



NSA Interrogation Officer - A Postcard From Guantanamo Bay

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From the Snowden Archives published by [The Intercept](#) come the internal newsletters of the NSA's most important division, the Signals Intelligence Directorate (SID). These particular documents called 'SIDtoday' are internal newsletters given to the vast number of NSA employees as a way of communicating the perceived importance of their work and, no doubt, like many internal company newsletters to keep up employee morale. They provide an intriguing insight into their work from the perspective of those on the inside.

In this particular document we get to see a glimpse of life as a junior intelligence officer working at the notorious Guantánamo Bay interrogation camp for captured combatants who were thought important enough to be detained, many for years without trial or legal representation.

In this release of the early days at Guantánamo, the NSA liaison officer worked in the Joint Interrogation Group. NSA liaison officers provided intelligence to support interrogations and observed or even participated in interrogations, and then relayed information back to NSA. This particular officer obviously found the work and lifestyle experienced at Guantanamo Bay very agreeable.

These documents went across the full range of employees to the intelligence and surveillance services within the 'Five Eyes' nations notated as "HIGHEST POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION IS TOP SECRET TO: USA AUS CAN GBR NZL".



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(S//REL) An early start can have you climbing John Paul Jones Hill to the Joint Task Force (JTF) SCIF while taking in a beautiful sunrise over the Caribbean Sea with Camp Delta looming austere below on the southern coastline. After a hustled day of tackling a myriad of issues and directly contributing to the global war on terrorism, one might be inclined to drive out to Phillips Park and enjoy a gorgeous sunset over Leeward Landing; however, the day would not be complete without the frequent iguana encounter. Few work environments offer such an opportunity - a rewarding challenge with incredible surroundings.

(S//REL) The mission of JTF-GTMO is to conduct detention and interrogation operations to

collect and exploit intelligence in support of the global war on terrorism (GWOT), to screen detainees, and to support law enforcement and war crimes investigations. The NSA Liaison Officer (NSA LNO) works in the Joint Interrogation Group (JIG), a major element of JTF-GTMO. The interrogation focus at Guantanamo is strategic; tactical questioning is accomplished in-theater to see what they know, categorize them accordingly, and determine what requirements they can satisfy.

(S) The work can be extremely interesting, challenging and very fulfilling. On a given week, the NSA LNO might pull together intelligence to support an upcoming interrogation, formulate questions and strategies for the interrogation, and observe or participate in the interrogation. Afterward, the LNO captures and disseminates pertinent technical information gleaned from the interrogation back to NSA TOPIs for SIGINT development.



Detainees on arrival to Camp X-Ray, the holding facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba

(U//FOUO) Outside work, fun awaits and opportunities abound. Water sports are outstanding: boating, paddling, fishing, water skiing and boarding, sailing, swimming, snorkeling, and SCUBA. No experience, no problem. Learn how to operate a boat in a weekend, become a certified open water scuba diver within weeks. If you've already mastered these skills, or once you do, the MWR marina rents boats from pontoon party boats to Carolina skiffs to ski boats to kayaks...and recently they've added sailboat rentals, too. The local dive shop has all the gear and tips to ensure a perfect outing. Surround all this water fun with a Tiki Bar and a Jerk House as well as the Bayview Restaurant ... relaxing is easy.

(U//FOUO) Water sports not your cup of tea? There are many other activities to round your day off. The library has two dozen internet terminals and over 1000 videos. Or take in a movie at the outdoor theatre featuring a weekly variety of the latest releases. Other activities include: pottery, hiking, nature walks, biking, paintball, martial arts, tennis, racquetball, basketball, softball, and bowling. There are also several swimming pools and gyms. Or, just relax and take in the warmth of the sun.



Detainees in Guantanamo Bay Prison have been subjected to waterboarding and force-feeding

The History of Guantanamo Bay

The reality is of course quite different. Guantánamo Bay detention centre - a symbol of torture, rendition and indefinite detention without charge or trial is now in its 15th year of existence.

It was established by the United States in January 2002, as a place for the US authorities to hold people perceived to be 'enemy combatants' in the 'war on terror'. The first detainees were transferred on 11th January 2002 to the prison camp immediately after it was finished.

The US government chose the island to hold detainees in a place neither where US nor international law applied.

The facilities at Guantánamo have become emblematic of the gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the US government in the name of terrorism. A 2013 "[Institute on Medicine as a Profession](#)" report concluded that health professionals working with the military and intelligence services "designed and participated in cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment and torture of detainees". Medical professionals were ordered to ignore ethical standards during involvement in abusive interrogation, including monitoring of vital signs under stress-inducing procedures.

In total, 779 men have been taken to the facility. Of these, only seven have been convicted, a conviction rate so low as to be ludicrous. Even then, of that seven, only one Guantánamo detainee has been transferred to the US mainland for trial in a civilian court.

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