



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MULTI NATIONAL FORCE-WEST
CAMP FALLUJAH, IRAQ

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5700
PAO
19 Jun 07

From: Public Affairs Officer, Multi National Force-West
To: Potential Media Embeds

Subj: MEDIA EMBED INFORMATIONAL PACKAGE

Encl: (a) Iraq Visa Guidance
(b) Kuwait Visa Guidance
(c) Ground Rules Agreement
(d) Informed Consent Statement
(e) Required and Recommended Gear

1. On behalf of Maj. Gen. W.E. Gaskin, Commanding General, Multi National Force-West, I would like to thank you for your interest in telling the stories of the brave men and women assigned to this command.

Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines appreciate your commitment to providing accurate and thoughtful accounts which one can only convey through living alongside our Iraqi and U.S. service members. Multi National Force-West strives to maintain a truthful accessible and transparent environment for you to file your stories.

During your embed, see firsthand U.S. Forces training and operating with our Iraqi counterparts, helping them transition to take the lead in the fight against the anti-Iraqi forces who threaten the safety, well-being and freedom of the Iraqi people. As Iraqi police and army units assume more responsibilities, they will provide the conditions necessary for the Iraqi people to establish themselves as an independent, self-governing nation.

Public affairs officers for the MNF-W and its major subordinate commands (MSCs) are deployed with these forces to help facilitate media access and ensure the conditions in the ground rules are abided by.

As an enclosure to this letter, you will find a list of ground rules that we must ask you to follow. Your agreement to these rules is necessary to protect U.S. and Iraqi service members operating in Iraq. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the revocation of a news media representative's embed status.

In addition to the ground rules, we ask that you come prepared to operate safely in this complex and hazardous environment. Embedding with combat units is inherently dangerous; the proper equipment and mindset are vital to your safety while embedded.

The MNF-W PA office will also serve as the release authority for official command information. As always, it is our goal to release timely and accurate information to the media with minimum delay. We will also work quickly and fairly to resolve any issues that arise between media reps and military forces.

The procedures outlined in this paper are designed to facilitate your reporting on Multi National Force-West, its MSCs and its supporting units.

2. For more information, or if you are interested in embedding but have not yet coordinated with the MNF-W Public Affairs Office, please contact 2nd Lt. Roger A. Hollenbeck at Roger.Hollenbeck@mnf-wiraq.usmc.mil. To process an embed request, the following information is required: full name,

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organization, passport number, passport date of issue, passport date of expiration, passport place of issue, date of birth and place of birth (city/state).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. S. Pool".

J. S. POOL
Major, USMC



Baghdad, 15th March 2007

**MEDIA ADVISORY
TO ALL INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ORGANISATIONS**

**PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING VISAS FOR NON-RESIDENT FOREIGN
JOURNALISTS**

Following a number of recent incidents with foreign journalists at Baghdad International Airport, please note the following official procedure for obtaining entry visas for non-resident foreign journalists:

1. All journalists must have a valid entry visa before arriving in Iraq;
2. Journalists may apply for a visa at an Iraqi embassy by completing an application form and presenting a letter from their media organization;
3. Journalists already in Baghdad that are leaving and wish to return, may also apply for a visa from the Consular Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Baghdad by sending their application form and request from their media organization to the MFA Press Department.
4. Please specify, on application, which country the visa is to be collected in;
5. On approval of the application, and in compliance with any consular regulations, the visa can be collected at the pre-specified consulate.

Foreign journalists can not obtain a visa on arrival at Baghdad International Airport. Please note - the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is unable to assist journalists that arrive without a valid entry visa.

The application form for applying for a visa can be downloaded from www.iraqmofa.net

For further enquiries please contact the Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during normal working hours:

press@iraqmofamail.net
pcoordination@iraqmofamail.net

Tel: 07901922304/07901922340
Tel: 07901924051

Enclosure B

KUWAIT VISA GUIDANCE

1. Kuwait requires all U.S. citizens to acquire a non-immigrant visa (endorsement or stamp placed by officials of a foreign country on a U.S. passport that allows the bearer to visit that foreign country). This regulation applies to news media representatives embedded with military units. News media representatives are responsible for obtaining their own visas.
2. For visa application information, please contact the Embassy of the State of Kuwait, 2940 Tilden St. NW, Washington, DC 2008 (202-966-0702) or Consulate, 321 East 44th St., New York, NY 10017 (212-973-4318). Internet: www.kuwait-info.org or <http://usembassy.state.gov/kuwait> for additional information.
3. Visas are issued upon arrival at Kuwait airports. Have a U.S. passport with minimum of three months validity and be prepared to turn in (2) copies of the visa application, (2) identical passport size photos, and the applicable fee.

Enclosure C

GROUND RULES AGREEMENT

The following is a listing of ground rules that have been developed to protect members of the Armed Services from the release of information that could potentially threaten their security or safety during military operations. These ground rules recognize the inherent constitutional right of the media to cover combat operations and are in no way intended to prevent release of derogatory, embarrassing, negative or non-complimentary information. During an operation, specific information on friendly force troop movements, tactical deployments, and dispositions that would jeopardize operational security or lives is prohibited. This would include unit designations, names of operations, location, direction of movement, and size of friendly forces involved, until released by USCENTCOM. Acceptance of these ground rules is an agreement between News Media Representatives (NMR) and the granting commands. NMR, including reporters, cameramen, photographers, producers, editors and media advisors, agree to follow the ground rules and the command will provide support, access to service members, information and other privileges.

Responsibility for adhering to these ground rules rests with the embedded NMR. Violation of ground rules, however, may result in the termination of embed and/or revocation of credentials. NMR must carry and support any personal and professional gear they take with them, including protective cases for equipment, batteries, cables, converters, etc. Embedded NMR should be physically fit and prepared to withstand the rigorous conditions required to operate with deployed forces.

a. Commanders may assign a military representative to escort embedded media. Embedded media are not authorized to travel from one command to another without a designated military representative while in an embedded status. Once their embed status has ended however, either by NMR or the unit commander, they are free to travel on their own essentially becoming "unilateral media."

(1) NMR may not bounce back and forth between an embedded and unilateral status. Unilateral media are responsible for their own travel and will not "embed" solely for the purpose of using Coalition transportation to safely transport them in the Iraqi theater of operations. MNF-W PAO may deny any embed they determine to be using embed status for this purpose.

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b. All interviews with service members will be on the record. Security at the interview source is the policy. Interviews with pilots and aircrew members are authorized upon completion of missions; however, release of information must conform to media ground rules.

c. Print or broadcast stories will be datelined according to local ground rules. Local ground rules will be coordinated through command channels with USCENTCOM.

d. If, in the opinion of the commander, a media representative is unable to withstand the rigorous conditions required to operate with the forward deployed forces, the commander or his/her representative may limit the representative's participation with operational forces to ensure unit safety, and inform OASD-PA, via the PA chain of command, as soon as possible. Gender will not be an excluding factor under any circumstance.

e. Media will not carry personal weapons.

f. If pooling is implemented, pool products will be made available to all accredited media (U.S. and others) on an equitable, no-fee basis. Media pool coordinators and bureau chiefs will be responsible for distributing media pool products.

g. Media representatives will be reminded of the prohibition against releasing/reporting names of individual casualties, or photographs that clearly identify casualties, until next of kin notification and official release by DoD. Photography from a respectful distance or from angles at which a casualty cannot be identified is permissible.

h. Media visits to medical facilities will be in accordance with applicable regulations, standard operating procedures, operations orders and instructions by attending physicians. If approved, service or medical facility PA personnel must escort media at all times.

i. Media coverage of wounded, injured, and ill personnel. The following procedures and policies apply both in and out of theater:

(1) The governing concerns about news media coverage of wounded, injured and ill personnel in medical treatment facilities or other casualty collection or treatment locations

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are patient welfare, patient privacy and next of kin/family considerations.

(2) Casualties may be covered by embedded media as long as the service member's identity is protected from disclosure until next of kin notification and release by OASD-PA (after the Congressionally mandated 24-hour waiting period following NOK notification). WHEN THE UNIT BEING COVERED IS COMPANY-SIZED OR SMALLER, ITS CASUALTIES WILL BE INITIALLY REPORTED AS MEMBERS OF THE CORRESPONDING BATTALION/REGIMENT OR GROUP/AIRCRAFT WING IN ORDER TO LESSEN THE RISK OF UNOFFICIAL NOTIFICATION AND HEIGHTENED STRESS OF FAMILY MEMBERS. Identification of a service members' MSC is allowed prior to next of kin notification.

(3) Reporters may visit those areas designated by the facility commander, but will not be allowed in operating rooms during operating procedures.

(4) Permission to interview or photograph a patient will be granted only with the consent of the attending physician or facility commander and with the patient's informed consent, witnessed by the escort.

(5) "Informed consent" refers to the level of understanding that the patient has regarding the fact that his/her picture and comments are being collected for news media purposes. The patient must be informed that their likeness and comments may appear in news media reports.

(6) The attending physician should advise the patient/service member whether their next of kin has been notified.

j. Light discipline restrictions will be followed. No visible light source, including flash cameras or television lights, will be used when operating with forces at night unless specifically approved by the on-scene commander.

k. Embargoes may be imposed to protect operational security. Embargoes will only be used for operational security and will be lifted as soon as the operational security issue has passed.

l. The following categories of information are **not releasable** since publication or broadcast could jeopardize operations and endanger lives.

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(1) Specific number of troops in units below Corps/MEF level.

(2) Specific number of aircraft in units below Wing level.

(3) Specific numbers regarding other equipment or critical supplies (e.g. artillery, tanks, landing craft, radars, trucks, water, etc.).

(4) Specific numbers of ships in units below the carrier battle group level.

(5) Names of military installations or specific geographic locations of military units in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility, unless specifically released by the DoD or authorized by the USCENTCOM commander. News and imagery products that identify or include identifiable features of these locations are not authorized for release.

(6) Information regarding future operations.

(7) Information regarding force protection measures at military installations or encampments (except those which are visible or readily apparent).

(8) Photography that would show level of security at military installations or encampments, especially aerial and satellite photography.

(9) Details concerning rules of engagement and escalation of force.

(10) Information on intelligence collection activities that would compromise tactics, techniques or procedures.

(11) Extra precautions in reporting will be required at the commencement of an operation to maximize surprise. Live broadcasts by embedded media from airfields, on the ground or afloat are prohibited until after the safe passage of the initial strike package or until authorized by the unit commander.

(12) During an operation, specific information on friendly force troop movements, tactical deployments and

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dispositions that would jeopardize operational security or lives. Information on on-going engagements will not be released unless authorized release by the on-scene commander. Media must request authorization to transmit live reports during operations against anti-coalition forces.

(13) Information on special operations units, unique operations methodology or tactics (e.g. air operations, angles of attack and speeds, naval tactical or evasive maneuvers, etc.). General terms such as "low" or "fast" are acceptable and may be used.

(14) Information on effectiveness of enemy electronic warfare.

(15) Information identifying postponed or canceled operations.

(16) Information on missing or downed aircraft or missing vessels while search and rescue or recovery operations are planned or underway.

(17) Information on effectiveness of enemy camouflage, cover, deception, targeting, direct and indirect fire, intelligence collection or security measures.

(18) No photographs, video or art showing an enemy prisoner of war (EPW) or detainee's face (recognizable or blindfolded), nametag or other identifying feature or item may be taken, including family members of the detainee. Photography from a respectful distance or from angles at which an EPW or detainee cannot be identified is permissible when combatants are taken into custody; however, EPWs or detainees at an EPW facility will not be photographed or filmed under any circumstances.

(19) Still or video imagery of custody operations or interviews with persons under custody.

(20) Information on counter improvised explosive devices and U.S. and Coalition knowledge of enemy IED tactics, techniques and procedures.

(21) Information on communication transmission (e.g. "River City").

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m. The following categories of information are **releasable**.

(1) Arrival of U.S. military units in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility when officially announced. Mode of travel (sea or air), date of departure and home station.

(2) Approximate friendly force strength figures.

(3) Approximate friendly casualty figures by service. Embedded media may, within OPSEC limits, confirm unit casualty figures they have witnessed.

(4) Confirmed figures of enemy personnel detained or captured.

(5) Size of friendly force participating in an action or operation will be disclosed using general terms such as "multi-battalion." Specific force or unit identification may be released when it no longer warrants security protection.

(6) Information and location of military targets and objectives previously under attack.

(7) Generic description of origin of air operations, such as "land-based."

(8) Date, time or locations of previous conventional military missions and actions as well as mission results are releasable only if described in general terms.

(9) Types of ordnance expended in general terms.

(10) Number of aerial combat or reconnaissance missions or sorties flown in USCENTCOM's area of operation.

(11) Type of forces involved (e.g., air defense, infantry, armor, Marines).

(12) Allied participation by type of operation (ships, aircraft, ground units, etc.) after approval of allied unit commander.

(13) Operation code names.

(14) Names and hometowns of U.S. military units.

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(15) Service members' names and home towns, with the individual's consent.

Signature

Date

Printed name, affiliation, address & phone number

Witness signature

Date

Witness printed name rank and organization

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Enclosure D

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

1. I recognize that covering combat and other military operations carries with it certain inherent risks to life, limb and equipment.
2. I recognize that the U.S. military, in pursuing the successful accomplishment of its mission, cannot guarantee my personal safety or the safety of my equipment.
3. I understand that my acknowledgement to this statement is a condition of being credentialed to cover U.S. military operations and receiving assistance for that coverage.

Signature

Date

Printed name, affiliation, address & phone number

Witness signature

Date

Witness printed name rank and organization

Enclosure E

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED GEAR

1. News media representatives (NMR) will be responsible for procuring/using protective equipment, such as Kevlar helmets and flak vests. Personal protective gear, as well as clothing, should be subdued in color and appearance. Because of the reduced threat, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) gear is not required.

2. When purchasing gear, please consider the wide range of temperatures prevalent on an average day in the desert; it is best to dress in layers. The wear of synthetic materials is discouraged outside forward operating bases due to their flammable characteristics.

3. NMR must carry and support any personal and professional gear they take with them, including protective cases for equipment, batteries, cables, converters, etc.

4. Listed below are required and recommended items for media representatives:

- Flak vest (**required**)
- Kevlar helmet (**required**)
- Camelback/canteens
- Sleeping bag
- ISO mat/ThermaRest mattress
- Cushion sole socks
- Boots/sturdy shoes
- Trousers
- Blouses
- Underwear
- Flashlight w/ batteries
- Goggles/100% UV sunglasses (ballistic)
- Small first aid kit
- Hygiene gear/foot powder
- Laundry detergent powder
- Prescription drugs (restricted - must be in original labeled container)
- Passport
- Ear plugs w/ case
- Rain/wind resistant jacket

- Cold-weather fleece
- Cold-weather hat
- Long underwear (top and bottom)
- Eyeglasses (as required)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent w/ DEET
- Chapstick
- Sandstorm face protection (scarf)
- Backpack/daypack

5. This list is not all-encompassing. Individual gear lists should be based on personal experience with activities in a prolonged outdoor environment. Feel free to consult with Marines to help gauge appropriate gear.

6. **Prohibited articles:**

- Any controlled substances or alcoholic beverages
- Destructive devices (explosive caps, tear gas, projectiles, etc.)
- Explosives and flammables (i.e. heat tabs, sterno, etc.)
- White phosphorous matches
- Pornographic material. This includes, but is not limited to: sports, fitness, health or entertainment magazines that would contain pictures of persons in any stages of nudity, persons in swimming apparel, tank tops, various types of revealing clothes.
- Prescription drugs (restricted) must be in original labeled container and not loose; should be in hygiene kit.