



June 3, 2005

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Enclosure 1: Koran Inquiry: Description of Incidents

*(As reported by the JTF-Guantanamo Commander's Inquiry Team)*

1. We found nine incidents (seven guard, two interrogator) alleging, intentional or unintentional mishandling of a Koran, but only five could be confirmed.

a. Guards. We identified seven incidents (four confirmed) where the guards' conduct may have been inappropriate. After thorough investigation we do not believe further investigation is warranted for any of these incidents and consider them all closed.

(1) During an interrogation in FEB 02, a detainee complained that guards at Camp X-ray kicked the Koran of a detainee in a neighboring cell four to five days earlier. The interrogator reported the first detainee's complaint in a memorandum dated 27 FEB 02. The interrogator confirmed that the guards were aware of the detainee's complaint. There is no evidence of further investigation concerning this incident; however, **we consider this a confirmed incident.**

(2) On 21 FEB 02, a detainee, started shouting, "God is great," and would not stop. The guards asked why he was shouting and he stated that one of the guards had kicked his Koran. The incident was reported in a JTF-160 intelligence report. The report stated the guards were questioned and denied kicking anyone's Koran. It is unclear from the report who questioned the guards concerning the incident. We found no evidence of further investigation concerning the incident. The detainee's hard copy record did not mention the incident. We do not believe further investigation is warranted and consider the incident closed.

(3) On 24 FEB 02, a detainee refused recreation time and his cell was searched. A rock hidden in a canteen and a nail hidden in a bucket were found during the search. The detainee was returned to his cell after the search and he fell on the ground. He claimed that the guards hit him in the groin, threw him on the ground and then kicked his Koran. A number of the detainees on the block stated they no longer wanted recreation time until the guards stopped disrespecting the Koran. The incident was reported in a

JTF-160 intelligence report. We found no evidence of further investigation concerning the incident.

(4) During an interrogation on 14 APR 03, a detainee complained to FBI and Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) interrogators that guards constantly defile the Koran. The incident was recorded in an memorandum, dated 15 APR 03, that summarized the interrogation. The detainee cited an instance where a female MP allegedly threw a Koran into a bag of wet towels to anger an unknown detainee (date of alleged incident unknown). He also alleged another MP told a detainee that the Koran belonged in the toilet (date unknown), and that the MP told detainees they were ordered to do these types of things. The detainee stated that these are things he has actually seen or heard and not just rumors. It is unclear from the report what the detainee actually observed or overheard (if anything) as opposed to what he was reporting that he was told by other detainees. We have no record of any further investigation concerning the incident. There is no record that the detainee mentioned any Koran mishandling in previous interrogations or that he mentioned Koran mishandling in subsequent interrogations. There is no mention of any Koran incident in the detainee's hard copy records. The detainee has been released from Guantanamo.

(5) On 15 AUG 03, two detainees complained to the swing shift guards (1400-2200 hrs) that the detainees' Korans were wet because the night shift guards had thrown water balloons on the block. The swing shift guards recorded the complaints in the block blotter log in accordance with normal procedures. We have not determined if the detainees made further complaints or if the Korans were replaced. There is no evidence that this incident was investigated. There is no evidence that the incident, although clearly inappropriate, caused any type of disturbance on the Block. **We consider this a confirmed incident.**

(6) On 21 AUG 03, a detainee complained to a guard that a two-word obscenity had been written in English on the inside cover of his English version Koran and asked to complain to the commander. The complaint was recorded in the Detainee Management System (DMS) electronic blotter system. After the incident, the English language Koran was taken from the detainee who retained his Arabic language Koran. We have no record indicating whether the detainee formally complained to the commander. We have found no evidence to confirm who wrote in the detainee's Koran. The detainee speaks English at a conversational level. It is possible that a guard committed this act; it is equally possible that the detainee wrote in his own Koran; however, **we consider this a confirmed incident.**

(7) On 25 MAR 05, a detainee complained to the guards that urine came through an air vent in Camp 4, and splashed on him and his Koran while he laid near the air vent. A guard reported to a Block NCOIC that he was at fault. The guard had left his observation area post and went outside to urinate. He urinated near an air vent and the wind blew his urine through the vent into the block. The Sergeant of the Guard (SOG) responded and immediately relieved the guard. The SOG ensured the detainee received a fresh uniform and a new Koran. The Joint Detention Operations Group (JDOG)

commander reprimanded the guard and assigned him to gate guard duty where he had no contact with detainees for the remainder of his assignment at JTF-GTMO. This incident was recorded in a series of contemporaneous sworn statements made by Camp 4 guard force members. There is no record that this incident caused any type of disturbance in the block. **We consider this a confirmed incident.**

b. Interrogators. We found two incidents (one confirmed) alleging that an interrogator had stepped on a Koran during an interrogation.

(1) On 25 JUL 03, a contract interrogator apologized to a detainee for stepping on the detainee's Koran in an earlier interrogation. The memorandum of the 25 Jul 03, interrogation session shows that the detainee had reported to other detainees that his Koran had been stepped on. The detainee accepted the apology and agreed to inform other detainees of the apology and ask them to cease disruptive behaviors caused by the incident. The interrogator was later terminated for a pattern of unacceptable behavior, an inability to follow direct guidance and poor leadership. **We consider this a confirmed incident.**

(2) On 21 AUG 03, a detainee complained to guards that an interrogator had asked why he wanted to be a Muslim and put his foot on the Koran. The detainee's complaint was recorded in an Intelligence Report (INTREP) activity log dated 21 AUG 03. The detainee did not state when the alleged mishandling occurred. It is unclear from the log whether it was the detainee's or the interrogator's foot that was placed on the Koran. There is no evidence of further investigation concerning the detainee's allegations. The detainee was interrogated nine times in 2003 and did not mention any Koran mishandling during these interrogations. On 12 AUG 03, the FBI interrogated the detainee; however, there was no mention of the Koran during the interview. To date, the only mention of Koran in reference to interrogation of the detainee is a Serious Incident Report (SIR) dated 1 DEC 04 that stated the detainee wrote passages from the Koran on his cell wall. The detainee's hard copy record did not mention the incident.

2. The other 10 incidents (seven guard, three interrogator) did not involve mishandling the Koran.

a. Guards. We have determined that in seven incidents involving guards, the guard(s) involved accidentally touched the Koran, touched it within the scope of his (their) duties, or did not actually touch the Koran at all.

(1) About 18 JUL 02, a detainee, dropped his Koran while being restrained by a guard in preparation for a movement. The Arabic-speaking detainees in the cells nearby yelled that guards had dropped the Koran. As detainees communicated from block to block spreading the story, the story changed to say the guards had ripped pages out of the Koran, and later it changed to say that guards had thrown the Koran in the toilet. The incident was reported in an intelligence report dated 18 JUL 02.

(2) On 5 JAN 03, a translator was called to translate during a search of a cell. The detainee residing in the cell refused to show his Koran during the search. The guards informed the detainee that if he did not show his Koran they would be forced to search it. The detainee did not comply. The MPs put on clean latex gloves and used a clean towel as they conducted the search. During the search, detainees in nearby cells continuously threw water at the MPs. As the translator departed the cell, the detainee spat on him. The translator recorded the incident in a sworn statement.

(3) On 05 JAN 03, at 1620 hours, two detainees refused to show their Korans during a random cell search. When the detainees refused to comply, the duty officer ordered the guards to search their Korans. The incident was recorded in a series of contemporaneous statements prepared by guard force personnel.

(4) On 16 JAN 03, a detainee was moved from Delta Block to India Block. India block was a maximum-security unit (MSU). At the time, detainees in the MSU were not allowed to keep their Korans (current SOP allows detainees to have Korans in the MSU and they carry their own Koran when moved to the MSU). The detainee refused to surrender his Koran before leaving Delta Block and was allowed to carry it to India Block. When the detainee was moved into his cell in India Block he was instructed to place his Koran on the bed. He complied and an MP put the Koran in a box for storage.

(5) On 18 AUG 03, at 1220 hours, a guard conducted a routine search of a detainee's cell. During the search, the guard accidentally knocked the detainee's Koran out of its holder (a surgical mask) and onto his bunk. The block NCO responded to the cell and explained to the detainee that the incident was an accident. The ICRC asked MG Miller, Commander JTF-GTMO, about the incident during a meeting on 09 OCT 03. MG Miller told the ICRC that he had investigated the incident and determined it to be an accident. A guard recorded the incident in sworn statement.

(6) On 18 AUG 03, two detainees complained that the guards had violated the Koran search policy when they touched the surgical masks used to hang detainee Korans from cell walls during a security, safety, and welfare inspection. The incident was recorded in the electronic blotter system. The guards stated in the blotter log that they were not violating Koran search policy because they did not actually touch the Koran when they squeezed and felt for bulges in the surgical masks. The SOP in place at the time of the incident did not address searching the Koran through the masks.

(7) On 13 NOV 04, a guard conducted a routine cell search. While shaking out the sleeping mat, the guard accidentally knocked the detainee's Koran out of the surgical mask onto the floor. The guard bent down and picked up the Koran. Available reports do not state which detainee owned the Koran; however, five detainees spat and threw liquids, including urine, at the guard after the Koran was touched.

b. Interrogators. We have found three incidents alleging that interrogators mishandled a Koran during an interrogation.

(1) On 28 NOV 02, during an interrogation, a detainee requested that a Koran on top of a TV set in the interrogation room be removed. It is unclear who initially placed the Koran on the TV; however, to appear less confrontational, the interrogator instructed the linguist to take the Koran off the TV. When a second interrogator learned of the detainee's request, he returned to the interrogation room and placed two Korans on top of the TV. This act highly agitated the detainee. This incident was recorded in a memorandum dated 28 NOV 02.

(2) Some time between late NOV and mid DEC 02, during an interrogation, an unidentified Marine got up on a table and squatted down in front of a detainee in an aggressive manner and unintentionally squatted down over the detainee's Koran. This provoked a visible reaction from the detainee. An officer reported this incident in a sworn statement, dated 11 Jan 05, as part of a separate investigation.

(3) During the search of the classified drive, a portion of a temporary file was discovered that mentioned an interrogator handling the Koran. The undated statement said that the Chaplain complained that an interrogator was tearing pages from the Koran during an interrogation. The author of the statement (who is a DoD contracted interrogator apparently in a supervisory position), in turn stated, that the interrogator was reading from the Koran. The interrogator forcefully turned the pages of the Koran during the interview, but did not tear any pages. It is unknown when this interrogation took place. The interrogator worked as a military and civilian interrogator at JTF-GTMO. Our scheduling records show that he participated in a series of interrogations in JUN-JUL 03.

3. We found 15 incidents where detainees mishandled Korans.

a. On 19 NOV 02, a detainee used his Koran as a pillow while he lay in his cell. The guards on duty recorded this incident in the electronic blotter.

b. On 11 MAY 03, a guard observed a detainee rip up his Koran and state he was no longer a Muslim. The guard recorded the incident contemporaneously in a sworn statement.

c. On 14 MAY 03, a guard observed a detainee rip his Koran into small pieces. The guard recorded the incident contemporaneously in a sworn statement.

d. On 5 JUN 03, a guard observed two detainees accuse a third detainee of not being a man. In response, the detainee urinated on one of their Korans. The detainees resided in adjacent cells. The event was recorded in FBI FD-302s, on 5 JUN 03 and 19 JUN 03.

e. On 17 JUN 03, a detainee began to laugh as the detainees near him prayed. He asked for the Sergeant of the Guard and an interpreter. When they arrived he threw his Koran around his cell. Then he requested that the interpreter place his Koran in the box each detainee has above his cell in order to offend the rest of the block. Guard personnel recorded the detainee's actions in the electronic blotter system.

- f. On 24 JUN 03, a guard observed a detainee rip his Koran and throw it out of his cell. The guard recorded the incident contemporaneously in a sworn statement.
- g. On 26 JUL 03, a detainee threw his Koran on his cell floor. Detainees residing near him complained to the guards about his actions and he was moved to a different cell. Guard personnel recorded the detainee's actions in the electronic blotter system.
- h. On 5 DEC 03, two detainees complained to a guard that a third detainee had urinated in their cells to prevent them from praying. The first two detainees resided in the cells adjacent to the third detainee at the time. They stated that when they tried to pray or read the Koran, the third detainee spat and threw urine on them. The first two detainees were subsequently moved to different cells. Guard personnel recorded these actions and the relocation of the two detainees in the electronic blotter system.
- i. On 23 FEB 04, a guard observed a detainee place two Korans in his toilet and state he no longer cared about the Koran or his religion. Five minutes later, after the detainee retrieved the Korans, he ripped several pages out of one Koran and threw the pages on the floor. Then he placed both Korans on the sink. The guard recorded the incident contemporaneously in a sworn statement.
- j. On 22 MAR 04, guard personnel observed a detainee tear the cover off of his Koran while inside his cell. The incident was recorded in the electronic blotter system.
- k. On 28 MAR 04, a detainee asked a guard to move a second detainee because he was throwing urine on the first detainee's Koran. The guard recorded the first detainee's request in the electronic blotter system. We have been unable to verify if the detainee was moved as requested.
- l. On 21 SEP 04, an unknown guard conducted a routine search of a detainee's cell. During the search the guard discovered that the detainee had ripped out pages of his Koran. The detainee used tape from the Koran binding to secure the Koran pages over the vent to keep the air from coming into his cell. The incident was recorded in the electronic blotter system.
- m. On 19 JAN 05, a detainee tore up his Koran and tried to flush it down the toilet. Four guards witnessed the incident and it was recorded in the electronic blotter system.
- n. On 23 JAN 05, a detainee ripped pages out of his Koran and threw them down the toilet. The detainee stated he did so because he wanted to be moved to another camp. Four guards witnessed the incident and it was recorded in the electronic blotter system.
- o. On 18 FEB 05, a detainee ripped up his Koran and handed it to a guard. The detainee stated he had given up on being a Muslim. Several other guards witnessed the incident and it was recorded in the electronic blotter system.