

IN THE CASE OF: [REDACTED]

BOARD DATE: 4 April 2024

DOCKET NUMBER: AR20230007920

APPLICANT REQUESTS: award of the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB).

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING DOCUMENT(S) CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD:

- DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Record) online application
- DD Form 149
- DA Form 4187 (Personnel Action), dated 22 March 2021
- Memorandum from U.S. Army Human Resources Command (AHRC), dated 26 October 2021

FACTS:

1. The applicant states in his two applications:

a. He is requesting that his recommendation to be awarded the CIB be granted as it met all criteria and was approved by his entire chain of command. The award was approved for combat operations in Raqqah, Syria, in 2017 through 2018.

b. He believes his record to be unjust as the award was approved from the team level, to company, to battalion, to the 5th Group Commander. Everyone up to the Commanding General of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) marked off for the approval.

c. His question is how a major at AHRC can disapprove the request for award or rather why. He and his teammates had the full support of 5th Special Forces Group Airborne to receive this award.

d. It is a disservice to the Soldiers, their unit, and the sacrifices they made to be denied this award after their chain of command approved it. Also, a fellow teammate had gone through the application process and has been awarded the CIB for these events. He thanks the Board for their time.

e. The reason for his delayed request is due to a clerical error on the unit's S-1 part that the team was unaware of. Once they resubmitted the request, it was several

deployments later. The requested award was approved from group level to the Commanding General of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne).

2. The applicant provides the following documents:

a. DA Form 4187, dated 22 March 2021, wherein the applicant was being recommended for award of the CIB for being personally present, under fire, and engaging in action against the enemy in ground forces combat.

- Date of Engagement: 3 December 2017
- Location : Fire Base Raqqah, IVO Raqqah, Syria

On 3 December 2017, Fire Base Raqqah was engaged by direct fire from 50-75 meters away. Operation Detachment Alpha members initiated the base defense plan to defend against the deliberate attack. Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance was coordinated for, and ISIS attackers retrograded after defensive measures were taken. The above incident is just one of the dozens of situations where the applicant participated in direct combat against Da'esh. The applicant's commander recommended approval on 23 March 2021, the battalion commander recommended approval on 26 March 2021, the group commander recommended approval on 20 August 2021, and the commanding general recommended approval on 12 October 2021.

b. Memorandum from the Chief, Awards and Decorations Branch, AHRC, dated 26 October 2021, disapproved the request for retroactive award of the CIB, stating:

(1) In accordance with Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-22 (Military Awards), paragraph 8-6f, a Soldier must be personally present and under fire, while serving in an assigned infantry or special forces primary duty, in a unit engaged in active ground combat to close with and destroy the enemy with direct fire. Award of the CIB will not be made except where evidence of injustice is presented.

(2) If the applicant believed AHRC's determination to be unjust he had the right to appeal to the Board.

3. The applicant's service records contain the following documents:

a. DD Forms 4 (Enlistment/Reenlistment of the Armed Forces of the United States) show the applicant enlisted in the Regular Army on 16 November 2012 and entered active duty on 24 June 2013. He had immediate reenlistments on 1 December 2018 and 7 December 2020.

b. Orders 11-401, published by U.S. Army Installation Management Command, Headquarters, United States Army Garrison Fort Bragg [Liberty], dated 11 January 2016 show the applicant was awarded the primary military occupational specialty (MOS) of 18E (Special Forces Communications Sergeant) and the secondary MOS of 11B (Infantryman) effective 14 January 2016.

c. DA Form 638 (Recommendation for Award), dated 7 January 2018 shows the applicant was recommended for the Army Commendation Medal. The applicant distinguished himself while serving as the Junior Communications Sergeant for Special Operations Task Force-Syria from 17 August 2017 to 1 February 2018. The award was approved on 30 March 2018.

d. Enlisted Record Brief, dated 20 November 2022 shows the applicant was deployed to Syria from 28 August 2017 through 10 February 2018 for a period of 6 months. His primary MOS was 18E, he was assigned to 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne). This document does not show he was awarded the CIB.

e. The applicant is still on active duty service in the Regular Army.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

1. After reviewing the application, all supporting documents, and the evidence found within the military record, the Board found relief is warranted.

2. The Board found the applicant met the criteria for the Combat Infantryman Badge during combat action on 3 December 2017 as confirmed by the chain of command endorsements for the badge. The Board determined the applicant should be awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge.

BOARD VOTE:

Mbr 1 Mbr 2 Mbr 3

■	■	■	GRANT FULL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT PARTIAL RELIEF
:	:	:	GRANT FORMAL HEARING
:	:	:	DENY APPLICATION

BOARD DETERMINATION/RECOMMENDATION:

The Board determined the evidence presented is sufficient to warrant a recommendation for relief. As a result, the Board recommends that all Department of the Army records of the individual concerned be corrected by awarding him the Combat Infantryman Badge for his actions on 3 December 2017.

X

CHAIRPERSON

I certify that herein is recorded the true and complete record of the proceedings of the Army Board for Correction of Military Records in this case.

REFERENCES:

Army Regulation 600-8-22 (Military Awards) provides, in pertinent part, that the Combat Infantryman Badge is awarded to infantry officers and to enlisted Soldiers and warrant officers who have an infantry or special forces specialty, satisfactorily performed duty while assigned or attached as a member of an infantry, ranger or special forces unit of brigade, regimental, or smaller size during any period such unit was engaged in active ground combat, to close with and destroy the enemy with direct fire. A recipient must be personally present and under hostile fire while serving in an assigned infantry or special forces primary duty, in a unit actively engaged in ground combat, to close with and destroy the enemy with direct fire.

//NOTHING FOLLOWS//