is not my field of expertise.

Q What did you learn?

A I learned that there exists a thing called a BPA. I would not have specific knowledge as to what document trails there would be. There was discussion of what we would have the scope of work be. I know that there were discussions of that. It was a means to facilitate payment for services rendered in a very restrictive, constricted environment.

Q Sure. Who would have that information?

A I believe we worked through the Tripoli staff who were --

Q On the Potomac?

A -- in exile on the Potomac. I believe we worked through the financial management officer, the management officer, and the general services officer to facilitate the paperwork. I don't know specifically who did it.

Q Was the management officer an individual by the name of [REDACTED]?

A No. This was [REDACTED], I believe.

Q Who is [REDACTED], if you recall?

A I think he was one of the temporary duty people that we

sent into Tripoli, but I don't know off the top of my head.

Q Okay.

A There were a lot of people moving in and out.

Q Yes. Is the Blanket Purchase Agreement something that's typically used abroad for services?

A It is frequently used in cases such as gardening services or cleaning services or things like that where you might have multiple companies that would perform the same variety of services that you could call on at different times.

BPA is also used for things like acquisition of office supplies. And you might set one up with, you know, two or three different office supply stores so that when you need to buy more printer paper, you can go to multiple sources but you don't have to compete a new contract each time. It's a more -- it's something that was set up by law to make acquisitions more simplified.

Q During the entire time that you worked Libya issues, was Mr. [REDACTED] employed under this Blanket Purchase Agreement or provided services under this agreement?

A It's not an actual employment. It was something that was intermittent. As he provided services, he received some compensation for his time. Honestly, he probably would have done much of the service gratis. We wanted something to be able to compensate him for what he was doing.

Q But during the entire time that you worked Libya

issues, he was part --

A In and out.

Q In and out of --

A He had other things going on. He had been a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. He had lots of different things.

BY MS. BETZ:

Q Just to clarify, so in the way that you described the Blanket Purchase Agreement, it seems more for equipment versus -- or --

A It can be for services --

Q For services or personnel?

A -- or for products.

Mr. Evers. You should not talk over each other.

A I'm sorry.

Q I'm awful.

A It could be for services or products.

Q Okay.

A Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q In the last hour, we talked a lot about the memo extending Benghazi operations into 2012, but I would like to go back and talk about moving into the villas. You had talked about, I think, the initial villa that you looked at, there was an issue with the title and you had to walk away from that villa. Do I remember correctly?

A There was an intermediate step where we were temporarily resident in a villa while we were working out -- because we had to move out of the Tibesti for security reasons, we moved into a temporary space until such time as we could work out what had been intended to be the leased property. Then we had to walk away from that leased property because of the ownership concerns. And then we worked our way into a different property.

Q Okay. And was that what was ultimately known as Villa A, B, and C as described in exhibit 3, the pros and cons?

A Yes. That is my understanding, is that the final version that we ended up in that we signed leases on is known as Villa A, B, and C.

Q Okay. And then the December 2011 memo was, we're going to give up Villa A, but we're going to keep Villas B and C?

A Yes.

Q But there was a villa before Villa A, an interim villa?

A My memory is not very sharp on this issue. It is possible that the interim villa ended up being Villa A. I cannot fully remember. I know that the landlord ended up being the same for some properties in there. Again, we talked about a lot of different properties, so I'm not 100 percent certain.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 10

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I'm going to hand you what I'm marking as exhibit 10,

which you have not seen before.

A Okay.

Q So if you'd take a moment and look at that. And I'm not going to ask you anything about the contents of page 2, except for maybe the part that --

Mr. Evers. But you should feel free to --

Ms. [REDACTED] I'm just refreshing my memory. It helps put it into context.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay?

A Uh-huh.

Q In this exchange on June 20th, 2011, you write to an [REDACTED] ?

A You got me.

Q Okay. And you write, quote, "we are treating the interim villa as hotel space dash only 30, 60 days while we wait for the upgrades to the villa compound to come online."

Is this what you were talking about, the interim villa versus the villa compound?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So physically the group moved into a home, for lack of a better --

A Yes.

Q -- term, a residence for a short period of time, and then they were looking at a bigger villa compound?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A And I believe the villa compound referred to here was the big compound that we eventually discarded as an option.

Q Okay. Because of the title issues?

A Yes.

Q And then you all moved on to Villas A, B, and C?

A Yes.

Q Okay. The next section down, which is [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] writing to you, she writes, [REDACTED], so the bureau would be responsible for the lease costs for the interim villa, correct? Why not OBO? [REDACTED]

And your answer is that, we're treating it as hotel space. Can you explain the difference in that to us?

A The leases that OBO funds are just that: leases. They are longer-term -- they're short-term leases that are still up to, I think, 10 years, 9 years, and then there's long-term leases that are beyond that. Because this was such a very short duration, the expectation was that the funding would come out of NEA funds as opposed to OBO funds. There was no formal lease. We were literally paying the owner to provide everything at the time.

Q Okay.

A More like a hotel would be paid for. We were just paying for the entire facility.

Q So for missions like that where you would hopefully

just stay in a hotel, that comes out of NEA's pocket?

A Yes. OBO would not pay for hotel space.

Q Does OBO get involved when you're going to have a more permanent presence there? I'm just trying to understand.

A OBO becomes involved when a lease is signed, when a lease that involves regular recurring payments is signed.

Q Okay. And is that 6 months, a year, 2 years?

A I'm not the expert on the leases. I can't tell you specifically what the trigger is. I know that in this particular case, OBO was not involved in the interim villa discussion other than as we were figuring out how to get to the next one.

Q Did OBO ever become involved while you were still there?

A We talked to OBO all the time about the villa compounds and different things. The interim villa, again, NEA was funding that, that cost.

Q Did the funding costs stay with NEA even after they moved into the villa compound?

A I don't recall exactly how the money was broken down. Generally speaking, my memory is that OBO used funds that had been allocated in the Tripoli budget to fund a large chunk of what was being spent on housing costs.

Q Do you recall whether OBO was paying for security upgrades to the facility?

A I don't have specific recollections. However, I do

know that there were discussions of physical security upgrades. OBO and DS were involved in those discussions. I don't recall whose budget it came out of.

Q Okay. Do you know if there was an assessment made as to whether the villa compound that they were going to move to had to meet the security standards of OBO?

A To be clear, the security standards are not set by OBO.

Q Okay.

A OBO implements the security standards.

Q OSPB --

A Yes.

Q -- standards? I got your acronyms mixed up, and that is why you are here to help us through this.

A There were evaluations by various parties who looked at the facilities that we were planning to occupy to determine what needed to be done to upgrade the security. To what extent they were looking at OSPB standards versus waivers versus anything else, I'm not the expert on that.

Q Okay. Do you recall being advised that the standards didn't apply and that waivers and exceptions were not needed?

A I don't have specific recollection of that statement, but it does not surprise me.

Q Okay.

[█████████ Exhibit No. 11

Was marked for identification.]

Q Let me hand you what I've marked as Exhibit 11. It's very, very short. Do you recall ever seeing -- let me read in for the record, this is an email exchange dated 6/20/2011. It bears document number C05397277.

Do you recall ever seeing this document or learning of its contents?

A I was not copied on this email and I don't recall seeing this email.

Q Do you recall receiving this information?

A I recall various iterations of conversations similar to this. I don't recall this specific discussion.

Q Okay. And what do you recall of the conversations you do recall, the various iterations?

A I recall that there was discussion that it was an interim facility, it was not a permanent facility, it was temporary in nature, people were residing where they were working, and these were things that did not trigger OSPB standards.

Q And do you recall who you had those conversations with or who was in the room, you know, who was having these conversations?

A It would have been in various conversations with OBO, DS, NEA all in the room. I don't have specific names for you.

Q These two names that are on here, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], do you know who they are?

A I know who [REDACTED] is. I do not know who

██████████ is.

Q And who is ██████████?

A ██████████ was one of the leasing specialists in OBO who was working on the leases for the properties.

Q Okay. Envoy Stevens left Benghazi on around November 20th of 2011. Do you recall that being approximately the time that he left Benghazi?

A I recall he left some time before Thanksgiving.

Q Okay. Do you know why he left? Was he called back to Main State because of his impending nomination as Ambassador, or was his work there finished, or were we transitioning to something else? Do you recall why it was that he came back?

A My recollection is he came out as part of a normally anticipated rotation to give him some time out of Benghazi. We tried to rotate everyone who was there on a long-term basis out on a regular basis to give them some R and R and allow them to --

Q Recharge?

A Recharge, yes.

Q Okay.

A And while he was out, I believe that's when the discussion was made about his nomination, but, again, I don't have the timeline specifically in mind.

Q You mentioned an individual earlier by the name of ██████████ who then went into Benghazi. Was there a series of persons who went in to, for lack of a better term, take Stevens' place?

A Yes.

Q And [REDACTED] was one of those individuals?

A Yes.

Q At the time that Stevens rotated out in November of 2011, was it anticipated that he would go back in, if you know, or was the discussion that there was going to be these series of principal officers?

A I don't recall.

Q Because embassy Tripoli had reopened by then?

A Correct.

Q And Ambassador Cretz --

Is it Cretz or Cretz?

A Cretz.

Q -- Cretz was back in Tripoli. Is that correct?

A I don't recall exactly when he returned to Tripoli, but he did go back into Tripoli some time that fall.

Q Is there a distinction between being a Special Representative and a principal officer?

A A principal officer is a more formal term related to accreditation to a particular host country.

Q So it's a position that's recognized by host countries?

A I believe it's under the Vienna Convention, but I'm not 100 percent certain of that. It's a more typical term that the State Department uses to refer to someone who is the senior-most person in a post.

Q Okay. And it may be a difference without a distinction, and if you know, please let us know, but do you know if [REDACTED] and the others that followed him went in as the acting Special Representative or if they went in as a principal officer?

A Again I repeat, my memory of the timeline is fuzzy.

At some point in the fall of 2011, we exchanged diplomatic notes with the new Government of Libya in whatever form that happened to be, and with the return of Ambassador Cretz, a Special Representative was not needed at that point, because we had our accredited Ambassador in Tripoli. So at that point, I believe, is when the term "Special Representative" ceased to be used, but again, I don't have specific recollection of the timeline.

Q And you said we had formal diplomatic papers with the new transitional national government, or council, TNC as it was called?

A We exchanged some form of diplomatic notes. I was not present at the exchange. I don't know exactly what form that took. I recall discussions of how we would ensure that we could get some sort of diplomatic privileges and immunities, and there was reference to an exchange of diplomatic notes. That's all I know.

Q So as far as you know, that did occur and --

A Yes.

Q -- there were diplomatic privileges and immunities

extended?

A To the extent that ^{the} ~~a~~ TNC was able to actually grant such things, yes.

Q Okay. And so one final very quick area. Do you recall that Ambassador Susan Rice went to Benghazi in November of 2011?

A I do not recall that. It may have happened.

Q Then --

A We had several visits --

Q My follow-up question of did you have any role in the logistics of that is probably a similar answer?

A With any visitor who came in, there was a series of logistical issues that arose. If I was on the seat and not on vacation, it's possible. I don't have specific recollection of that.

Q Would her trip over there have to have been approved by Undersecretary Kennedy?

A Generally speaking, all executive branch employees would have had to fall under the undersecretary's approval process. I don't specifically know how it was worked for Ambassador Rice, who was a cabinet level individual. I'm unaware of the specifics of how that worked.

Q You don't recall having to write that memo?

A I may have. I just don't recall.

Q Okay. And with that, we'll go off the record, because our hour is up, and we will take another short break and switch

seats.

A Great.

[Recess.]

Mr. Kenny. We will go back on the record. The time is 2:35.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], again thank you. We appreciate your patience.

I'd like to return and revisit some of the documents that were just discussed in the last hour, try to do so as quickly, as expeditiously as possible. We want to be respectful of your time.

I'd like to return and direct your attention to exhibit 5. This was the email from you to [REDACTED].

A Okay.

Q And I'd like to direct your attention to the email that's embedded within this email. It's an April 10 email as well from [REDACTED], to a series of people. You were asked about some of these individuals on this recipient line, but I'd just like to real quickly ask you, the first line here reads, per Special Envoy Stevens. Was your understanding that this was a direct read-out of a conversation that someone had had with Special Envoy Stevens in Benghazi?

A If you look at who the email is from, on the back of the document, it states that [REDACTED] was in the State Department operations center.

Q Okay.

A So that tells me that Chris Stevens called the operations center and provided the read-out that was included in the email.

Q Okay. So when we look at the language here, would it be safe to assume that this language was the Ambassador, then the Special Envoy's, voice?

A It is likely that when the Ambassador called in, someone was taking notes of the conversation. Whether or not it's in his voice, I do not know.

Q Okay. I'd just like to direct your attention, it's the fourth bullet in, and we were referring to some security incidents, some threat reporting around the initial days of the Special Envoy's insert into Benghazi. This particular line reads, quote, "he plans to discuss the situation further with the Brits, Turks, and the TNC to see if this is an irreversible situation. Departure would send a significant political signal and would be interpreted as the U.S. losing confidence in the TNC. The initial message to the TNC would frame the departure as due to security grounds and as a temporary measure only," close quote.

A Uh-huh.

Q And I'd just like to ask you, understanding that you may not have been privy to the policy discussions about the need or the reasons for the Special Envoy to be in Benghazi around this time, but is your sense in reading this that Special Envoy Stevens had a desire to remain in Benghazi to carry on the U.S. mission

that was there at the time?

A I read this email as stating that he was consulting with his counterparts in other diplomatic missions and with the TNC to determine what the situation was. I infer that some were thinking about departing, and he was evaluating the ramifications of any decisions.

If you look at the email offered by [REDACTED] up above it, it says, he's weighing whether to pull the team. That's all I got.

Q And these other individuals that are referred to here, the Brits, the Turks, were you aware of whether other foreign missions were present in Benghazi at this time?

A I do not recall the timeline of who showed up when.

Q Okay. But is it safe to assume that if he was to discuss the situation further with these entities, that they were in fact also in Benghazi?

A Yes, they were.

Q Okay. And would that have been prudent from a risk management standpoint to have consulted with the other missions about the security situation in Benghazi in order to plan for the future of the mission?

A It is common to consult with counterparts at other missions when looking at the security situation among other things.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Before we leave that document, I just wanted to ask, you had noted the response that came back from [REDACTED]. I think there was a discussion in the last hour that she was potentially the -- was she present in Benghazi at this point in time, or was she elsewhere and she went in when he was not there?

A She was resident in Washington with the Tripoli In Exile team. When he would come out for R and R breaks, she would be the one who would fill in behind him. So they would not have been generally present at the same time other than overlap for maybe a few hours. But looking at the read-out from the operations center, she was on the call with him as they were doing the read-out.

Q And she seems to be reporting that Chris -- you know, I think you read it or maybe my colleague read it. It says there, quote, "Chris weighing whether to pull team," end quote. Do you recall whether the Ambassador, and I'm just talking about this point in time related to this particular concern, whether he actually did -- it said, you know, he -- it then said we asked him to consult Euros, and I think you just spoke about that that was relatively routine to consult with counterparts, and give the Department a recommendation. So at this point in time, did Chris, Ambassador Stevens is how I always refer to him --

A At this point, he was not an ambassador.

Q Right. I understand he was Special Envoy or Special

Representative.

Did he make a recommendation that the team should be pulled?

A I recall discussions about the security situation and what an extraction would look like if we pulled him out of Benghazi. I do not recall a specific recommendation to leave.

Q And you had said at various points in time during the conversation today that almost from the moment he was there during this, and I'm just again focusing on this initial time period, we just spent a lot of time on it, there was a constant assessment as to whether a continued presence in Benghazi was possible. So during the time period that we've just covered in the last hour, I think it ran from April to June of 2011, was there ever a recommendation made by the Special Envoy or anyone else to pull the team out of Benghazi?

A With the span of 4 years that have passed since the time that I worked on this issue, I cannot speak with a definitive answer yes or no to that question.

Q To the best of your recollection, do you recall there being a recommendation?

A I recall there many -- I'm sorry for speaking over you. I recall many discussions about the security situation and what a potential departure would look like. I do not recall specific recommendations one way or the other.

Q And would you have been involved -- it sounds like you recall the discussions about security in particular. Were you

involved in discussions about the reasons for staying as well, the benefits of staying or the rationales for staying, or would that be other folks?

A My awareness of the discussions to stay or to leave were really focused on the logistics involved in that decision and what it would take to make it happen either way. The justification for departure, because it involved security, I had somewhat of a deeper awareness of, because we had to plan on extraction capability, among other things.

The discussion of the reasons to stay, I was aware of the purpose of being there and the ongoing discussion of the value of the presence there.

Q And just to put it in context, the time period that we've now spoken about over the last hour plus, to put it in context, this is during the revolution. Is that correct?

A Again, without having a timeline in front of me, that is the best of my understanding of the timeline, with my fuzzy memory, yes.

Q All right. And do you just recall in general when Qadhafi was captured in terms of a generalized timeline? My sense of it is later in the fall that sort of fell and Qadhafi was captured in October of 2011.

A I recall we returned to Tripoli in late September of 2011, and the situation was such that we were believing that Qadhafi was nearing the end of his tenure.

Q So is it safe to say that at least at this point in time, Qadhafi is still a presence, a controlling presence in Libya --

A Yes.

Q -- and the revolution is ongoing?

A Yes.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Just real quickly, we'd like to clarify a couple of matters, and we'll, again, try to do this as quickly as possible. Moving to exhibit 8. And in the course of our discussion here, this is the email, it's a May 12th email, 2011, there's discussion, it appears to be at the deputies level within the State Department, it talks about staffing and there's a number 17 here.

You were asked about the original insert team and what their mission was, how far out that that was planned in advance. And I'd just like to know -- and I understand it's difficult without a precise timeline in front of you, but the date of this email appears to be May 12th. And do you recall exactly when the Chris Stevens mission entered Libya?

A The mission entered in early April. I don't recall the exact date.

Q Okay. So is it possible this email would have been outside of that initial 30-day window --

A Yes.

Q -- that the team was originally proposed to be in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And so would this, then, reflect some sort of planning going forward for what the next stage or next phase of the mission might look like?

A My interpretation of this email and my memory of what was going on at the time was that everybody and their brother wanted to go into Benghazi. We had Senators, we had cabinet level individuals, we had Congressmen, we had everyone within the interagency who wanted to go in there, and there was a desire to establish what the maximum number that we could support at any given time was on the ground. And that is part of the planning discussion, but it was really a, how can we set some limits and ensure that we're not putting too many people at risk here.

Q Okay. And just real quickly to possibly try to connect that back to our discussion, you had been asked about the undersecretary's involvement in clearing U.S. Government personnel for travel into Libya. What you just described, would that play into the reason why the undersecretary or the Office of M more broadly would have monitored more closely personnel in and out of the country, this demand for people to go into Libya?

A It's the demand for people to go in. It's the ability to support the people on the -- the ability of the people on the ground to support their function for being there as well as the

function of the visitors coming in, and it's the ability to protect those coming in.

Q Okay. And, again, this is the mid-May time period, so we believe it to be outside of the initial 30 days, beginning to look at a more phased presence and buildup potentially in Benghazi. I understand you had told us a few moments ago that you weren't necessarily involved in the discussions about how to extend or what the mission is, but more how to implement it once decisions are made.

During this time period, do you recall hearing that the mission was viewed as a success within the Department or that the reporting that was being received in Benghazi was useful and valuable to policymakers?

A My recollection was that the reporting coming out of Benghazi was very well received, that there was perceived to be value in having a presence in Benghazi that could help to establish a relationship between the U.S. Government and a presumed new Libyan Government should Qadhafi fall. There was also a desire to address ongoing humanitarian and weapons control issues by being present there.

RPTR KERR

EDTR ROSEN

[2:50 p.m.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Okay. And just real briefly again, to return, there is a sentence that was read to you about Deputy -- then-Deputy Steinberg just being on the Hill to discuss Libya. You mentioned you didn't have a lot of information to share with us about that, but was it your general understanding that the State Department was briefing Congress, providing information to Congress about Libya at this point in time?

A I don't have any specific memories of specific events, but from -- I can extrapolate from this email, among others, that there were discussions on the Hill.

Q Okay. Thank you. And moving now to exhibit 11. This is a June 20, 2011, email. It discusses waivers or exceptions to security standards. First, I'd just like to ask is what is the role of NEA/EX in the waiver or exceptions process, so exceptions to SECCA or waivers to the OSPB standards?

A NEA would -- in general, these kind of waivers would be handled between DS and OBO. NEA might have been asked to clear on a request to clear on language that reflected NEA's ~~in~~equities in a particular issue, but this was not something that we would draft or be involved in the decisionmaking on.

Q And is that, in fact, reflected in this email,

exhibit 11, which says, quote, "This is to confirm that a determination has been made by DS that no waivers or exceptions to security standards are needed for the Benghazi compound property," close quote.

A I would rather not speculate on a document that I have not been copied on, that I was not involved in the discussion of. I will say that the fact that I was not and no one at NEA/EX was involved in that discussion reflects NEA's level of involvement in the determination.

Q Okay. And just further, to that point, I know here it refers to the Benghazi compound, but we had a little discussion about the timing, the sequencing of when the special envoy, special representative moved from facility to facility. Is it clear to you at all from this email, which villa, whether it's an interim villa or a proposed property under consideration that this email is referring to?

A No.

Q Okay. And just very briefly, before we move on, in several of our rounds, there has been a discussion of this distinction between the special representative and the special envoy designations. I would just like to touch on that real briefly. And again, we've been using special envoy only because that's how we've seen that appear in certain documents, and perhaps in press reports about the special envoy when he was -- contemporaneous with when he was in Benghazi.

I would just like to ask, did that designation, whether he was a special envoy or special representative, would that -- would that have any practical effect on your work in assisting the mission in Benghazi at that time?

A No.

Q Okay. So it would have had no consequence whatsoever in terms of your ability to provide assistance to Benghazi?

A No.

Q Or U.S. --

A It was a linguistic distinction.

Q We'd like to move forward now, and I apologize if it feels like a deluge of exhibits are coming your way. We are going to do our best to keep things --

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Before we jump into those. You know, we had spoken with you during our first hour about the action memo in December and your involvement in that, and you indicated you, to the best of your recollection, thought you started drafting around Thanksgiving of 2011?

A Yes.

Q And we've now spent a lot of time talking about kind of 6 months preceding even that timeframe, and just speaking in a general way, do you recall the discussions in the fall of 2011 as Tripoli was being reopened, about continuing the presence in Benghazi, and whether one of the potential options was simply

having no presence in Benghazi?

A There were many discussions related to the reopening of Tripoli and the footprint in Benghazi. The drafting of this memo on the future of Benghazi operations started as a vehicle to provoke discussion about what Benghazi would look like.

Q Did anyone on the ground, and by "on the ground," I mean, in Benghazi or reentering into Tripoli at the time, suggest to you as an option to draft into that memo that there be absolutely no presence in Benghazi, that it be shut down and the only presence in Libya be in Tripoli?

A As we were looking at options of what to include, we would have discussed all possible options, including a closure. I don't recall specifically any recommendation one way or the other --

Q So that was --

A -- in any event, but I don't know.

Q So the option of potentially having a presence was certainly an option that people would have been aware of and would have discussed, to the best of your recollection; is that correct?

A That is correct.

Q And the ultimate recommendation, as reflected in what went up to that memo, was to have a continued presence?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So moving forward, we'd like to spend some time to discuss post the action memo in terms of how it was implemented

and its effect in the Department, specifically on security staffing in Benghazi. And so I mentioned that there will be a series of documents we'll use. We'll do our best to point you to relevant portions just so we can move quickly through this.

But I will mark as exhibit 12, it's an email dated January 6, 2012, from you to [REDACTED] and cc'ing [REDACTED] with the subject, quote, "Re: Possible visit by PMO," close quote. Document number is C05397563, and I'll give you a moment to review that.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 12

Was marked for identification.]

Ms. [REDACTED] Okay.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Okay. So I'll just note at the outset, in the first email in this thread is a January 5th, 2012 email, you wrote to [REDACTED], and it looks like you were floating the idea of a possible visit to Benghazi, and you propose a few dates there. I would just like to briefly ask you, did you ever have occasion to travel to Libya as part of your duties as a post management officer?

A I did.

Q Okay. Do you recall the dates of your trip?

A I was there in early February. Late January, early February.

Q Okay. And what was the primary purpose of your trip?

A In part, it was to -- the intent of the trip as planned was to lay eyes on the facility in Benghazi, have an understanding of more of the risk -- the constraints that they were facing on the ground, to personally experience the security levels and things like that, so that I could better characterize it for the people back in Washington, and then travel to Tripoli and have a similar experience in Tripoli as well as having some face time with the people I was interacting with on a regular basis.

Q Okay.

A In the end, I never made it to Benghazi.

Q Okay.

A I got trapped on a plane for 8 hours in Istanbul because of snow, and ended up going straight to Tripoli.

Q Okay. When you visited Tripoli, the embassy in Tripoli, I imagine your attention at that time was focused on the resource challenges that were facing the embassy at that time; is that a fair characterization?

A I would say that I was continuing to fulfill my function as post management officer from Tripoli as opposed to from Washington.

Q Okay.

A So I was looking at most of the same issues. Frankly, one of the biggest things I was looking at while I was in Tripoli was how to get exercise equipment for our team who were operating with one treadmill that had been [REDACTED] personal

treadmill, and everything else was homemade exercise equipment.

Q And this is in Tripoli, you said?

A Yes.

Q Was that based on requests that you were hearing from post --

A Yes.

Q -- that they were wanted exercise equipment?

During your time in Tripoli, were you part of discussions about security resources in Benghazi?

A Yes. One of my goals had been to sit down with [REDACTED] the RSO, and talk about Benghazi. We had been looking at ways to have Tripoli take on a more leadership role as regards Benghazi, and have it take on more of the role of a constituent post, in essence, of Tripoli.

And one of the things that we were hoping to get post buy-in to was this idea that we would send staff assigned to Tripoli out TDY to Benghazi, and rotate at least one person from Tripoli out to Benghazi so that there would be some more consistent presence on the ground, that is, in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And did [REDACTED], the RSO at the time, did he have any opinions on that proposal?

A I think he thought it was a good idea, but there was some discussion about how we would get those resources.

Q Okay. I'd like to, just quickly, move up the email here. The second email in this is January 6, [REDACTED]

writes to you, quote, "I am supposed to depart post on February 1, but I would be pleased to do everything possible to get it set before I depart. You absolutely should come out here and see the place. Thanks for hosting the call yesterday. Not sure it was that productive, but I think it was useful, if that makes any sense. Fair warning that I'm going to be an increasingly vocal gadfly if DS doesn't sort itself out fairly quickly on staffing and security upgrades appreciating that money and people aren't easy to find these days," close quote.

Do you happen to recall -- [REDACTED], by the way, is, your understanding, is the principal officer in Benghazi at this time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. When he refers to the need for DS to sort itself out fairly quickly, do you -- do you know exactly what he was referring to?

A Around this period of time, there became increasing difficulty in maintaining a stable number of agents on the ground in Benghazi.

Q Okay.

A Some of this was due to visa delays with the Libyans. Some of this was due to transportation difficulties in getting in and out of Benghazi. The plane we were using to get in there at various times went out of service, and DS also had many competing priorities. They were trying to manage multiple crises at once and had to try to figure out how to allocate their staffing --

Q Okay.

A -- adequately.

Q That is helpful context. Based on the concern that Mr. [REDACTED] raises here, did you ever -- I'm sorry. I would like to read just another portion of his email, which is the last paragraph that reads, quote, "I'd also ask for more detail on DS' proposed RSO rotation system here, unclear to me how it works, and how we don't end up with an average of about four officers, vice five, unless their placement timing is truly impeccable. This and the facility upgrade decision should go beyond [REDACTED]. I want to see someone senior in DS on the line for whatever resourcing decisions ultimately get made," close quote.

When [REDACTED] refers to seeing someone senior in DS on the line, and decision going beyond [REDACTED], is your understanding -- who is your understanding of [REDACTED] in this context?

A [REDACTED]

Q Okay. And he the desk officer in DS/IP/NEA?

A Yes.

Q And when [REDACTED] says he wants senior in DS on the line, who did you interpret him to mean by that?

A I don't know specifically who he intended. I presume he meant someone senior to [REDACTED] within the DS organization.

Q Okay. Did you ever discuss with [REDACTED] or mention to him that he should not raise these types of concerns, that he shouldn't be rocking the boat about security staffing in Benghazi?

A No.

Q Okay. Did [REDACTED], the principal officer, did he ever express to you that anyone had ever told him not to raise these types of concerns and not rock the boat about security staffing in Benghazi?

A Not in my memory.

Q Okay. And finally, in this email thread, you responded to the principal officer and you wrote in the second paragraph, quote, "[REDACTED] is working closely with DS leadership on this stuff, not to make excuses, but they are also dealing with issues in Syria and Yemen right now that are also drawing on funds and people at an alarming rate. Frankly, part of the problem and the slow-down is at the DAS level in the DS leadership (please don't forward any further)" close quote.

We had mentioned a moment ago, you were talking about some of the challenges that you felt diplomatic security was facing in providing DS agents. One of those was resource constraints, and here you same to mention two of those. Is that part of that discussion; is that --

A Yes.

Q -- what you were referring to?

A Yes.

Q And when you say that those needs or demands were drawing on funds and people at an alarming rate, what did you mean by that?

A There were -- if we go back to the Arab Spring, and this was still -- even though it was a year later, the Arab Spring was still ongoing, it became more of a year than a season, the crises were ongoing. If I'm not mistaken, this is around the time that things were getting really dicey in Yemen. I recall at some point they stormed our embassy and took our flag, and then Robert -- that was in Syria, and Robert Ford went and got it back, but these are -- there were a lot of these things going on.

We had continued physical presence in those posts, but at some point, we did do some drawdown. I don't remember exactly how that went. I didn't cover those countries. But DS' mechanism for surging security support in was something called the Mobile Security Division. They had several of those Mobile Security Divisions, which were meant to be mobile, agile, and quickly responsive and temporary in nature. Several of those were static because they were being used for security in Libya on a rotating basis, so they were not really available to be used to deal with other crises.

Q Okay. And just so we understand, you mention here both funding and available people?

A Uh-huh.

Q Were both of those at play in terms of providing security staffing in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. In the first sentence I read to you, you

mentioned that [REDACTED] was working closely with DS leadership. Who did you understand that to be?

A My understanding was that [REDACTED] worked up his chain of command. He had told me on several occasions that any time we ask for a DS clearance, he had to make an appointment to go in to brief Charlene Lamb on the issue, so that she could provide her specific clearance, and then it would go from there to Eric Boswell.

I'm not sure if there was an intervening step between Charlene and Eric Boswell or not, but based on those conversations I had had with [REDACTED], I had every reason to believe that he was working closely senior leadership on these issues.

Q Okay. So you learned this from [REDACTED]?

A Yes.

Q [REDACTED] told you --

A And in meetings. I mean, [REDACTED] was not the sole person from DS in large meetings that we would have on these issues. There would be senior people, depending on the level of the meeting.

Q Okay. I understand. The last sentence here, might draw your attention to, you refer to the slowdown of being at the DAS level in DS leadership. Who or what is the DAS level in DS leadership?

A Charlene Lamb. This was -- for the record, this was not my finest hour in terms of what I wrote in the email. It

reflected my frustration at the time. Clearances from DS had become quite slow, in part, because [REDACTED] had to personally brief Charlene Lamb and had to fit time into her schedule to brief her before she would clear on an item. And as things were moving fast and furious, having to wait for him to find time in her busy schedule to brief her to get a clearance became quite difficult, and this was me expressing a bit of my frustration at that.

Q So at this time period, this is January 6th when you write this email, we are only a few days out from the action memo, so when you say that [REDACTED] would have to go brief Charlene Lamb, what, in this context, would he be briefing her on that would require her clearance?

A It would depend on the specific issue. I mean, if we were trying to get a clearance on -- anything that there was a formal memo to the Under Secretary, It would go through the clearance process through DS as part of that process, and he would have to brief her on that, but he would also -- she and others in DS leadership would be briefed on a regular basis on what was going on in Libya.

Q So in this specific context, when you wrote this email in response to the principal officer's concerns about diplomatic security staffing at the Special Mission, was the issue that was being briefed to Ms. Lamb, to DAS Lamb related to security staffing at the Special Mission Compound?

A Based on the context of the email in front of me, I

would presume that that is the case.

Q Okay. So you had mentioned a moment ago that this may not have been your finest hour, that you were expressing some frustration, and we see that in your comment here where it seems you wanted to keep a close hold on your feelings here. I would like to move forward, but I would just like to first understand whether you acted on that frustration in any other way?

So, for instance, did you speak to your supervisory post management officer or your executive director or deputy executive -- executive director about these types of concerns in this time period?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A In at least a few occasions I recall having [REDACTED] reach out directly to Charlene Lamb to discuss aspects of the situation. I can recall moments of frustration where I would get up and stomp around the office and say, "I just need a clearance." These things, it's part and parcel of doing the job, and sometimes you have to express your frustration out loud or else it builds up too far.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 13

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So with that, I think we'd like to enter -- this will be exhibit 13. And for the record, this is an email dated

February 12, 2012, from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], [REDACTED], and you with the subject, quote, "Need ~~Read~~ DS
coverage for Benghazi," close quote. The document number is
C05409829.

Okay. So let's start at the beginning of chain. There's an
email, it's from [REDACTED]. It's to a series of people. You
are cc'd on the line, and I would just like to quote a portion of
this email. It begins, quote, "Apologies for being a broken
record, but beginning tomorrow, Benghazi will be down to two
agents. The third scheduled to arrive Tuesday, is delayed TBD due
to visa issues. Since one agent needs to remain on compound to
protect the other USG employees, this leaves just one DS agent to
travel off compound. RSO procedures at present call for two
agents to do so. We have no drivers and new local guard contract
employees have no experience driving armored vehicles. What this
means is that we will be all but restricted to compound for the
vital February 12-18 timeframe. This will effectively leave us
unable to do any outreach to Libyan nationals during the week, and
we will extremely limited in the ability to obtain any useful
information on reporting."

Just first, who is [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED] was filling the principal officer position in
Benghazi at that time.

Q Okay.

A He replaced [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And next, [REDACTED] replies on the same day, and in the middle of his response he writes, quote, "While the status of Benghazi remains undefined, DS is hesitant to devote resources, and as I indicated previously, this has severely hampered operations in Benghazi. This often means that DS agents are there guarding the compound with two other DOS personnel present. That often also means that outreach and reporting is nonexistent," close quote.

Just for a little bit of context, this appears to be around the time of your visit to Embassy Tripoli; is that correct?

A It is likely right after my visit to Tripoli.

Q Okay. And you'd mentioned that you met with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to discuss security resources generally for the country, for the embassies, as well as the Special Mission. Do you recall RSO [REDACTED] raising this concern here about DS being hesitant to devote resources?

A I don't recall him using those specific words. I recall discussions about the staffing shortages that we were seeing in Benghazi about whether or not the MSD and SST were going to remain in Tripoli and what a platform would look like and how we would get bodies in to perform the security work that needed to be done.

Q Okay. Had you heard this particular concern before either from RSO [REDACTED] or any of the other -- either through [REDACTED] or the other DS agents in Benghazi? The reason I

ask is you mentioned a moment ago that some of your frustration was in the need to get clearance from Charlene Lamb for certain decisions. Here RSO [REDACTED] seems to be expressing a slightly different concern that it's not so much the bureaucracy as it is a decision or a lack of decision by DS. Is this something that you were familiar with at this time?

A Again, my timeline is fuzzy in terms of my memory from several years ago in exactly when things happened. It may be creative memory. I can't be totally honest in saying at this particular time, I remember what conversations were had. I remember conversations at length about security and resources and how to achieve the mission.

Q Did RSO [REDACTED] ever express to you a concern that these decisions were being held up at the DAS level within DS?

A I don't recall specifically whether or not he expressed those concerns at that time. We all know he expressed those concerns later, but it's -- there were constant discussions about these issues with numerous people. I'm not sure my memory attributes to specific individuals.

Q Okay. Moving up the chain here, it appears that you emailed [REDACTED] in Libya management issues. I believe you may have addressed this before, but what is Libya management issues?

A Libya management issues was an email collective we had established within ~~NEA/SCA/EX~~ ^{NEA-SCA/EX} for those people who were working on Libya issues so that we didn't have to always think about am I

copying all the right people. As long as we made sure that we include in that list, everyone who needed to be involved in the discussion within EX would be on the email.

Q Okay.

A So it was somewhere early in the year where we determined that we needed this ~~distro~~^{distro} list, and we developed it. I know for certain that I was on the list, [REDACTED] was on the list, [REDACTED]. Other than that, I'm not sure who else was part of it.

Q And I'd just to understand a little bit better why you felt the need to send this particular thread to executive director for NEA/EX?

A As I mentioned in the last hour, when emails came across my plate that flagged issues that I felt that others working on the issues needed to be aware of, I made sure to share that information. In this particular context, [REDACTED] needed to know that this had been sent around amongst the Tripoli and Benghazi crowd, as well as DS so that he was aware of the situation.

I had briefed him of -- about my conversations after I came out from my trip in Libya. He knew that there were concerns about the staffing. He obviously read my mind when I forwarded him the email, because his next email was to -- the next day he sent an email to Charlene Lamb saying what do you want, you know, can we discuss this?

Q Right. The next day -- I'll just quote from there, [REDACTED]

█ writes, quote, "Charlene, I suspect that the NEA front office will react if the reporting stops. Do you have some time to discuss this tomorrow?" Close quote.

Moving up in the chain, █ then forwards it to █ and asks, quote, "█, what would you like us to say to Charlene?" Close quote.

And farther up in the chain, Ms. █ writes back and responds, thanks everyone, thanks -- quote, "Thanks very much for the opportunity to weigh in on this. For Benghazi, I think the real problem is that DS continues to view Benghazi as an undefined mission, and as such, is unwilling to commit resources to it. Given that M has approved Benghazi's continued existence through the end of the calendar year, DS needs to come up with a long-term plan for staffing the mission that includes three DS agents at all times (one to stay on the compound, the other two to support moves)" close quote.

So you had just returned from ^{Embassy} ~~the~~ Tripoli at this time --

A Yes.

Q -- I think you mentioned a moment ago. Was this belief that DS viewed the Special Mission as an undefined mission, was that something that you heard while you were at post? Did any of the staff share that with you in your discussions with them?

A I don't recall the specific words, but I recall the concept or the notion.

Q Okay. Did you personally have the sense that DS viewed

this as an undefined mission?

A I was aware that DS had many crises that they were struggling to react to simultaneously. I was aware that DS viewed this as something that was a continuing requirement without funds to support.

Q Okay. And just to connect that back to our discussion about the action memo, because I think we talked about one of the purposes being able to provide a mandate and to obtain funding through whatever means or whatever resources that were available. Did you ever say to [REDACTED], we have this action memo, this is our mandate, we need to find the staffing here, or anything to that effect?

A It is likely I did. I don't have specific recollection of a conversation in which I did that.

Q Okay. I note here that Ms. [REDACTED] makes a request, or states that DS needs to come up with a long-term plan for staffing for the mission. Do you recall whether that ever happened going forward?

A I recall many discussions about how to staff Benghazi. Whether or not DS had a defined plan for how they were going to do it, I don't have specific knowledge of that.

Q Okay. Do you recall that [REDACTED], the executive director, met with Charlene Lamb at some point in this timeframe to discuss these issues here?

A I do not recall a specific meeting. From this email in

exhibit 13, I'm aware that they were likely going to have a phone call. [REDACTED] may have met with Charlene, but I don't know specifically if he did or not.

Q Do you recall hearing anything about the outcome or any do-outs in particular from that meeting if there were -- if there was such a meeting?

A The meeting was envisioned to ^{tee up} [REDACTED] meeting with Charlene later in the week.

Q Okay. And that's helpful in actually leading the discussion forward here, as I note that she mentions here, "I'm hoping to raise this with DS when I meet with them later this week." Do you recall if that meeting took place?

A Yes, it did.

Q Okay. And did you prepare any materials for Ms. [REDACTED] or any talking points to use during that meeting?

A I may have prepared talking points for her. I don't recall specifically. I am certain we had discussions preparing her for the meeting.

Q Okay. And was this a meeting in which -- did she happen to be back in D.C. at this time or was she still in -- at the embassy and conducting it remotely? Do you recall?

A [REDACTED] was out on R&R travel and back for consultations.

Q Okay. And so she would have been meeting with a variety of folks, looking at here --

A Yes.

Q -- to include DS; is that accurate? Okay. And you mentioned you couldn't recall if you prepared any talking points. I don't know if thinking about preparing for that meeting, whether that helps refresh your recollection about whether [REDACTED] did, in fact, meet with Charlene Lamb?

A Again, I don't know if [REDACTED] met with Charlene or not. I know for certain [REDACTED] met with Charlene that week.

Q Okay. Did you attend that meeting?

A I did.

Q Okay. Maybe you could just walk us through that meeting, what sorts of issues were raised, what the response was from Ms. Lamb?

A [REDACTED] essentially briefed Charlene on the situation in Tripoli, primarily because that's where [REDACTED] was currently serving. They then discuss Benghazi some. And [REDACTED] was primarily seeking to get clarity from Charlene on DS' plan moving forward for security in both Tripoli and Benghazi.

During the meeting, there was what appeared to be a different policy set forward by Charlene about our security posture in Benghazi that advocated for local hire drivers and only one armed DS officer per vehicle with some reference to maybe in the future, once people had the foreign affairs counter threat training, some individuals could potentially self drive. That seemed very different from what the previous stated policy of having two DS in any vehicle leaving the compound in Benghazi. It seemed a

significant difference in policy, which raised alarm bells.

Q Did she explain why that policy was changing?

A There were comparisons made to our presence in other high-threat locations. I believe Yemen and Syria were mentioned among potentially others, and discussion of our security stance in those locations and a desire to adjust the posture in a way to make it more in line with the way that we operate in similar environments elsewhere.

Q And that policy was different than the policy that was then in effect --

A Yes.

Q -- in Benghazi? Okay. You mentioned that it raised alarm bells. Could you elaborate on what you mean? Did it raise specific concerns for you? For Ms. [REDACTED]?

A The way that this policy was stated in the meeting made it sound like that had been DS' position for quite awhile, which was not our understanding of the position, and it changed operating assumptions under which we had been working. And we took this meeting in mind as we worked on [REDACTED] other interactions through her time there to raise concerns with people like Under Secretary Kennedy and others to say, you know, we need to address this issue and come up with a mutually-agreed policy on the way forward.

Q Are you familiar with the term or the phrase "emergency action committee meetings"?

A Yes.

Q So in the course of our review, we've had the opportunity to review certain emergency action committee cables that would have been produced by post at either Embassy Tripoli or Benghazi, and some examples of those would include changes to or proposed changes to travel security policy.

A Yes.

Q And what you're describing here sounds a little bit like travel security policy. Is that --

A Yes.

Q Okay. Would that ordinarily be something that would be set or determined by post through an EAC mechanism?

A It would normally originate with post in consultation with Washington.

Q Okay. And in this instance, do you recall if post had generated this idea or consulted with Main State at all about this change that you were hearing in terms of what DS agents should be tasked with doing in Benghazi?

A It did not sound to me like something I had heard before.

Q Okay. So we're running a little short on time. We may revisit this in the next hour. I would just like to hopefully close out this particular meeting that you had and ask, you mentioned that the issue may have been escalated; is that --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- right? Can you elaborate further on that, explain what specific steps, what actions were taken following this meeting?

A I don't have specific memory of what actions were taken. There was a desire to increase awareness of this change in policy and find a way to mitigate it in a way that made sense to ensure continued security for our folks in Benghazi and Tripoli.

Q Okay. Did Ms. [REDACTED], did she express her concerns to DAS Lamb during this meeting --

A Yes.

Q -- about the change in policy? And what was DAS Lamb's response to those concerns being raised?

A I don't have specific memory. I remember that she referenced competing resources and a desire to use more static resources to address the security needs in Tripoli and Benghazi, to allow resources such as the Marine's -- the mobile security divisions and the SST, which I can't remember what SST stands for, but to allow those to be what they're supposed to be, which is temporary and available to be responsive to new crises.

They had taken on a much more static role in Libya, and she was trying to find ways to create a more static footprint that would use resources in a more conventional way as opposed to this mechanism that was meant to be crisis responsive.

Q Okay. And so when we talk about static, we're referring to both Tripoli and Benghazi, right?

A Yes.

Q And it sounds like, was much of the discussion about Tripoli or did it include a blend of both Benghazi and Tripoli?

A I would say the large majority of the conversation between [REDACTED] and Charlene was specific to Tripoli, because there was discussion of when the MSD and when the SST would be pulling out, and we were trying to figure out how we were going to mitigate that change, but there was also discussion specific to Benghazi because of the continued shortage of personnel on the ground.

Q Sure. And do you recall one of the things being discussed in this meeting, the need to prepare some sort of quantitative assessment or justification for the number of security personnel that were being sought, either in Tripoli or Benghazi?

A I don't remember if that discussion specifically occurred during [REDACTED] meeting with Charlene, but I am aware that there was a request to post to develop an -- and it came in part from my conversations with [REDACTED] while I was on the ground in Tripoli. We wanted post to lay out a specific plan for the future as to how they thought security would be best met with more permanent resources in Tripoli and how Benghazi could be more effectively staffed.

Q Okay. And do you recall in the course of those discussions, those conversations, what the level that was sought

in Benghazi was in terms of numbers of security staffing?

A I know that in the future of Benghazi operations memo from December 2011, there was a five -- a number of five security personnel. I'm also aware, though, that as our total numbers began to dwindle and we had fewer people on the ground, that there was really a minimum need of three, one to stay on the compound and two -- two to allow one in each vehicle for vehicle movements, have two separate vehicle movements, but that's presuming that none of those three got any down time, so no rest time, no -- no time to sleep, even if it were moving forward, but three was really the base minimum that was required.

Q Okay. And do you recall who would have requested three, or a minimum of three, where that requirement would have come from? Would that have come from post, for instance?

A It would have been a discussion between Benghazi, Tripoli, DS, to figure out what the base minimum was.

Q And was the number three, was that tied to the discussion of whether DS agents should be used as drivers in Benghazi?

A In part, yes.

Q Okay. We just mentioned you couldn't recall if the quantitative assessment was tied to this specific meeting, but when post eventually did submit that, do you recall how well that was received by Main State, specifically the Bureau of Diplomatic Security?

A I wouldn't have been present in discussions with DS as to their reaction to the memo.

Q Okay.

A Or the cable.

Q Okay. So you never had any follow-up discussions with [REDACTED] about it?

A I probably had various discussions with [REDACTED], but in terms of what the actual reaction was, I'm not sure I have anything there.

Q Sure. Okay. Well --

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And then before we switch over for the next hour, there was -- we discussed a little bit with you earlier with regard to an exchange with [REDACTED] and he had said he was going to become an increasingly vocal gadfly, and we asked you some questions about that, but did he ever come back to you and say that he had felt that he been penalized, retaliated against, or in any other way, an adverse action taken against him for being, in his view, an increasingly vocal gadfly?

A I don't recall any discussions with him of that sort. I remember discussions with him about per diem issues after he came back. That's really the main discussion he and I had.

Q So he didn't certainly raise any concerns about that?

Do you recall anyone else expressing to you, and speaking, in particular, with regard to personnel posted in Benghazi or in

Tripoli and who were dealing with staffing issues in Benghazi, do you ever recall anyone else coming to you and saying that they had been told not to express their concerns or advocate their concerns with Main State?

A I don't recall a conversation like that.

Q And do you recall anyone coming to you and saying they felt they had been penalized or retaliated against or adverse action had been threatened because they were speaking up about concerns they may have had with regard to staffing?

A I don't recall a conversation like that.

Mr. Kenny. Okay. We'll go off the record. Thank you.

[Discussion off the record.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Let's go back on the record. It is 3:50 in the afternoon, and we anticipate this to be our last round, unless of course you would like to extend your stay and come back and visit with us again.

A I am happy if you say this is your last round.

Q Okay. As you have seen throughout the day, I have some follow-up questions on the questions you were asked in the last hour, so let's go back there first.

Do you -- there was a discussion in the last hour when the -- in the November, December timeframe, when the memo was being circulated, to extend Benghazi throughout 2012, and one of the things that my colleague, Ms. Sawyer, asked you was, was closure

ever -- closure of Benghazi ever an option, and you said yes, it was an option. But as I recall, and I just want to clarify, was -- do you recall any specific conversation or discussion in which the closure of Benghazi was actively discussed or was discussed?

A In official conversations or just in conversations in general?

Q Let's start with official conversations.

A In official conversations, as we met to discuss options related to the Benghazi footprint, that was always one of the items that was out there as a potential decision point. As we were looking at security and others things, closure was always an option.

Q And it was discussed?

A Yes.

Q Okay. What about in informal discussions?

A Informal discussions, likely, every day I said why can't we just shut this place down, but then I also said why can't we just explode it larger. I mean, it was part of -- part of the discussion of what are we trying to achieve? How are we trying to achieve it? What do we need to do to make it happen?

Q In your opinion, did it have to change in some way to make it either effective or change in closing it down because it wasn't being effective?

A I was not in a position to judge its effectiveness. That was not my role in EX. My role was to determine what

footprint we needed in order to support the function of our presence in Benghazi.

Q Okay. You were also shown exhibit 12, which was the January 6 email exchange at the top between you and [REDACTED], and then -- and [REDACTED], the three of you are on two of the three email exchanges in this exhibit, and it regarded staffing by the diplomatic security agents principally in Benghazi; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Yes. Okay. This is January 6th of 2012, and the memo extending Benghazi had been signed on December 27th, 2011. I guess what I wanted to try and find out is had that memo, the December 27th, 2011 memo, been widely circulated? Was this a residual problem from before that memo was signed or -- and was that memo to take care of this problem or was this a continuing problem, notwithstanding that memo? And I understand that's a long explanation, but --

A That's a very multi-parted question.

Q Yes. Can you take it apart for me and -- first of all, just answer what parts of it you can, and then we'll -- I'll do some follow-ups.

A The presence in Benghazi had, over several months, morphed in many different directions. There was not an underlying document outlining the plan and the structure of which I can remember at this point in time. The staffing issues had begun to

arise around the time that we began staffing Tripoli and continued. Part of what we were trying to do with the future of Benghazi operations memo was to put in writing, with everyone agreeing to it, this is what the plan is moving forward.

Was part of that to try to force DS to staff it more fully? There was likely some underlying desire to have that be the case, but there was also just a genuine desire to define the requirement. Everyone was putting forth a good faith effort to react to the situation at hand. Many, including those in DS and OBO, were reacting to multiple competing priorities and crises at the same time, and trying to document it and create that formal decisionmaking process was done in an effort to memorialize this is how it should be.

Q Because in this conversation in January -- in early January of 2012, I don't see reference to that memo or something like, you know, some reference like we fixed it in the memo that was just signed, and you know, perhaps due to the holidays, people hadn't seen it. Was there an underlying recognition that the memo had been signed when you were having this conversation?

A Honestly, I had been out on leave right after I sent the memo out for clearance, and I probably was shortly returned from leave. I am unaware of what the discussion had been prior about the signing of memo.

Q Okay.

Mr. Evers. You want to take a look at page 2?

Ms. [REDACTED] "This was just signed yesterday." Oh, yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I'm sorry, what --

A On page 2 of [REDACTED] email from Friday, January 6th.

Q Uh-huh.

A It makes reference to [REDACTED] claiming he hadn't seen the recent request for security upgrades outside of the villa move project. His complaint that in effect, quote, This was just signed yesterday, so we haven't done anything, when this memo has been in the works for a month.

That's making reference to, I believe, the future of Benghazi operations memo, so it sounds like even though the memo was dated December 27th, that doesn't necessarily mean that's when it was signed by Patrick Kennedy, so I'm not sure. So let me look at the signed version. If I can read his handwriting there.

Generally speaking, the date on these action memos, I'm looking at exhibit 4, the date on these action memos that's typed on is the date that it is submitted to the principal for signature. That doesn't necessarily mean that the decision is made on the date that is dated on the memo.

Q Could you look at exhibit 2. And in the upper left-hand corner there is a bunch of stuff that's been imprinted on it.

A Yes.

Q And at the bottom there is a date of January 5th, 2012. Does that date signify anything?

A That would indicate that that's the day that action was taken on the memo.

Q Because once action is taken, then it's input in the system in some way?

A Correct.

Q And is that what all of these long lists of letters mean?

A The long list of letters means that these are the offices to which copies of the signed memo would have been distributed.

Q On the date it was signed?

A On the date it was signed.

Q Okay. So this -- so even though exhibit 2, the action memo for Under Secretary Kennedy is dated December 25th, 2011, it is your opinion, from working in the State Department for 20 years and this electronic stamp on it, that it wasn't signed until January 5th?

A Correct.

Q Okay. Thank you. Back -- so then your conversation, your email conversation with [REDACTED], as recounted in the January 6th email exchange, which was exhibit 12, was literally the day after it was signed?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So DS had not been given any, essentially, opportunity to fulfill what they had committed to in -- in the action memo?

A Correct. And from a bureaucratic standpoint, the electronic version of the signed memo may have been distributed the night of the 5th of January, but at what time it got distributed out to the various action offices for their awareness, I don't have any idea on that timeline.

Q Okay. There is a reference on page 2 of exhibit 12 in the [REDACTED] exchange to you on January 6th, the last line of the first paragraph, which is a partial paragraph, where he says -- and just reading not the full last line, but quote, "When this memo has been in the works for a month and anyone could see this decision coming (especially DS which was holding it up)," did you -- did you share that assessment with Mr. [REDACTED] that DS was the one that was holding up the memo?

A As I mentioned previously, the clearance process for the memo was very long and involved, and it was not purely a paper exercise. There were many meetings and discussions surrounding the edits and changes to the document. It was a living document that morphed over time.

There were many, many deep discussions in various bureaus about how they wanted to characterize the aspects that related to their functional area of responsibility in that memo. I don't necessarily think that DS was the only thing holding up the memo.

We had equally long and frustrating discussions with the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations and trying to get the Maghreb office to give us a definitive paragraph on the purpose of staying in Benghazi. The paragraph morphed multiple times because the situation morphed. There was always something changing. I wouldn't necessarily characterize that DS was the only --

Q Okay.

A -- holdup.

Q It just took that long?

A It took a long time.

Q Okay. And then just a couple of questions on exhibit 13, which is the February 12th, 2012, email exchange regarding again DS staffing issues, the SST in Tripoli, pulling the MSD, and a variety of subjects. As I recall, you said this was right after you got back from Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So you had met with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] over in Tripoli and seen for yourself what they were up against?

A During my time in Tripoli, I met with virtually everyone in the mission to talk through their issues, especially on the management side of things.

Q Did they try and capture you and make you stay?

A They asked me a few times if I would stay.

Q Yes. Okay.

A I think Benghazi asked me to stay in Tripoli, too.

Q There is a reference in this memo that there were going to be three agents in Benghazi, one to stay at the compound and two to be devoted to off-compound moves. We're now, you know, 5 weeks after the December 11 signing in January of '12 action memo, and the conversation is about having only three agents in Benghazi. What happened?

A There was a series of complex issues that arose involving staffing, medivacs, visa issues, transportation issues that started making it more and more difficult to get DS personnel into Benghazi, any personnel, not just DS personnel. And it became apparent that five -- while it would have been ideal to have five on the ground, needed to find ways to identify what the bare minimum was to ensure that we at least had that profile in Benghazi.

Q And that's -- and so by February 12th, it was down to three as the bare minimum?

A Yes.

Q You also talked about [REDACTED] came back to D.C. and had meetings, and you attended the meeting that she had with Charlene Lamb. Did she also meet with Under Secretary Kennedy?

A It is likely that she did. I don't recall specifically if she met with him during that series of meetings, but it was not uncommon for her to meet with Under Secretary Kennedy.

Q Okay. And in your -- I assume that you had a lot of

conversations with her while she was attending her meetings back in Washington?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did she ever convey to you that she raised with Under Secretary Kennedy the issue of DS security support to Libya, in general, Tripoli, and Benghazi?

A As I don't recall if she specifically had a meeting with Under Secretary Kennedy during that period of time, I don't have specific recollection of her telling me whether or not she raised an issue such as that with the Under Secretary at the time. If she had met with Under Secretary Kennedy during that time, which she may have done, there is every likelihood that she would have raised that issue with him, but I don't have specific recollection of that.

Q Would there be some sort of documentation regarding those type of meetings, anytime, that DCM or an ambassador comes back and meets with the principals of the State Department?

A If someone were meeting with Under Secretary Kennedy, for example, there would likely be a briefing checklist that was prepared for said meeting. I don't know specifically if one was created for a meeting for her with him at that time.

Q And who would have prepared those for the Ambassador or DCM when they come back to have those meetings?

A The checklists actually are not for the Ambassador or DCM. They are for the principal.

Q Okay.

A And that would have been fallen to the action officer. I'm talking about a hypothetical document here. I don't have a specific document I'm referring to.

Q So you would do logistics, [REDACTED] would do DS security, or at least start the draft of those?

A When I arranged meetings for [REDACTED] with Patrick Kennedy -- I think this is a more specific way to reference it, given that I don't know specifically if a meeting happened in that timeframe. When I would arrange a meeting for her with Under Secretary Kennedy, I would be tasked with drafting a briefing checklist, I would solicit input from DS and OBO, but I would also provide him with any ^{NEA-SCA/EX'S} ~~SCA/EX'S~~ opinion on where those issues lay at that period of time.

Q Once again --

A But DS and OBO would have to clear on the document.

Q Okay. And once again, you were the funnel for the information?

A Yes.

Q Okay. You talked in the last hour about your awareness of a lot of competing demands on DS' resources at the time, the whole Arab Spring, that was more than a season, it lasted a year, and just the number of overseas posts that the State Department has. You have familiarity with Syria and Yemen as well as Libya; is that correct?

A Some.

Q Some. Okay. Can you, to the best of your ability, kind of compare and contrast what Libya had in Tripoli and in Benghazi versus what Syria and Yemen had, and in that just the physical security they had in their embassies, did Syria and Yemen's facilities meet OSPB standards, you know, was the footprint similar or disparate? Is there any comparisons that you can make?

A This is a very, very broad question.

Q Yes.

A I am not an expert on these issues, nor do I have any physical familiarity with Sana'a or with Damascus. I am not an expert and not able to comment on those. What I can tell you, though, is that both Damascus and Sana'a were permanent embassy facilities.

Q So they would presumably have met OSPB standards or had waivers and exceptions in place?

A I am unaware of what arrangements were made surrounding those facilities, but I know that they were permanent U.S. government facilities. Benghazi was not a U.S. Government facility -- a permanent U.S. Government facility.

Q Was Tripoli a permanent or a temporary facility in -- once you reentered?

A When we reentered --

Q Or reopened.

A When we reentered Tripoli in September of 2011, our embassy that had been there had been burned by Qadhafi's people in May of 2011. It was uninhabitable. Our people eventually set up a temporary facility in the former Ambassador's residence that they turned into office space while they were setting up a separate compound that would eventually become the interim embassy facility. So one was temporary in the lead up to an interim facility.

Q Okay. And do you recall that there was an official signing off by Under Secretary Kennedy that the Tripoli facility could be occupied on the interim basis as is?

A Which facility are you referring to?

Q The temporary one, before they went -- I'm sorry, the temporary one before they went to the interim one.

A The one in the Ambassador's residence?

Q Yes.

A I do not recall a specific document. It is possible that something was generated for him to sign off on.

Q Okay. One of the aspects of security at overseas posts is the ability of the host nation to offer security support to U.S. facilities over there and to U.S. personnel over there. Am I correct in that understanding?

A In general, part of a bilateral relationship is that the host government provides some security support for a diplomatic presence on the ground in country.

Q Particularly in 2012, from once it was decided to maintain a presence in Benghazi through 2012, what was your understanding of the host nation support in Benghazi?

A The Transitional National Council, which eventually took on the role of government -- or governing body within Libya had made arrangements for some external security to be made available to us. My understanding is that it was actually provided by one of the militias that was loyal to the TNC.

Q Was there also local guard force services in Benghazi?

A At some point, I cannot remember exactly when we began to have a local guard force, but we did.

Q And do you recall whether there were any problems with that local guard force?

A The local guard force was started from scratch in a place where we had not previously had local guards, where it was not common to have local guards that were of the caliber that we would have expected to provide security. I recall that various folks from DS were involved in training the personnel. I don't have specifics on what training was involved, but I recall that there were discussions of the need for training for these individuals. I also recall discussions of the need for more uniforms.

Q And do you recall discussions entailing the fact that you couldn't use foreign companies to feed the local guard force?

A Could you be more specific?

Q Like, do you recall if there was any restriction by the Transitional National Council, the interim Libyan Government that they would not allow foreign countries to come in to provide security services?

A I remember there was discussion that we could not bring in like a U.S.-staffed company to provide the services, but I don't know anything more than that.

Q Okay. But definitely a U.S. security company could not come in and do that?

A I remember discussions that we couldn't have a Blackwater or something like that come in --

Q Right.

A -- to -- yes.

Q Okay. What -- beyond DS agents, and you talked a little bit about the mobile security deployment or detachment, I don't remember which, the D?

A MSD, division, mobile security division.

Q Okay. And they're, as you describe, sort of a surge protection force that's supposed to be able to react to emerging threats in security situations. Would that be a generalized way of describing them?

A My understanding is there was a dual function to MSDs. Not only were they there for surge support in crises, but they were also there for training to be able to go around to various embassies and provide additional training to guard forces and

others, and that was their main purpose, hence, the mobile part of MSD.

Q Was an MSD team ever sent to Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q An entire team?

A They -- the initial entry group that joined Chris Stevens on his arrival into Benghazi was comprised of members of an MSD. Whether it was an entire MSD or not, I'm unaware.

Q So MSD were the DS security officials that accompanied Chris Stevens in April of 2011?

A Yes.

Q After you moved to the villa compound, did MSD ever devote a team to Benghazi?

RPTR DEAN

EDTR ROSEN

[4:15 p.m.]

Ms. [REDACTED] I don't believe so, but I am not certain as to the specifics.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Do you know was there any discussion as to why? Was there any prohibition other than resources, was there any other type of policy, prohibition on using MSD resources in Benghazi?

A I personally was focused on ensuring that we had the platform necessary to support the people who were there to do the mission that had been identified for Benghazi. I was not focused on the nature of the security elements that were present in Benghazi. I was focused on the fact that we had security present in Benghazi, and that DS had determined that that was the platform that was needed to provide the security. Whether or not they were MSD, honestly, I didn't know, nor did I truly care what their title was or where they were coming from. I just wanted to make sure we had the security that we needed.

Q You mentioned earlier SST?

A Yes.

Q And what -- not what the words stand for, but generally, whose resource is it? How do you get it? How do they get deployed, that kind of thing. You don't have to tell me what

SS -- I know it is security team, but I don't remember --

A I don't remember the name of it. SST is a DOD resource.

Q And do you recall is there a number associated with an SST team, is it 8, 16, 32, 50?

A Your guess is at good as mine. We had an awful lot of them in Tripoli. I remember having to count them coming in and out and having to track their movements on our airplane coming in and out. How many there were? I don't know. There were a lot.

Q Double digits?

A Yes.

Q So at least 10 or more? Was an SST team ever deployed to Benghazi?

A To my knowledge, no.

Q Do you know of any reason why?

A I was not privy to those discussions, DS are the experts and the determiners of our security needs.

Q Well, we have looked at these emails back and forth between yourself and [REDACTED] and yourself and [REDACTED] who were there, who were using you as the funnel of information complaining about the lack of security assets in Benghazi. I just was wondering if you had any discussions with them or anyone else regarding other types of security assets that been used at other places around the world and whether they were available in Benghazi?

A I recall, at some point, discussion of some of the SST in Tripoli being sent to Benghazi to help fill in gaps. How much that happened, I am unaware. We were looking at everything. Benghazi was not normal, was not usual, was not something that was easily compared to other presences around the world, so we were working with DS, who was working with DOD on identifying any and all resources that were available to be tapped.

Q Do you know what a FAST team is? F-A-S-T?

A They are Marines, that is all the I know.

Q And a lot of them?

A They can be varying sizes.

Q Were they ever in Libya?

A Maybe. I don't recall specifically.

Q Is there, for these military assets, either a FAST team or the SST? Is there any cost to the State Department to have them?

A As I have said before, it depends. When any request for support from another agency is invoked -- I am speaking in generalities here -- but whenever we place a request in, like when we asked AID for help in contracting for the ferry to bring the vehicles in and for the vehicles and things like that, the State Department generally asks that the support be provided on a non-reimbursable basis, so that the State Department does not have to pull out of State Department budget to pay for such things. Sometimes those agencies come back and say, we will provide you

the support on a reimbursable basis. I do not have recollection as to whether the support was provided on a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis.

Q Okay. Were you aware of something known as the White House's "boots on the ground" policy, or "no boots on the ground" policy?

A I was aware there was a "no boots on the ground" policy. There was a lot of joking about well, I guess everybody has to wear loafers.

Q What did you understand that policy to be?

A No uniformed military on the ground.

Q Did that apply to Libya, to your knowledge?

A The "no boots on the ground" policy that I was aware of was specifically in relation to Libya. Who created the policy, or whose policy it was, I am unaware.

Q Did that prevent, in any way, military assets from being deployed to Benghazi?

A The "no boots on the ground policy" was a subject of conversation as we were interacting about DOD's support assets and how they could be used in Libya, whether it was in relation to Benghazi or Tripoli, I do not have specific recollection.

Q And who was a part of those conversations?

A Everyone that I talked to. I don't have specific names for you.

Q All right. In June of 2012, you left NEA/EX; is that

correct?

A Yes.

Q Do you remember when in June of 2012?

A I do not have a specific date in my head.

Q Did you recall whether you were there for most of June?

A It was generally somewhere in the middle of the month, but I don't know actually when. I had started a slow phaseout to kind of wean myself off of Libya and wean my replacement, who was a first tour officer to ensure that as we filled the gap, he would have some support to figure out what he was doing.

Q That was an individual I believe you identified as [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED]

Q And he had not been in a position like yours before?

A He had been working in our office for 8 or 9 months, I believe. He had been serving as a post management officer. He had not been covering Libya up to that point.

Q What country had he covered right before Libya?

A He had multiple countries, I don't know specifically which countries. I believe he picked up at least part of my former portfolio, but I don't recall exactly what he had.

Q But he was in NEA?

A Yes.

Q A series of security incidents occurred in Benghazi in June of 2012, and I wanted to explore with you how many of them you were aware of and that is why I was asking you the questions about your transitioning in trying to figure out which ones might have occurred while you were still in your position. Do you recall some rather significant security incidents occurring in Benghazi as you were leaving NEA/EX?

A My timeline is a little bit fuzzy; if you give me specific incidences, I can let you know if I remember them. But a lot happened over the timeframe I covered Libya.

Q Do you recall an incident wherein an IED exploded at the wall of the compound and blew a big hole in it?

A Yes.

Q That was approximately early June of 2012?

A I remember an incident where something blew up, I don't remember it being an IED.

Q An explosion of some sort?

A Yes.

Q It do you recall that there was an attempted assassination of the U.K. ambassador in Benghazi?

A I recall an attack on the convoy of the U.K. ambassador.

Q Do you recall what was used to attack?

A No.

Q So you don't recall whether it was an RPG or anything

like that?

A I don't recall.

Q Do you recall being advised that there was a large Islamist rally in downtown Benghazi where there were close to 1,000 people protesting and waiving al Qaeda banners?

A Specifically, in June of 2012, I don't remember.

Q Do you remember that general incident occurring during the time that you were on the clock, shall we say, with NEA/EX on Libya issues?

A I recall many incidences in Tripoli and Benghazi where a group of many, many people started to assemble for a demonstration. It is not that hard in that part of the world to pull together any large number of people very quickly.

Q In the time you were there before you left in June of 2012, do you recall any discussions of potentially closing Benghazi because of these incidents?

A I recall discussion of security of post, discussion of trip wires, looking at what we needed to do to ensure the continued safety and security of our personnel.

[████████ Exhibit No. 14

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I am going to hand you what is marked as Exhibit 14.

If you just take a moment to look that over. This is Exhibit 14 is an email exchange dated June 30, 2012. The various

participants are [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and yourself on this.

A Uh-huh.

Q And the first one is from [REDACTED], and I believe you described him earlier you thought you recalled he was in Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q And what was he doing in Tripoli?

A I believe he was filling in as a management officer. He was a retiree on a what we call While Actually Employed status.

Q Is that also the acronym WAE?

A Yes.

Q And so he would be like the head management person in Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q And so he writes to [REDACTED] and copies you and asks, quote, "Are you hearing any talk at the NEA front office or M levels regarding the closing of Benghazi?" And you are cc'd on the response, but [REDACTED] is the one that responds. Do you recall Tripoli inquiring at this time regarding this?

A I do not recall this particular discussion. At this point, I was likely in the process of transitioning out, and I was copied for my awareness, but not necessarily for my action. Honestly, I was probably fixated on trying to get myself out of EX.

Q I anticipate it had been a stressful tenure in EX. A lot had happened while you were there?

A Yes.

Q Would that be a fair assessment of it?

A Yes.

Q You don't have any recall of who all in the Department was discussing whether Benghazi needed to close?

A No.

Q After you left NEA/EX, did [REDACTED] or others reach out to you for institutional knowledge or keep you in the loop as to what was happening in Libya throughout the summer of 2012?

A There was a period in time when I filled in up Under Secretary Kennedy's office for about 6 weeks covering NEA, and I continued to watch those issues during that time. It is possible I was copied on messages during that time. Other than that, there was no continual dialogue. There may have been an odd question here or there, but nothing.

Q When was that 6-week period when you were in Under Secretary Kennedy's office?

A Immediately after I left EX, before I joined ^{HR/CDA} ~~HRCEA~~.

Q And do you remember when you joined whatever those letters were on the HR department?

A It was probably somewhere between mid- to late June and early August. I was bridging a gap between two special assistants in the M family. And given everything that was given on in the

NEA, they wanted to have somebody who had familiarity with all the players.

Q Okay.

A So they had me fill in there.

Q Okay. In the time you were at Under Secretary Kennedy's office, were you aware of, privy to, or part of any discussion by anyone from the White House national security staff who was going to travel to Benghazi?

A I don't have specific recollection of any discussions. If something came up, I might have been copied on it. I don't have any --

Q At that time, was Under Secretary Kennedy still personally approving everybody who traveled into and out of Libya?

A It is my understanding that he was.

Q Even though embassy Tripoli had reopened?

A I am not 100 percent certain, honestly.

Q Your recollection was that he still was?

A But he was also approving Syria and Yemen, there was a lot of moving pieces. The specific time line as to when he stopped approving travel into Tripoli, I don't know for certain.

Q Your recollection, though, is that it listed past Tripoli reopening?

A Yes.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 15

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I want to hand you what I have marked as exhibit 15. And you are not on this email exchange, but it is an email exchange dated July 26, 2012, and bears document number C05579456. But I would direct your attention to the bottom portion of this where -- let me just ask you, do you recognize any of the names in the "from," "to," and "cc" of the bottom portion of this email, the first -- the starting email of this exchange?

A I do not know [REDACTED]; [REDACTED], the name sounds familiar. I think he was probably DS, but I don't remember him specifically; [REDACTED], of course, we established that I knew; [REDACTED] I knew; [REDACTED] was filling in that principal officer position in Benghazi.

Q So these are obviously people talking about Benghazi-related issues, and I just want to read into the record that this email exchange says, "Please see attached operational plan for the upcoming weekend visit of NSC staff director for Libya, Ben Fishman to Benghazi." And I provided this as a frame of reference to see if it refreshed your recollection in any way as to a trip by Ben Fishman to Benghazi?

A No.

Q Do you recall if, during this time period, that you would have been in Under Secretary Kennedy's office at this time?

A I transitioned out somewhere at the end of July or early August. I don't remember the exact time.

Q Would the State Department have put together any type of materials for somebody from the White House National Security Council who was going to travel to Benghazi? Would that be typical?

A If something like that were created, it would have not been done by NEA/EX, so I don't know specifically.

Q Who would have been -- who would have had been charged with preparing briefing papers for a White House official to travel to Libya?

A He's a staff level, I am not certain that anything would have been created, but it would likely have come out of the Maghreb office, if something did.

Q And who had Libya in the Maghreb office at that time?

A I don't remember.

Q Prior to your leaving NEA/EX, or during the time that you worked in Under Secretary Kennedy's office, were you aware or ever privy to any conversations or meetings regarding Secretary Clinton making a trip to Benghazi?

A No, not that I recall.

Q Not aware that there was any discussion of a planned trip for her in the fall of 2012?

A I do not recall anything like that.

Q And grant it, you were not there, but in August of 2012, there was an information memo that went to the Secretary regarding the deteriorating security situation in Libya. In the

time that you worked in NEA/EX, do you recall ever preparing such a memo for the Secretary?

A Such a memo would not have come from EX in the first place, likely.

Q Who would have been the primary drafter of such a memo?

A If it was talking about the declining security situation, it would have depended on whether it was about the policy side of what was going on in the political climate, versus whether it was specific to security of our personnel.

Q So if it was political instability, it would have come out of the policy side of the house?

A Yes.

Q And if it was overall violence and increases in attacks against Westerners or something, it would have come out of the security side of the house?

A It depends.

Q Okay.

A If it were specific to the security and safety of our personnel, it likely would have come out of DS. If it were more general about the situation on the ground, it likely would have been drafted by the Libya desk in conjunction and consultation with Benghazi.

Q By Libya desk, would that be NEA/MAG?

A Yes.

Q Were you working on the day of the attack in Benghazi

on September 11, 2012?

A I am not 100 percent certain. I remember when I heard about the attack, I was in my home. In the job that I was working at that time in the Bureau of Human Resources, I teleworked on those days. I believe that was a Wednesday, but I don't remember for certain. I teleworked Wednesdays, that is the only reason it is sticking in my head. I remember being present at home when I heard about the attack. I don't know if I had just gotten home from work or if I was working from home that day.

Q Were you called back in any way to augment resources or anything? Did you have any role that you played in the aftermath of the attack to assist in any way, given your background in Libya matters?

A When I heard about the attack as it was happening, I called the operations center and spoke to the folks in the crisis management office, and I offered to come in and assist any task force that was being stood up. At that time, I was told that my offer was very much appreciated, but they felt like they had sufficient resources at the time. They would keep me in mind if this ended up being an ongoing discussion. Given that I had left a job and -- my current job had no reason to have a BlackBerry, there was an offer to just make sure that I had information so that I knew what was going on in the after hours time.

Q So did they provide you with a BlackBerry?

A No, no.

Q Okay. Did you -- you called the operations center and volunteered your services. Did you reach out to any of your other former colleagues in NEA regarding what was happening?

A I may have. It is human nature to reach out to people and share, shared sorrow.

Q Do you remember discussing with them who was responsible for the attacks, or who was believed to be responsible for the attacks?

A I don't -- I don't recall any discussions like that. It might have happened.

Q I have one last area. Following the attacks in Benghazi, the Secretary convened an Accountability Review Board. And as I understand it, from looking at the documents, there was a memo or a requirement that people with relevant documents were to gather them up and send them into the ARB, do you recall that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did you -- what steps did you take in response to that?

A I worked with NEA/EX and they asked me to compile the relevant requested documents and share them with NEA/EX. I did that.

Q How did you physically do that? Did you have to go back to NEA/EX? Did you still have access to them through your current position?

A There was an email box that was established that I was

asked to put relevant -- put the requested emails into that email box and then I was asked to look through any documents that I may still have had access to as well. There may have been also discussions about where things might have been saved on shared drives, and ~~Share points~~ ^{SharePoints} and things like that.

Q Okay. And so how did you -- explain to me this email box. So if you went through your what, inbox? Outbox? Did you have archived files? How do you gather up relevant emails to send to this collection box?

A I went through the archived emails that had been generated from the time that I had been in the EX office.

Q Did you archive them at the time, or was there some sort of automatic archiving?

A At the time of my departure from post, created PSTs to capture that information.

Q So you were given those PST files?

A They were recovered for me when the need was established.

Q Okay. There were also congressional inquiries in as early as September of 2012 following the attacks. Did you get a similar directive regarding the congressional inquiries?

A I may have, I don't have specific memory of that.

Q Okay. Other than your own records that you would have had your signature on and found from your archived emails, did you have any role in gathering or producing other documents, you know,

memos or other hard copy documents or anything like that?

A No.

Q Was there someone within NEA/EX who would have had that role? Do you have a records management officer or someone who gets tasked with responding to requests for information?

A At that time, I was not working in NEA/EX.

Q Right. When you were there.

A At the time that the request for documents was made, I was not working in NEA/EX. The person who made the request to me was, I believe, [REDACTED]. It could have been someone reaching out to me on behalf of [REDACTED]. I produced the documents in whatever form I was asked to produce them to whatever relevant person I was asked to produce them to.

Q Okay. You are -- you currently, just recently left Deputy Secretary Higginbottom's office; is that correct?

A Yes.

Q As of when was that again?

A I was in training for about 5 weeks. My last official day was July 9. In reality, I left that office at the end of May.

Q And again, because it has been a long day, for you especially, but what were your duties and responsibilities when you worked in her office?

A I was one of many special assistants working for the Deputy Secretary. I was focused mainly on human resources, diversity issues, specifically LGBT issues. Also, I was being

looking at Consular Affairs and western hemisphere affairs issues.

Q So you had no involvement in implementation of ARB recommendations, or responding to congressional inquiries, or FOIA litigation or anything like that?

A No.

Q Who had that portfolio in her office while -- as of July 2012 when you left?

A 2012? 15.

Q I am focused on 2012. Yes, 2015?

A At that time it was [REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. I think that is all the questions I have. I would like the record to reflect it was 50 minutes, not 60 minutes.

Mr. Evers. I will reflect right back, I appreciate it.

[Discussion off the record.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q The time is 7 minutes to 5:00 here. Ms. [REDACTED], thank you again, appreciate your patience, we are hopefully in the final stretch and we will try to work through this as quickly as possible and get you on to your next adventure.

I would like to quickly turn to Exhibit 14, if I can. This was an exhibit that was introduced during the last round, an email June 13, 2012. You were asked a series of questions about this particular email, and you said that you didn't recall, or recollect this particular discussion about whether to close the

Special Mission in Benghazi.

What I would like to ask you about in the first, the email at the top here from [REDACTED], it refers to [REDACTED] watching the EAC yesterday to see if post was going to recommend a drawdown. I wanted to ask you a question as a follow-up to our discussion about the EAC, and first just ask, as a post management officer, would you track the Emergency Action Committee cables that would come back from post?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And can you just explain why you would have done that as a PMO?

A Again, was part of being the funnel and being the advocate for post, making sure the issues that are raised in the EAC cable are raised to the relevant folks. It is usually security-related, but sometimes it has to do with another agency's presence or some other things. So it is just being aware of the situation on the ground and where we need to go. Sometimes we would raise that thing with others, other times we would just have it to complete our awareness of the situation on the ground.

Q Okay. And then when [REDACTED] refers to looking to the EAC to obtain information about whether post had recommended a drawdown or a closure, just to understand, was the EAC one of those vehicles by which that information would come from post that, for instance, Special Mission of Benghazi should have been suspended?

A I am going to speak in generalities for a moment about the way that an embassy functions in a crisis.

Q Please.

A The Emergency Action Committee at an embassy would make a recommendation to the chief of mission as to whether or not to request a drawdown of personnel which would trigger a request for an ~~authorized and ordered~~ ^{authorized or an ordered} departure, for example.

In this particular case, the EAC would be looking to make a Tripoli-based recommendation -- this is my extrapolation, given that I was not physically involved in the discussion, but I was copied on the email -- my extrapolation from reading this was that the Tripoli EAC was looking at the situation in Benghazi, likely in consultation with Benghazi and working up a -- and determining whether or not to make a recommendation to the Ambassador about whether or not to recommended a drawdown.

Q And you said those discussions or that information in that cable would have then triggered discussions in D.C. or Main State; is that correct?

A Yes, correct.

Q So would that have been normal, recognizing there are many crises, defining normal may be difficult, but would that have been standard practice?

A In the experience within my interactions with post during crises, during the Arab Spring, that is generally how things worked.

Q Okay. And again, you have no memory or recollection of an EAC, this particular EAC which --

A I have no specific recollection of the EAC that is mentioned in this document.

Q Okay. I would like to shift back to Exhibit 13. This is an email from [REDACTED], February 12, 2012. There was a follow-up discussion in the last hour about specific security requirements for staffing in Special Mission Benghazi.

A Uh-huh.

Q You had been asked where the number 3 came from, or what the number 3 was based on. Do you recall that conversation?

A Yes.

Q So one of the things that would be helpful for us to understand is the different roles, the different individuals were playing with respect to security. Now [REDACTED], you told us earlier, was the deputy chief of mission for them; is that correct?

A That is correct.

Q And in your experience with her, you had mentioned that you met with her when you visited Embassy Tripoli; is that right?

A Yes.

Q Was your assessment that Ms. [REDACTED] was concerned about the safety and security?

A May I make a clarification?

Q Please.

A [REDACTED] and I may have only overlapped for a short period of time when I was in Tripoli. I now recollect that the vast majority of my time, Gene Cretz was the only one present at post. I don't have specific recollection of meeting with [REDACTED] while I was in Tripoli. I met with [REDACTED] over the phone, or in person, kind of constantly over the 2 years that I was covering Libya. Specific to my trip to Tripoli, I recall that [REDACTED] was out for at least part of my time there, if not the entire time I was there.

Q No, thank you. That is a helpful clarification.

But in the course of your discussions in the 2 years with Ms. [REDACTED] where you would be discussing various matters, would those touch on security?

A Yes.

Q Was your assessment that Ms. [REDACTED] was concerned the safety and security of the U.S. presence in Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you have any evidence that she wasn't anything but fully committed to providing the best security resources that she could for the mission and the embassy?

A [REDACTED] was fully dedicated to ensuring that we had sufficient resources to fulfill our mission in both Tripoli and Benghazi to include security, to include budget, to include facilities, to include personnel.

Q And so in your view, was she a vigorous advocate for those types of resources?

A Yes.

Q So continuing the discussion of the levels of security staffing, you were asked in the last hour about the Accountability Review Board process, are you aware that they released a report in December of 2012?

A Yes.

Q Okay. They had also reviewed security staffing levels and how those fluctuated over time and attempted to understand better the reasons why that happened. One of the statements I would like to just read for you and ask you a question about it, it reads, "As it became clear that DS would not provide a steady complement of five TDY DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approval and the reality of an ever-shifting DS platform. From discussion with former Benghazi-based staff, board members concluded that the persistence of DS leadership in Washington in refusing to provide a steady platform of four to five DS agents created a resignation on the part of post about asking for more."

You were asked in the last hour about how the initial number of five that was set out in the action memo had changed over time, and how three became the requirement at one point, maybe it may have fluctuated again thereafter. I would just like to ask, was it your sense as well that the personnel at post that various individuals working, serving at the embassy there, that they became resigned about requesting additional DS security personnel?

A To clarify, I did not say that the new level had become three. What I said was that it was determined that the minimum level of staffing was three in order to be able to provide security for movements.

In terms of the attitudes regarding security in Benghazi, in my interactions with the folks in Benghazi, in Tripoli, during my time covering Libya from NEA/EX, I do not recall a time when they ceased to seek additional support. They -- I do not recall a point in time when there was resignation that they would not get what they needed. I felt like there was a continual advocacy to attempt to get to where they thought they needed to be.

Q Okay. And just continuing our discussion about the ARB, I would like to ask a little bit about your involvement in that process. There have been a series of allegations that the ARB didn't receive all of the information, the documents, they didn't need it to do the job properly. Just to be clear, none of those allegations are directed at specifically you or any particular person, they are general claims of information about how individuals may have been pressured not to provide the ARB with information. So I would like to ask, were you able to be fully forthcoming with the ARB?

A Yes.

Q Did you withhold any information about the ARB?

A No.

Q Were you ever under any pressure from anyone to

withhold information from the ARB?

A No.

Q And I believe you mentioned that you had the opportunity at one point in time to read the ARB; is that correct?

A I read the unclassified portion.

Q Okay. Was your sense that it generally reflected, or accurately captured, your experience working with the NEA/EX?

A Given that it has been many years since I have read the ARB report, my general memory is that the general tenor of the report seemed to reflect my experience. I did not feel that they had substantially gotten things wrong.

Q Okay. I would like to note that the ARB commended the executive office, stated that personnel within the office, I guess, that would include you, showed dedication in collaborating on solutions with DS counterparts in responding to TDY staffing requests and demands, so I did just want to note that.

A Thank you.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So within that, you have been asked a lot of questions in the course of today and you have answered and provided very valuable context about the back and forth that went on. And it certainly seems, and I think a little bit was captured in the ARB, that there was kind of a consistent back and forth to try to achieve adequate and appropriate DS agent staffing levels. Given all of that, and given the fact that you really were, as you

described it, kind of funneling and helping that conversation. Did you ever have the sense that anyone in that chain was acting with anything other than good faith and trying to make sure that they got whatever resource that they could to both Tripoli and Benghazi?

A My belief is that all of the people working on Benghazi and Tripoli issues were making a good-faith effort to meet the requirements in the face of the vast array of crises that they were facing around the world.

Q And some of the back and forth that was reflected in some of the exhibits that we showed you indicated some of your efforts to, when you thought necessary, elevate the conversation by making sure that, I think it was Mr. [REDACTED] as the executive director of your entity, was having conversations with DAS Lamb to try to resolve and make sure attention was being given to the staffing.

Did you feel that that helped improve the situation at any point?

A I feel that the overall situation was one where there were discussions at all levels of the Department as we were working through issues, we would naturally elevate things as we needed to elevate things to ensure that they received proper focus and attention. I did not feel that anything impeded that function.

Q And did you feel, I think my colleague may have some

additional questions about this as well, understanding that you weren't a security expert, but would you have felt constrained in any way if you had felt that there was a dire need to remove people from Benghazi? Would you have felt constrained in any way from raising that point during the period of time from the beginning when you were there in the spring of 2011 to when you left in 2012?

A No.

Q And did you ever raise that as a concern?

A As security issues were discussed between Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington, we all raised thoughts and concerns about these issues as things came up and had fulsome discussion about those issues. In the end, the final decision about security determinations fell to the experts in security which were the diplomatic security folks.

Q Did you ever hear anyone within diplomatic security -- did anyone ever describe to you, or did you hear anyone in diplomatic security kind of indicate that they had a belief that Benghazi was a suicide mission?

A I did not hear those terms used, that term used.

Q Did you ever hear anyone in DS or anywhere else say that they knew that people in Benghazi were at grave risk and they just did not care and would not provide the resources?

A I did not hear anyone say that they did not care about the safety and security of personnel in Benghazi.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So at this point, I would like to ask you a series of questions about a number of public allegations related to the attacks. We understand the committee is investigating these allegations, and therefore, we have to ask everyone about them, but I would not want you to think by us asking these questions that we or the Democratic members are saying that any of these allegations have any merit. There are a lot of allegations here, so I just ask for your patience as you bear with us. For the most part, I am going to ask whether you have any evidence that would substantiate any of these allegations. If not, we will move on to the next one.

It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One congressman has speculated that "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down." This resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally

signed an April 2012 cable to denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally assigned in April of 2012 a cable denying security resources to Libya?

A I have no evidence that she personally signed a cable in April of 2012.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton has misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner the course of military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support from military operations in Libya in spring of 2011?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels for other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria" closed

quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," closed quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapon transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A No.

Q The next allegation: A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing the annex to assist the Special Mission compound on the night of the attacks. And there have been a number of allegations about the cause and appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report concluding the team was not ordered to quote, "stand down," closed quote, but that instead, there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart. Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand down order to CIA personnel?

A No.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay temporarily, or think it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or improper reason

behind the temporary delay of CIA security personnel was part of the annex to assist the Special Mission compound?

A No.

Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to Congress?

A No.

Q It has been alleged CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attack for political reasons, and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity

and non partisanship," closed quote. Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made a, quote, "intentional misrepresentation," closed quote, when she spoke on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks. Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A No.

Q It has been alleged the President of the United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief," closed quote, on the night of the attacks, and that he was, quote, "missing in action," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing in action on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of that attacks were

considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were ordered by the superiors to stand down, meaning see-saw operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff reported issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," closed quote.

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could

have saved lives, but the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A No.

Q Appreciate your indulgence on that. Last set of questions here just to conclude, the ARB has conducted and concluded its investigation within 2 months issued a report in 2012. Congress received that report in the same month. This is now the eighth congressional investigation into the attacks following the ARB's work and were committed to ensuring it is the last. So one of the things that we were interested in just exploring with you is whether -- what impact the continued investigation has had if any -- on you personally?

A I have fatigue of hearing about it. I am very frustrated by having to continually hear about the things that I went through and having to go through them again and again. I knew Chris very well, he died. It is a horrible thing that he died. Thank you.

The process that has gone on to continue to question this is not one that I think has seen a whole lot of additional benefit. The Department did what it does after any tragedy. We looked at what happened, and we worked to learn from it to figure out where to go from there. And I can tell you that I have seen in contingency planning and other things as we try to move to address crises since that time that the lessons of Benghazi have been taken to heart. And this continued investigation is very

stressful for those of us who lived through this time. We have a lot of retained stress from it. We will never quite get away from it. It is an experience that will not leave us. We would like to be able to move beyond it, though.

Q And that is certainly our and the ranking member's intent as we hope that this is the last investigation into this matter.

I would like to just thank you for sharing that.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q I think likely covered in your explanation, but is there anything from your perspective that you think this committee, in particular, needs to be examining to finally kind of put to rest the congressional side of the inquiry and to the before, during and after of the Benghazi attacks?

A As I mentioned before, I feel that the Department has taken many of the lessons of what happened in Benghazi and used it to inform future operations in the way that we do things. Obviously, it is Congress' prerogative to continue to look into these things to figure out what happened. I -- I don't have any specific things to advise.

Ms. Sawyer. We certainly appreciate your testimony today, certainly your service over the many years with the Department. We also very much appreciate your sharing, to the degree you did, the impact. It is very important for the committee to understand that. It is also part of the scope of our jurisdiction to

understand how we can help advise Congress in how it conducts investigations. So as painful as that question is, we do appreciate your willingness to share that information with us, because it does help inform hopefully Congress in the way it conducts investigations going forward. So again, thank you very much for your time with us today. We have nothing further for you, and so we hope that you make it to your dinner party. It is 5:21 in a timely fashion.

Ms. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Mr. Kenny. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 5:21 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

Witness Name

Date

Errata Sheet

Select Committee on Benghazi

The witness reviewed the accompanying transcript and certified its accuracy by providing the following corrections. These corrections are reflected in the transcript as identified below.

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>LINE</u>	<u>ALL CORRECTIONS MADE BY WITNESS</u>
9	16	Replaced "13 years" with "12 years."
11	15	Replaced "director general of the foreign services chief of staff" with "Director General of the Foreign Service as his Chief of Staff."
14	19	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
14	25	Replaced "joint effect" with "joint EX."
24	8	Replaced "I was sent to Hawaii" to "I was sent to Hawaii on personal travel" to clarify that this was not official travel.
46	10	Replaced "more" with "war."
48	7	Replaced "is entire I will likely" to "is entirely likely."
53	15	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
54	22	Replaced "as" with "and."
57	8	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
60	14	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
61	1, 8, 14	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
67	16	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
71	6	Replaced "that" with "but."
74	8	Replaced "T&Z" with "TNC."
77	13	Replaced "opener" with "owner."
83	25	Replaced "DN, DBNP" with "D(N), D(B), and P."
86	1	Replaced "put" with "let."

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>LINE</u>	<u>ALL CORRECTIONS MADE BY WITNESS</u>
126	2	Replaced "a" with "the."
136	22	Replaced "inequities" with "equities."
150	2	Replaced "Read" with "Need."
152	24	Replaced "NEA/SCA/EX" with "NEA-SCA/EX."
153	6	Replaced "distri" with "dristro."
154	17	Replaced "MC" with "Embassy."
156	7	Replaced "TF" with "tee up."
174	13	Replaced "SCA/EX's" with "NEA-SCA/EX's."
188	20	Replaced "HRCEA" with "HR/CDA."
195	5	Replaced "share points" with "SharePoints."
199	7	Replaced "an authorizer and order departure" with "an authorized or an ordered departure."