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Freedom of Information Officer, Headquarters,
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SCIENTIFIC/EDUCATIONAL/NEWS MEDIA
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September 12, 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

Freedom of Information Act request: Iraq oil meetings

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552), I hereby request that copies be provided to me of:

- Releasable records of communications with oil companies on the subject of Iraq, since January 1, 2008.

Specifically, please include minutes of meetings, letters, emails and records of telephone conversations. Please search for the following companies:

- ExxonMobil (also known as Exxon);
- Chevron (a.k.a. ChevronTexaco);
- ConocoPhillips (a.k.a. Conoco) ;
- BP (a.k.a. British Petroleum);
- Shell;
- Hunt;
- Anadarko;
- Occidental;
- Marathon;
- Hess;
- Prime;
- Hillwood;
- Aspect;
- Texas Keystone;
- Sterling;
- Woodside;
- Talisman;
- Heritage;
- Crescent.

Treatment of withheld information

If you decide to withhold any of these records (or portions thereof), please explain the basis for your exemption claims, in order to permit me to reach an informed decision as to whether or not to file an administrative appeal. If an exemption applies, however, please consider exercising your discretionary release powers to disclose the records. Additionally, please release all reasonably segregable portions of the records that do not meet an exemption.

(a)(4)(A)(iii) of the FOIA. I require the above information
or any commercial purpose. I shall disseminate it through
:t of oil policy in Iraq, for which I have a publication
House Group Limited. The book is expected to have a

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large circulation worldwide (exceeding 100,000), including within the United States. Its publication will be combined with media articles and blogging. As evidence of my ability to generate such coverage, my work has previously been reported in the *Washington Post*, *Time*, *National Public Radio*, *Financial Times*, *Dow Jones Newswires*, local U.S. radio stations, and numerous non-U.S. and online outlets.

I am an expert in Iraqi oil policy, which I have studied since 2003. I have traveled twice to Iraq, I have strong contacts with Iraqi and non-Iraqi oil experts and stakeholders, and have spoken many times at conferences of policymakers, civil society, business, journalists and academics. With this specialist knowledge, I am well placed to interpret the requested information to a public audience.

Disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the role of the U.S. government in reconstructing Iraq. The Department of Energy has played an important role in that process; this request seeks to increase understanding of the degree to which those activities were coordinated with international oil companies. This information is not currently available. Oil, which accounts for around 95% of Iraqi government revenue, is a vital part of the country's future. Furthermore, on the question of oil in Iraq there are numerous suspicions and conspiracy theories. As such, publicly disseminating information about the US contribution is likely to lead to a more informed discussion, and significantly enhance public understanding.

If this fee waiver is denied, please inform me of your reasons. In that case, for the purpose of assessing fees, please treat me as a representative of the news media, under FOIA section (a)(4)(A)(ii)(II). In consideration of such fee status, please note:

- The definition of "news media" in the Open Government Act of 2007, as "any person or entity that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw materials into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience" (sec.3);
- The definition of "news" in the Department of Energy's FOIA regulations as "information that is about current events or that would be of current interest to the public" (section Sec. 1004.2(m)); and
- The ruling in *National Security Archive v. Department of Defense*, 880 F.2d 1381 (D.C. Cir. 1989) that the Freedom of Information Reform Act of 1986 requires a broad interpretation of "news media" as a person or organization who publishes and disseminates information to the public, including through the publishing of books.

In any case, please notify me if costs are to exceed $25. I agree to pay costs not exceeding that amount, subject to your consideration of my above submissions on fee status.

Yours faithfully,

Greg Muttitt

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