

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC

Jordan Sekulow, Executive Director  
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John A. Monaghan, Senior Litigation Counsel  
American Center for Law and Justice  
201 Maryland Ave., NE  
Washington, DC 20002-5703

September 9, 2021

Email: [foia-response@aclj.org](mailto:foia-response@aclj.org)

Mr. Sekulow,

This letter acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) request dated 30 August 2021 and received by the Information Management Office on 31 August 2021, in which you seek *records pertaining to communications, knowledge and efforts surrounding the failure unfolding in Afghanistan and the communications had between agencies in the months leading up to the national security and humanitarian catastrophe*. You followed up with a list of (18) items. The time frame of records you requested herein is January 20, 2021, to the date this request is processed.

**Your request has been assigned ODNI tracking number DF-2021-00334.**

We will begin to process your request and will contact you should we require clarification of your request. **Your requests for a fee waiver has been granted.**

Your request for expedited processing has been denied because you have not satisfied ODNI standards for expedited processing established in 32 CFR 1700.12. If you are not satisfied with my response to your request for expedited processing, you may administratively appeal by submitting a written request to the Chief FOIA Officer, c/o Director, Information Management Office, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Washington, DC 20511 or [dni-foia@dni.gov](mailto:dni-foia@dni.gov). The request letter and envelope or subject line of the email should be marked “Freedom of Information Act Appeal.” Your appeal must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 days of the date of this letter.

The time needed to process your request necessarily depends on a variety of factors, including the complexity of our records search, the volume and complexity of any records located, and the order of receipt of your request. Accordingly, ODNI uses a multi-track processing system. Your request may require the need to consult with internal and external agencies or components. *See* 5 U.S.C. 552 § (a)(6)(B)(i)-(iii). Because of these unusual circumstances, we need to extend the time limit to respond to your request beyond the ten additional days provided by statute. As a result, we have assigned your request to the complex track.

To assist you with any aspect of your request you may contact me, the FOIA Public Liaison, at my contact information below. You may also contact the Office of Government Information Services (“OGIS”) of the National Archives and Records Administration to

inquire about the mediation services they provide. OGIS can be reached by mail at 8601 Adelphi Road, Room 2510, College Park, MD 20740-6001; telephone (202) 741-5770; facsimile (202) 741-5769; Toll-free (877) 684-6448; or email at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Requester Service Center at [dni-foia@dni.gov](mailto:dni-foia@dni.gov) or (703) 275-1313. You may reach me directly at [dni-foia-liaison@dni.gov](mailto:dni-foia-liaison@dni.gov) or (703) 275-3500.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally A. Nicholson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Sally A. Nicholson  
Chief, Information Review &  
Release Group  
FOIA Public Liaison  
Information Management Office



**UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND**  
7115 SOUTH BOUNDARY BOULEVARD  
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5101

8 September 2021

Mr. John A. Monaghan  
*Emailed to: [jmonaghan@aclj.org](mailto:jmonaghan@aclj.org)*

Dear Mr. Monaghan,

We received your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request on 30 August 2021 seeking all records, communications or briefings created, generated, forwarded, transmitted, sent, shared, saved, received, or reviewed by any senior level DOS, DOD, or ODNI/IC official from 20 January 2021 to 2 September 2021. Specifically; you seek records: (1) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way Taliban plans or intentions to persecute, enumerate or limit the civil rights of the religious minorities, such as Christians, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists, Shi'a Muslims and Baha'i adherents; (2) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way Taliban plans or intentions to persecute, avenge perceived wrongs, feud, or limit the civil rights of the ethnic minorities, such as Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Baloch, Turkmen, Nuristani, Pamiri, Aimaq, and others; (3) in Afghanistan, referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way reports of atrocities by the Taliban; (4) connected to, directing or regarding in any way the closure of Bagram airfield; (5) connected to, or regarding in any way the withdrawal of the U.S. military or presence in Afghanistan by a certain date; (6) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way a report or recommendation concerning the impact of American withdrawal on the stability of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan; (7) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way evacuation of Americans from Afghanistan; (8) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the State Department's termination of the contingency and Crisis Response Bureau, as evidenced by a memo marked sensitive but unclassified and signed by Deputy Secretary Brian McKeon; (9) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the impact of American withdrawal on women in Afghanistan; (10) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the leaving in Afghanistan of American military vehicles, equipment, and weapons, whether having been given to the military of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan or having been abandoned by the U.S. military; (11) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way warnings that Afghanistan risked falling to the Taliban shortly, or within any particular approximate or specific length of time, after the military's withdrawal; (12) of Taliban public announcements or other publicity meant for Afghan consumption referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, the application Sharia law to adherents of other religions, future Taliban intentions to the United States, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, Americans, and future or present intentions to Buddhist, Christian or other religious works of art; (13) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way a possible rapprochement between China and the Taliban; (14) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its activities or public announcements about the Taliban; (15) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way reports of the Taliban confiscating America passports; (16) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the Taliban preventing Americans and Allied Nationals from traveling to Kabul or bordering

countries; and (17) referencing, connected to, or regarding in any way the Taliban or ISIS, ISIS-K and the 30 August 2021 bombing of Kabul airport. Your request is being processed in accordance with Title 5 U.S.C. § 552 Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act, and Executive Order 13526. The actual processing time for these documents will depend upon consultation with other DoD components, stateside, overseas, or other agencies.

In your request, you asked for expedited processing. In order to qualify for expedited processing, the requester must demonstrate a compelling need for that information. Under the FOIA, compelling need means that: (1) failure to obtain records on an expedited basis could reasonably be expected to pose an imminent threat to the life or physical safety of an individual; or, (2) the information is currently newsworthy, such as information urgently needed by an individual primarily engaged in disseminating information in order to inform the public concerning federal government involvement; (3) failure to obtain records on an expedited basis would create an imminent loss of due process rights; or (4) failure to obtain records could reasonably be expected to harm substantial humanitarian interests. Your request does not satisfy the requirement for compelling need. Therefore, I cannot approve your request for expedited processing. Additionally, your request for a fee waiver is granted.

For any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request, you have the right to contact the Directorate for Oversight and Compliance, Defense Privacy, Civil Liberties, and Transparency Division, FOIA Public Liaison (Ms. Tonya Fuentes) at [OSD.FOIALiaison@mail.mil](mailto:OSD.FOIALiaison@mail.mil); telephone (571) 372-0462. Additionally, you have the right to contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, MD 20740-6001, e-mail at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at (202) 741-5770; toll free at (877) 684-6448; or facsimile at (202) 741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to appeal to the appellate authority, Ms. Joo Chung, Director of Oversight and Compliance, Office of the Secretary of Defense. The appellate address is Directorate for Oversight and Compliance, 4800 Mark Center Drive, ATTN: DPCLTD, FOIA Appeals, Mailbox# 24, Alexandria, VA 22350-1700. As an alternative, you may use the Office of the Secretary of Defense FOIA request portal at <https://pal.whs.mil/> to submit your appeal electronically, or you can email your appeal to [OSD.FOIA-APPEAL@mail.mil](mailto:OSD.FOIA-APPEAL@mail.mil), and state "FOIA Appeal" in the subject of the email. Your appeal must be postmarked or submitted electronically within 90 calendar days from the date of this letter, cite USCENCOM's case #21-0517, and clearly mark "Freedom of Information Act Appeal" in your correspondence.

The USCENCOM FOIA Requester Service Center receives numerous FOIA requests and has a substantial number of pending FOIA cases. Therefore, we process requests in a multi-track processing system based on the date of receipt and complexity of the request. The FOIA does not require agencies to respond to questions, to do research, compile or analyze data, summarize, or conduct surveys for members of the public. You should be aware that the FOIA only provides the means by which the public can request specific documents from USCENCOM. The requested documents should be described to the extent that they may be located with a

reasonable amount of effort. Your FOIA is currently #3047 in our queue. You can view your status on our website at [www.centcom.mil/Home/FOIA](http://www.centcom.mil/Home/FOIA).

If you have any questions regarding your inquiry, please contact the FOIA Requester Service Center at (813) 529-6285, [centcom.macdill.centcom-hq.mbx.freedom-of-information-act@mail.mil](mailto:centcom.macdill.centcom-hq.mbx.freedom-of-information-act@mail.mil), and refer to USCENTCOM case #21-0517.

Sincerely,

**DETIEGE.MIC**  
**HAEL.A.1166**  
**497627**

Digitally signed by  
DETIEGE.MICHAEL.A.11  
66497627  
Date: 2021.09.08  
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Michael A. Detiege  
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force  
Chief, Command Records Branch