

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2009 2:51 AM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: RE: assessments of journalists - Stars and Stripes (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Caveats: NONE

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Gentlemen,

As mentioned during yesterday's conference call, Afghanistan has unfortunately used Rendon products exactly as (b)(6) describes.

CJTF101 would not approve any reporter's embed until provided a detailed "background check" of the reporter, provided by Rendon. Though the reports focused primarily on the reporter's previous stories and basic reporting style, CJTF101 would deny embeds based on the reports. During my time here, I have received complaints from journalists about the delay of approving their embeds, specifically due to waiting for these background checks. The Rendon contract has since transferred to USFOR-A PA and we no longer use the reporter backgrounds to vette reporters. While I support the approach of a general statement to Stripes, I wanted you to know the specifics of our experience here to contextualize your statement. Please let me know if you have questions and thanks,

V/r,
(b)(6)

International Security Assistance Force (Public Affairs)
Comm: (b)(6)
DSN: (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2009 9:55 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6)
Subject: FW: assessments of journalists - Stars and Stripes

Gentlemen,

Stars & Stripes is going after the Rendon group, and specifically if/how we as PAO's have used their analyses to vette reporters requesting embeds. We don't use Rendon here at the DoD level. How would you like to respond on how we're using them downrange? Without giving them tons of details,

we
might want to just give Stripes a general statement on why we use groups like Rendon/Lincoln. Either way, can you get us back something by tomorrow CoB?

Thanks,

(b)(6)

Press Officer

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs The Pentagon, Room 2D961 Washington, DC 20301-1400
Office (b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Lapan, David COL OSD PA

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2009 12:30 PM

To: Oten, David Mr OSD PA

Cc: Turner, James Mr OSD PA; (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: RE: assessments of journalists - Stars and Stripes

Looking at the contracts, and as you note, they appear to be from/for USF-Afghanistan and Air Force (specifically Lackland). I am copying the desk officers who can farm this query to those organizations (CENTCOM and SAF/PA).

I cannot accept e-mail responses to the questions? What kind of BS is that?

r/DAL

-----Original Message-----

From: Oten, David Mr OSD PA

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2009 12:17 PM

To: Lapan, David COL OSD PA

Cc: Turner, James Mr OSD PA; (b)(6)

Subject: FW: assessments of journalists - Stars and Stripes

Sir,

I was called by Stars and Stripes, Japan, (front desk refers the unknown to me).

Charlie Reed (female) is asking about profiling reporters requesting embed in the AOR using products from a contract with the Rendon Group Inc. (PA Firm) here in DC.

<http://www.rendon.com/services.php>

Iraq and Afghanistan I/O or PA work a Rendon Group Contract, according to (b)(6)

OASD-PA does not use Rendon for research and we do not according to (b)(6)

(b)(6) folks have also never heard of them.

The questions are below. She indicates a Thursday deadline. Federal contact information on Rendon Group awards is here.

http://www.usaspending.gov/fpds/fpds.php?company_name=Rendon&sortby=r&reptyp e=r&database=fpds&fiscal_year=2009&detail=4&datatype=T&submit=GO

the 2009 awards are to USFOR Afghanistan and AF at Lackland, (Probably their Info Ops Center).

This is going to be partly a referral to downrange PAs on embed questions and partly a Contracting Research mission.

How would you like to approach this?

V/R

Mr. David Oten
Defense Press Operations
1400 Defense Pentagon (20961)
Washington, DC 20301-1400

(b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: Reed, Charlie [mailto:ReedC@pstripes.osd.mil]
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2009 9:19 AM
To: Oten, David Mr OSD PA
Subject: assessments of journalists - Stars and Stripes

Hi David,

As per our conversation, I have some questions related to the military's affiliation with The Rendon Group, Inc. regarding assessments of journalists requesting embeds (or currently embedded) with troops downrange.

I like to know the following:

1. How long has the DoD employed The Rendon Group for media assessments?
2. What data does The Rendon Group use to calculate the assessments?
3. How many journalists have been assessed?
4. Is every journalist who requests an embed in Iraq and Afghanistan assessed?

5. How are these assessments used by commanders, public affairs, etc?
6. Why was this assessment system implemented?
7. Is it an annual contract? How much is the contract worth?

I cannot accept e-mailed responses to these questions. My deadline is Thursday morning.

Best,
Charlie

Charlie Reed
Reporter/Photographer
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