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30 December 2004

Transmitted by Secure Facsimile

Dan Levin
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Office of Legal Counsel
Department of Justice
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Levin:

~~(TS)~~ [redacted] ~~(NF,OC)~~ Please find enclosed a paper describing a generic interrogation process that sets forth how the Agency would expect to use approved interrogation measures, both in combination and in sequence with other techniques. Our hope is that this letter will permit your office to render advice that an interrogation following the enclosed description would not violate the provision of 18 U.S.C. § 2340A.

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~~(U//FOUO)~~ If you have any questions, or would like briefings, please contact me and I will obtain answers and/or arrange the required briefings.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
Associate General Counsel

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Enclosure

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Background Paper on CIA's Combined Use of Interrogation Techniques

Note: This paper provides further background information and details on High-Value Detainee (HVD) interrogation techniques to support documents CIA has previously provided the Department of Justice. [redacted]

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This paper focuses strictly on the topic of combined use of interrogation techniques.

The purpose of interrogation is to persuade High-Value Detainees (HVD) to provide threat information and terrorist intelligence in a timely manner, to allow the US Government to identify and disrupt terrorist plots, [redacted]

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[redacted] and to collect critical intelligence on al-Qa'ida [redacted]
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In support of information previously sent to the Department of Justice, this paper provides additional background on how interrogation techniques are used, in combination and separately, to achieve interrogation objectives. Effective interrogation is based on the concept of using both physical and psychological pressures in a comprehensive, systematic, and cumulative manner to influence HVD behavior, to overcome a detainee's resistance posture. The goal of interrogation is to create a state of learned helplessness and dependence conducive to the collection of intelligence in a predictable, reliable, and sustainable manner. For the purpose of this paper, the interrogation process can be broken into three separate phases: Initial Conditions; Transition to Interrogation; and Interrogation.

A. Initial Conditions. Capture, [redacted] contribute to the physical and psychological condition of the HVD prior to the start of interrogation. Of these, "capture shock" and detainee reactions [redacted] are factors that may vary significantly between detainees [redacted]

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[redacted] Regardless of their previous environment and experiences, once an HVD is turned over to CIA a predictable set of events occur:

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1) Rendition.

a. The HVD is flown to a Black Site [redacted] [redacted] A medical examination is conducted prior to the flight. During the flight, the detainee is securely shackled and is deprived of sight and sound through the use of blindfolds, earmuffs, and hoods.

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[redacted] There is no interaction with the HVD during this rendition movement except for periodic, discreet assessments by the on-board medical officer.

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b. Upon arrival at the destination airfield, the HVD is moved to the Black Site under the same conditions and using appropriate security procedures.

2) Reception at Black Site. The HVD is subjected to administrative procedures and medical assessment upon arrival at the Black Site. [redacted]

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[redacted] the HVD finds himself in the complete control of Americans; [redacted]

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[redacted] the procedures he is subjected to are precise, quiet, and almost clinical; and no one is mistreating him. While each HVD is different, the rendition and reception process generally creates significant apprehension in the HVD because of the enormity and suddenness of the change in environment, the uncertainty about what will happen next, and the potential dread an HVD might have of US custody. Reception procedures include:

a. The HVD's head and face are shaved.

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b. A series of photographs are taken of the HVD while nude to document the physical condition of the HVD upon arrival.

c. A Medical Officer interviews the HVD and a medical evaluation is conducted to assess the physical condition of the HVD. The medical officer also determines if there are any contraindications to the use of interrogation techniques.

d. A Psychologist interviews the HVD to assess his mental state. The psychologist also determines if there are any contraindications to the use of interrogation techniques.

Transitioning to Interrogation - The Initial Interview.

Interrogators use the Initial Interview to assess the initial resistance posture of the HVD and to determine--in a relatively benign environment--if the HVD intends to willingly participate with CIA interrogators. The standard on participation is set very high during the Initial Interview. The HVD would have to willingly provide information on actionable threats and location information on High-Value Targets at large--not lower level information--for interrogators to continue with the neutral approach.

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to HQS. Once approved, the interrogation process begins provided the required medical and psychological assessments contain no contraindications to interrogation

C. Interrogation. [redacted]

[redacted]

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For descriptive purposes, these techniques can be separated into three categories: Conditioning Techniques; Corrective Techniques; and Coercive Techniques. To more completely describe the three categories of techniques and their effects, we begin with a summary of the detention conditions that are used in all CIA HVD facilities and that may be a factor in interrogations.

1) Existing detention conditions. Detention conditions are not interrogation techniques, but they have an impact on the detainee undergoing interrogation. Specifically, the HVD will be exposed to white noise/loud sounds (not to exceed 79 decibels) and constant light during portions of the interrogation process. These conditions provide additional operational security: white noise/loud sounds mask conversations of staff members and deny the HVD any auditory clues about his surroundings and deter and disrupt the HVD's potential efforts to communicate with other detainees. Constant light provides an improved environment for Black Site security, medical, psychological, and interrogator staff to monitor the HVD.

2) Conditioning Techniques. The HVD is typically reduced to a baseline, dependent state using the three interrogation techniques discussed below in combination. Establishing this baseline state is important to demonstrate to the HVD that he has no control over basic human needs. The baseline state also creates in the detainee a mindset in which he learns to perceive and value his personal welfare, comfort, and immediate needs more than the information he is protecting. The use of these

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conditioning techniques do not generally bring immediate results; rather, it is the cumulative effect of these techniques, used over time and in combination with other interrogation techniques and intelligence exploitation methods, which achieve interrogation objectives. These conditioning techniques require little to no physical interaction between the detainee and the interrogator. The specific conditioning interrogation techniques are:

a. Nudity. The HVD's clothes are taken and he remains nude until the interrogators provide clothes to him.

b. Sleep Deprivation. The HVD is placed in the vertical shackling position to begin sleep deprivation. Other shackling procedures may be used during interrogations. The detainee is diapered for sanitary purposes, although the diaper is not used at all times.

c. Dietary manipulation. The HVD is fed Ensure Plus or other food at regular intervals. The HVD receives a target of 1500 calories per day per OMS guidelines.

3) Corrective Techniques. Techniques that require physical interaction between the interrogator and detainee are used principally to correct, startle, or to achieve another enabling objective with the detainee. These techniques—the insult slap, abdominal slap, facial hold, and attention grasp—are not used simultaneously but are often used interchangeably during an individual interrogation session. These techniques generally are used while the detainee is subjected to the conditioning techniques outlined above (nudity, sleep deprivation, and dietary manipulation). Examples of application include:

a. Insult Slap. The insult slap often is the first physical technique used with an HVD once an interrogation begins. As noted, the HVD may already be nude, in sleep deprivation, and subject to dietary manipulation, even though the detainee will likely feel little effect from these techniques early in the interrogation. The insult slap is used sparingly but periodically throughout the interrogation process when the interrogator needs to immediately correct the

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detainee or provide a consequence to a detainee's response or non-response. The interrogator will continually assess the effectiveness of the insult slap and continue to employ it so long as it has the desired effect on the detainee. Because of the physical dynamics of the various techniques, the insult slap can be used in combination with water dousing or kneeling stress positions. Other combinations are possible but may not be practical.

b. Abdominal Slap. The abdominal slap is similar to the insult slap in application and desired result. It provides the variation necessary to keep a high level of unpredictability in the interrogation process. The abdominal slap will be used sparingly and periodically throughout the interrogation process when the interrogator wants to immediately correct the detainee [redacted]

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[redacted], and the interrogator will continually assess its effectiveness. Because of the physical dynamics of the various techniques, the abdominal slap can be used in combination with water dousing, stress positions, and wall standing. Other combinations are possible but may not be practical.

c. Facial Hold. The facial hold is a minor corrective technique and is used sparingly throughout interrogation. The facial hold is not painful and is used to correct the detainee in a way that demonstrates the interrogator's control over the HVD.

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Because of the physical dynamics of the various techniques, the facial hold can be used in combination with water dousing, stress positions, and wall standing. Other combinations are possible but may not be practical.

d. Attention Grasp. [redacted]

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[redacted] It may be used several times in the same interrogation. This technique is usually applied [redacted]

[redacted] grasp the HVD and pull him

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into close proximity of the interrogator (face to face). Because of the physical dynamics of the various techniques, the attention grasp can be used in combination with water dousing or kneeling stress positions. Other combinations are possible but may not be practical.

4) Coercive Techniques. Certain interrogation techniques place the detainee in more physical and psychological stress and, therefore, are considered more effective tools in persuading a resistant HVD to participate with CIA interrogators. These techniques--walling, water dousing, stress positions, wall standing, and cramped confinement--are typically not used in combination, although some combined use is possible. For example, an HVD in stress positions or wall standing can be water doused at the same time. Other combinations of these techniques may be used while the detainee is being subjected to the conditioning techniques discussed above (nudity, sleep deprivation, and dietary manipulation). Examples of coercive techniques include:

a. Walling. Walling is one of the most effective interrogation techniques because it wears down the HVD physically, heightens uncertainty in the detainee about what the interrogator may do to him, and creates a sense of dread when the HVD knows he is about to be walled again. [redacted]

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[redacted] interrogator
[redacted] An HVD may be walled one time (one impact with the wall) to make a point or twenty to thirty times consecutively when the interrogator requires a more significant response to a question. During an interrogation session that is designed to be intense, an HVD will be walled multiple times in the session. Because of the physical dynamics of walling, it is impractical to use it simultaneously with other corrective or coercive techniques.

b. Water Dousing. The frequency and duration of water dousing applications are based on water temperature and other safety considerations as

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established by OMS guidelines. It is an effective interrogation technique and may be used frequently within those guidelines. The physical dynamics of water dousing are such that it can be used in combination with other corrective and coercive techniques. As noted above, an HVD in stress positions or wall standing can be water doused. Likewise, it is possible to use the insult slap or abdominal slap with an HVD during water dousing.

c. Stress Positions. The frequency and duration of use of the stress positions are based on the interrogator's assessment of their continued effectiveness during interrogation. These techniques are usually self-limiting in that temporary muscle fatigue usually leads to the HVD being unable to maintain the stress position after a period of time. Stress positions requiring the HVD to be in contact with the wall can be used in combination with water dousing and abdominal slap. Stress positions requiring the HVD to kneel can be used in combination with water dousing, insult slap, abdominal slap, facial hold, and attention grasp.

d. Wall Standing. The frequency and duration of wall standing are based on the interrogator's assessment of its continued effectiveness during interrogation. Wall standing is usually self-limiting in that temporary muscle fatigue usually leads to the HVD being unable to maintain the position after a period of time. Because of the physical dynamics of the various techniques, wall standing can be used in combination with water dousing and abdominal slap. While other combinations are possible, they may not be practical.

e. Cramped Confinement. Current OMS guidance on the duration of cramped confinement limits confinement in the large box to no more than 8 hours at a time for no more than 18 hours a day, and confinement in the small box to 2 hours. [redacted]

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[redacted] Because of the unique aspects of cramped confinement, it cannot be used in

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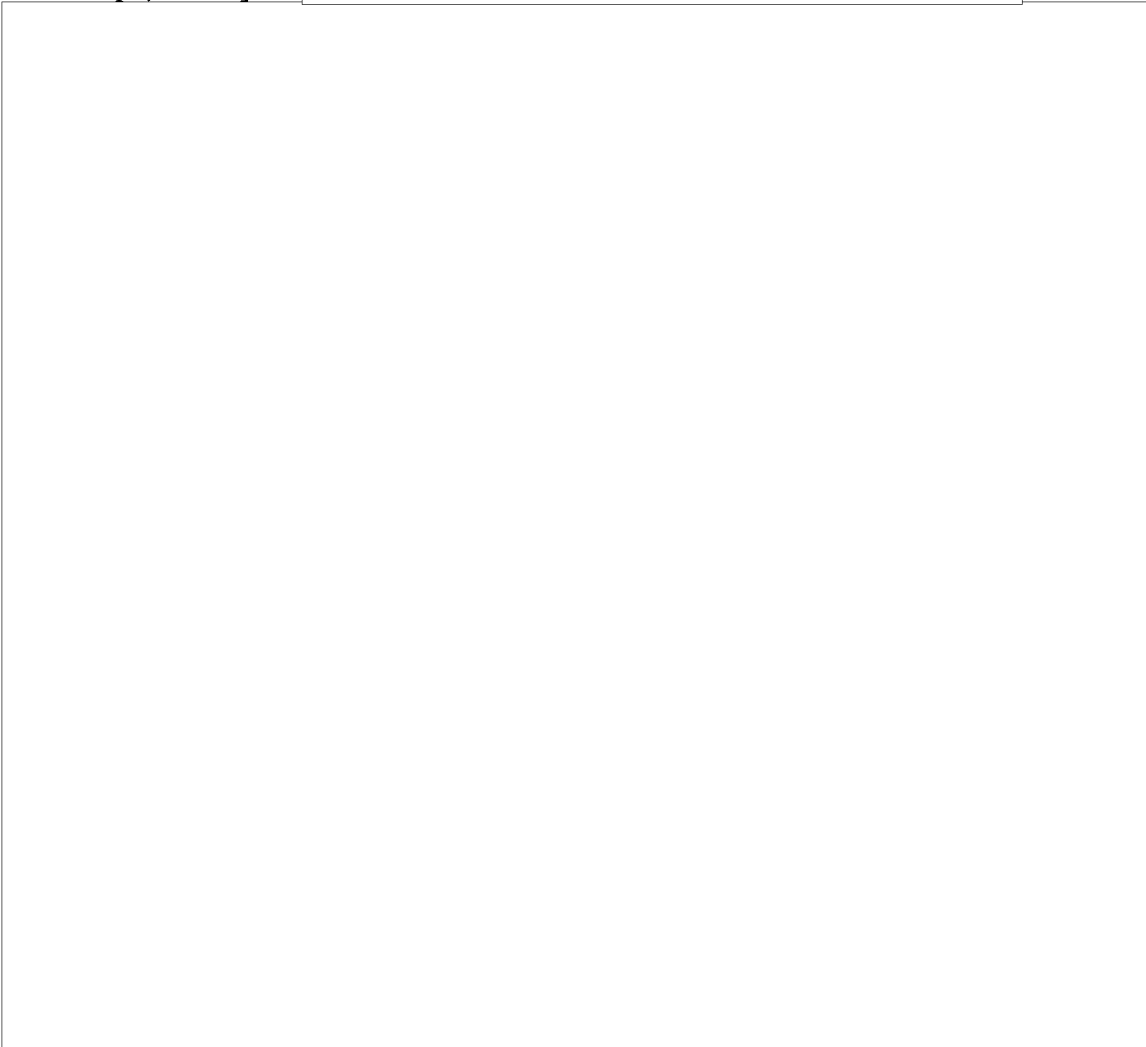
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combination with other corrective or coercive techniques.

D. Interrogation - A day-to-day look. This section provides a look at a prototypical interrogation with an emphasis on the application of interrogation techniques, in combination and separately. [redacted]

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2) Session One.

a. The HVD is brought into the interrogation room, and under the direction of the interrogators, stripped of his clothes, and placed into shackles [redacted]

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b. The HVD is placed standing with his back to the walling wall. The HVD remains hooded.

c. Interrogators approach the HVD, place the walling collar over his head and around his neck, and stand in front of the HVD. [redacted]

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d. The interrogators remove the HVD's hood and [redacted]

[redacted] explain the HVD's situation to him, tell him that the interrogators will do what it takes to get important information, and that he can improve his conditions immediately by participating with the interrogators. The insult slap is normally used as soon as the HVD does or says anything inconsistent with the interrogators' instructions.

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e. [redacted]

[redacted] If appropriate, an insult slap or abdominal slap will follow.

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f. The interrogators will likely use walling once it becomes clear that the HVD is lying, withholding information, or using other resistance techniques.

g. The sequence [redacted] may continue for several more iterations as the interrogators continue to measure the HVD's resistance posture and apply a negative consequence to the HVD's resistance efforts.

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h. The interrogators, assisted by security officers (for security purposes) will place the HVD in the center of the interrogation room in the vertical shackling position and diaper the HVD to begin sleep deprivation. The HVD will be provided with Ensure Plus (liquid dietary supplement) to begin dietary manipulation. The HVD remains nude. White noise (not to exceed 79db) is used in the interrogation.

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room. The first interrogation session terminates at this point.

i. [redacted]

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j. This first interrogation session may last from 30 minutes to several hours based on the interrogators' assessment of the HVD's resistance posture. [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] The three Conditioning Techniques were used to bring the HVD to a baseline, dependent state conducive to meeting interrogation objectives in a timely manner. [redacted]

[redacted]

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3) Session Two.

a. The time period between Session One and Session Two could be as brief as one hour or more than 24 hours. [redacted]

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[redacted] In addition, the medical and psychological personnel observing the interrogations must advise there are no contraindications to another interrogation session.

b. [redacted]

[redacted]

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c. Like the first session, interrogators approach the HVD, place the walling collar over his head and around his neck, and stand in front of the HVD.

[redacted]

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d. [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] Should the HVD not respond appropriately to the first questions, the interrogators will respond with an insult slap or abdominal slap to set the stage for further questioning.

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e. [redacted]

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The interrogators will likely use walling once interrogators determine the HVD is intent on maintaining his resistance posture.

f. The sequence [redacted]

may continue for multiple iterations as the interrogators continue to measure the HVD's resistance posture.

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g. To increase the pressure on the HVD, [redacted]

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water douse the HVD for several minutes.

[redacted]

h. The interrogators, assisted by security officers, will place the HVD back into the vertical shackling position to resume sleep deprivation. Dietary manipulation also continues, and the HVD remains nude. White noise (not to exceed 79db) is used in the interrogation room. The interrogation session terminates at this point.

i. As noted above, the duration of this session may last from 30 minutes to several hours based on the interrogators' assessment of the HVD's resistance posture. In this example of the second session, the following techniques were used: sleep deprivation, nudity, dietary manipulation, walling, water dousing, attention grasp, insult slap, and abdominal slap. The three Conditioning Techniques were used to keep the HVD at a baseline, dependent state and to weaken his resolve and will to resist. In combination with these three techniques, other Corrective and Coercive Techniques were used throughout the interrogation session based on interrogation objectives and the interrogators' assessment of the HVD's resistance posture.

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4) Session Three.

a. [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] In addition, the medical and psychological personnel observing the interrogations must find no contraindications to continued interrogation.

b. The HVD remains in sleep deprivation, dietary manipulation and is nude. [redacted]

[redacted]

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c. Like the earlier sessions, the HVD begins the session standing against the walling wall with the walling collar around his neck.

d. If the HVD is still maintaining a resistance posture, interrogators will continue to use walling and water dousing. All of the Corrective Techniques (insult slap, abdominal slap, facial hold, attention grasp) may be used several times during this session, based on the responses and actions of the HVD. Stress positions and wall standing will be integrated into interrogations [redacted]

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Intense questioning and walling would be repeated multiple times. [redacted]

[redacted]

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Interrogators will often use one technique to support another. As an example, interrogators would tell an HVD in a stress position that he (HVD) is going back to the walling wall (for walling) if he fails to hold the stress position until told otherwise by the HVD. This places additional stress on the HVD who typically will try to hold the stress position for as long as possible to avoid the walling wall. [redacted]

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interrogators will remind the HVD that he is responsible for this treatment and can stop it at any time by cooperating with the interrogators.

e. The interrogators, assisted by security officers, will place the HVD back into the vertical shackling position to resume sleep deprivation. Dietary manipulation also continues, and the HVD remains nude. White noise (not to exceed 79db) is used in the interrogation room. The interrogation session terminates at this point. In this example of the third session, the following techniques were used: sleep deprivation, nudity, dietary manipulation, walling, water dousing, attention grasp, insult slap, abdominal slap, stress positions, and wall standing.

5) Continuing Sessions.

[redacted]

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Interrogation techniques assessed as being the most effective will be emphasized while techniques with little assessed effectiveness will be minimized.

a.

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b. The use of cramped confinement may be introduced if interrogators assess that it will have the appropriate effect on the HVD.

c.

[redacted]

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d. Sleep deprivation may continue to the 70 to 120 hour range, or possibly beyond for the hardest resisters, but in no case exceed the 180-hour time limit. Sleep deprivation will end sooner if the medical or psychologist observer finds

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contraindications to continued sleep deprivation. [redacted]

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e. [redacted]

[redacted]

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f. [redacted]

[redacted]

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g. The interrogators' objective is to transition the HVD to a point where he is participating in a predictable, reliable, and sustainable manner. Interrogation techniques may still be applied as required, but become less frequent. [redacted]

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[redacted] This transition period lasts from several days to several weeks based on the HVDs responses and actions.

h. The entire interrogation process outlined above, including transition, may last for thirty days

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[redacted] On average, the actual use of interrogation techniques [redacted] can vary upwards to fifteen days based on the resilience of the HVD. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted] If the interrogation team anticipates the potential need to use interrogation techniques beyond the 30-day approval period, it will submit a new interrogation plan to HQS for evaluation and approval.

2. Summary. [redacted]

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- Since the start of this program, interrogation techniques have been used in combination and separately to achieve critical intelligence collection objectives.
- The use of interrogation techniques in combination is essential to the creation of an interrogation environment conducive to intelligence collection. HVDs are well-trained, often battle-hardened terrorist operatives, and highly committed to jihad. They are intelligent and resourceful leaders and able to resist standard interrogation approaches.

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

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However, there is no template or script that states with certainty when and how these techniques will be used in combination during interrogation. However, the exemplar above is a fair representation of how these techniques are actually employed.

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- All CIA interrogations are conducted on the basis of the "least coercive measure" principle. Interrogators employ interrogation techniques in an escalating manner consistent with the HVD's responses and actions. Intelligence production is more sustainable over the long term if the actual use of interrogation techniques diminishes steadily and the interrogation environment improves in accordance with the HVD's demonstrated consistent participation with the interrogators.

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