

DOD PREPARING TO ADMIT AFGHAN MASSACRE SOLDIER WAS DRUNK

DOD appears to be preparing to admit one of two critical details Afghan witnesses to this weekend's massacre have maintained from the start: that the shooter(s) was drunk (villager witnesses also said more than one soldier was involved). At least, that's what I conclude by the anonymous leak to DOD's favorite mouthpiece, Barbara Starr.

The military is investigating whether alcohol was a factor in the rampage, two senior military officials tell CNN. One of the senior military officials said alcohol was found on the base in the area where the suspect lived. It is not clear yet if the alcohol belonged to the soldier and a toxic screening was conducted but the results have not been returned, the official said.

Yet even as the story gets worse, I worry that DOD will aim to cover up the worst parts of it. Starr's sources are already citing the burial of the bodies (as per Islamic custom) when addressing evidentiary issues).

A U.S. official familiar with some elements of the investigation says CID investigators have "recovered some initial evidence" from the scene, including shell casings. [snip]

"Ballistics is not going to be a problem," the official told CNN.

While officials are likely to be able to recover much of this material, all the victims have been buried and permission to exhume the bodies is unlikely the

official said.

And they're also talking about forwarding recommendations up the chain of command.

After the CID completes its investigation, investigators will forward their findings up the chain of command, and military officials "will then make judicial process decisions," according to Kirby.

Starr does answer one question I've seen increasingly asked: why DOD hasn't released the Staff Sergeant's name. They won't do so, apparently, until he is charged.