



# UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, CENTRAL COMMAND  
7115 SOUTH BOUNDARY BOULEVARD  
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5101

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
1650/10  
ADJ  
11 Aug 09

From: Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command  
To: The Family of Captain Matthew C. Freeman XXX XX 9979/7509 USMC

Subj: BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Encl: (1) Award Certificate  
(2) Award Citation  
(3) Decoration Set  
(4) Combat Distinguishing Device

1. Forwarded, with pride in recognition of Captain Freeman's selfless dedication to duty.
2. The memory of Matthew's heroic life and the impact he left on his fellow Marines, will not be forgotten. He truly embodied the Marine Corps values of "Honor, Courage and Commitment". He will be greatly missed.

  
S. T. HELLAND



The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the BRONZE STAR MEDAL posthumously to

CAPTAIN MATTHEW C. FREEMAN  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

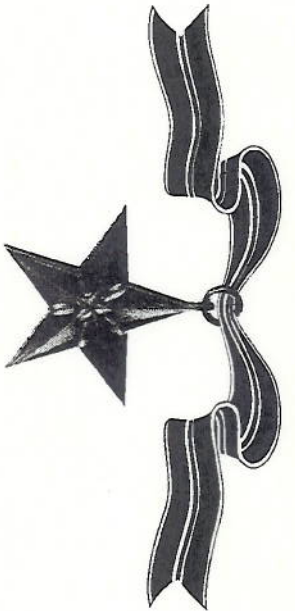
CITATION:

For heroic service in connection with combat operations against the enemy as a Fire Support Team Leader and Company Advisor for 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army. Captain Freeman's keen judgment and decisive leadership were ever present in all phases of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. On 7 August 2009, Captain Freeman engaged in the combined and joint Operation BREST THUNDER in one of the most dangerous areas within the 201st Corps' Area of Operations, the Shpee Valley of Kapisa Province. The strength of the enemy in the Shpee Valley was estimated to consist of more than eighty insurgents with reports that a large number of reinforcements had recently moved into the area. Acting to conduct a reconnaissance of force in the valley, Captain Freeman's element received enemy fire almost immediately upon leaving the combat outpost. Pinned down as the result of this fire, Captain Freeman decided to clear a kulat in order to gain access to the top deck and achieve better observation of the enemy's firing position. Receiving a heavy volume of enemy fire, Captain Freeman led the way in clearing the house and was the first to reach the rooftop. Once on the rooftop, he spotted an enemy Rocket-Propelled Grenade gunman and immediately killed him. He and one of his team members spotted several other insurgents and began to engage while under fire. It was at this time that Captain Freeman fell mortally wounded. He fought with bravery and determination while demonstrating unwavering courage in the face of the enemy. Captain Freeman's performance of duty in a combat zone reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

The Combat Distinguishing Device is authorized.

For the President,

S. T. HELLAND  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U. S. MARINE CORPS  
COMMANDER, U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES, CENTRAL COMMAND



# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
HAS AWARDED THE

**BRONZE STAR MEDAL,**  
(WITH COMBAT DISTINGUISHING DEVICE, POSTHUMOUSLY)

TO

CAPTAIN MATTHEW C. FREEMAN, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

FOR

HEROIC ACHIEVEMENT 7 AUGUST 2009

GIVEN THIS  
11TH

DAY OF  
August 2009



S. T. HELLAND  
LIEUTENANT GENERAL, U. S. MARINE CORPS  
COMMANDER, U. S. MARINE CORPS FORCES,  
CENTRAL COMMAND

## Summary of Action

Captain Matthew C. Freeman is enthusiastically recommended for the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device for heroic service while serving as a Marine Combat Advisor, Regional Corps Advisory Command -Central, Embedded Training Team (ETT) 4-5 with 4th Kandak, 3d Brigade, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army (ANA), Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. From 23 July 2009 to 7 August 2009, Captain Freeman was deployed to Afghanistan in a TAD status under Task Force Phoenix, U.S. Army and was in receipt of Hostile Fire pay and the Combat Zone Tax Exclusion. He performed his combat advisor duties under enemy fire in the Shpee Valley, Kapisa Province (Regional Command East) while partnered with the French Marines of Task Force Korrigan. His heroic actions during Operation Brest Thunder in a very demanding combat environment greatly merit the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device.

On 7 August 2009, Captain Freeman engaged in Operation BREST THUNDER which was a combined and joint operation with the Afghanistan National Army(ANA), the French Marines of Task Force Korrigan, United States Army, and United States Marines. This operation took place in one of the most dangerous areas within the 201st Corps Area of Operation, the Shpee Valley, Tagab District, Kapisa Province. The estimated strength of the enemy in this valley is estimated to consist of approximately 80 insurgents, with several hundred fighters having the ability to reinforce within three hours.

According to intelligence reports days prior to this operation, a large number of Taliban (estimated 300) entered the Shpee Valley in order to reinforce members that were already located in Shpee. It was reported that the enemy was armed with AK-47s, PKMs, RPGs, DSHKs, BM1 rockets, and 82mm mortars. The mission of this operation was for the ANA and ETTs to conduct a reconnaissance in force of Shpee Valley in order to disrupt insurgent freedom of movement, deny enemy safe haven, and show legitimacy of the ANA and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan(GIRoA). The ETT that was responsible for this mission was a unit that was part of the 48th Brigade, 108th Cavalry Squadron out of Georgia. Though Captain Freeman was not a part of this Embedded Training Team, seeing that they needed assistance in this operation, he immediately volunteered his skills and experience to act as Fire Support Team Leader. He did this after being in country just under two weeks. Captain Freeman knew that the mission would be dangerous and complex, but he did not hesitate to participate.

Captain Freeman worked hard prior to the mission in order to coordinate and synchronize fires with French Marines, U.S. Forces, and the ANA. He ensured that he and his team studied the target reference points, maps, aerial photographs, and operations orders. Prior to crossing the line of departure, Captain Freeman conducted last minute coordination with the all units involved in the operation to ensure there was a clear understanding of coalition fires.

Captain Freemans element received enemy fire almost immediately upon leaving the Combat Outpost. He and his team were on the side of the ridge beside a collott when they started taking fire. Pinned down as a result of this fire, Captain Freeman immediately got along a wall to have better observation of enemy fire. Unable to view exactly where the fire was coming from, Captain Freeman decided that he needed to clear out a collott and gain access to the top deck in order to achieve better observation of the enemys firing positions. Receiving a heavy volume of enemy fire, Captain Freeman led the way in clearing the house and was the first to reach the rooftop. Once on the rooftop, he spotted an RPG gunman and immediately killed him. He and one of his team members spotted several other insurgents and began to engage while under fire. It was at this time that Captain Freeman fell mortally wounded.

Captain Freeman fought with determination, commitment to his troops, and honor. He demonstrated unwavering courage in the face of the enemy while exhibiting keen judgment and displaying inspiring leadership. His display of boldness and fearlessness motivated those who were near him to continue to fight. Captain Freemans selfless actions are a great credit to himself, Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan and the United States Marine Corps.