



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (AFSOC)

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION B

FROM: HQ AFSOC/CC

SUBJECT: Handling of Detainees and Enemy Prisoners of War

1. All AFSOC personnel coming into contact with enemy prisoners of war (EPW) or detainees will strictly adhere to standards of behavior contained in international and domestic law, military customs, and United States Government policy. What this means is that all persons held in US Government custody will be given humanitarian care and treatment from the moment they come under the control of US forces until release or repatriation.

2. AFSOC personnel involved in handling or transport of detainees and EPWs will, at a minimum, follow these guidelines:

a. EPWs/detainees will, at all times, be treated humanely and with respect for human dignity.

b. EPWs/detainees will not be subjected to physical mutilation or other uses of force greater than that required to ensure protection of US forces and other friendly personnel.

c. EPWs/detainees will at all times be protected, to the extent possible considering the situation, against acts of violence or intimidation, insults, and public curiosity.

d. Female EPWs/detainees will be treated with due regard to their sex.

e. EPWs/detainees will be provided appropriate medical attention, considering the circumstances and the requirements of the Law of Armed Conflict.

f. EPWs/detainees will not be discriminated against based on race, nationality, religious belief or political opinions, or any other similar distinction.

g. EPWs/ detainees will not be photographed for any reason other than official photographs taken as part of prisoner processing or accountability systems.

3. None of the above should be construed to limit or impinge upon the inherent right and obligation of self-defense of every military member. Personnel involved with detainees and EPWs must carefully consider the handling of such personnel in light of the need to protect US and friendly personnel.

AIR COMMANDOS - AIR RESCUE WARRIORS
QUIET PROFESSIONALS

1 of 85

4. AFSOC personnel will familiarize themselves with applicable laws, policies, and standards of behavior regarding treatment of prisoners. AFSOC commanders and judge advocates will incorporate this topic into all Law of Armed Conflict training and pre-deployment briefings.
5. AFSOC personnel will promptly report, either through their chain of command or through OSI, Security Forces, JAG, IG, or other official channels, any suspected or confirmed incidents – by US or other personnel – of detainee or prisoner abuse. Reports of such abuse will immediately be forwarded through command channels to AFSOC/CC (copy to AFSOC/JA). AFSOC members will refrain from discussing detainee- and EPW-related issues outside of US military channels without proper authorization and clearance by AFSOC/CC in coordination with AFSOC/PA.
6. Violations of this policy will subject members to disciplinary action under the UCMJ or other adverse personnel actions.

MICHAEL W. WOOLEY
Lieutenant General, USAF
Commander