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Navy official to read prisoner allegations

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WASHINGTON -- The Navy's inspector general will review newly public documents regarding the treatment of prisoners held overseas to see if any call for an investigation, the Pentagon said Friday.

Many of the documents were obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union and disclosed in December. Several are messages from FBI agents discussing what they described as improper treatment of suspected terrorists held at the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz sought the review, which will be conducted by Vice Admiral Ronald Route.

U.S. Southern Command announced Jan. 5 it would investigate the allegations raised in those documents that pertain to Guantanamo. Route will further review them to see if any that pertain to Iraq, Afghanistan, or other areas that are outside the purview of the Southern Command inquiry, should also be investigated.

Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman, said Route's review was an attempt to ensure every allegation regarding prisoner abuse is thoroughly examined. Route has 30 days to submit his report, according to a memo from Wolfowitz seeking his inquiry.

Since the abuses at the Iraqi prison of Abu Ghraib became known, the military has conducted scores of inquiries into abuse allegations in its overseas prisons.