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INFORMATION ABOUT SWITCH PLATE TASKING/REPORTING/EVALUATION

The information provided by SWITCH PLATE sources is obtained through a unique and highly sensitive collection technique. Your care in evaluating this information will insure that we are better able to assess and/or modify the technology to provide you, the customer, with a better product.

TASKING:

Information gathered utilizing this technique is likely to consist of a mixture of correct, incorrect, and irrelevant or apparently irrelevant data. You should be aware of the following facts:

1. Experience has shown that the Source's raw data, unedited, tends to be of more value to the customer's Analyst, since it is more accurate than someone else's summary of what the Source has said. The Project Officer, however, may add his/her comments to the report as a separate entry.

2. A more experienced Source will usually provide raw data only, while a less experienced Source may be inclined to "pre-analyze" the information when reporting it. While it is the Project Officer's responsibility to assist in preventing the Source from doing this, operational necessities such as criticality of reporting speed, violation of item 1., above, or other constraints may allow some "pre-analyzed" information to be forwarded.

EXAMPLE: A more experienced source may describe the target (a submarine under construction) as a huge, cylindrical, metallic object, pointed on one end. A less experienced source may report the object as "...It looks like some kind of a rocket".

An analyst familiar with this new technique and recognizing that this has happened, will "back analyze", to determine what raw data caused the Source to report such seemingly inaccurate data. To aid in a more complete understanding of the Source's short answers, a brief summary, with sketches, will be attached to the reporting sheet.

3. Sources, like all humans, tend to be attracted to aspects of the target which attract them, personally. They also tend to ignore or gloss over aspects which do not attract them. This sometimes leads to widely varying descriptions of the same target site. An old illustration serves as an example:

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EXAMPLE: Four blind men were tasked to report the shape of an elephant. One stood in front, felt the trunk, and said that an elephant is actually a huge variety of snake. Another felt the ear and described an elephant as being like a living leaf, another felt the tail, and reported that it is like a long, hairy rope. The fourth felt one leg and reported that an elephant is a tall, vertical animal, shaped like a tree trunk.

4. Sources may, at times, correctly answer a question in the wrong terms. This is usually due to the Source's "pre-analyzing".

EXAMPLE: Returning to the Source who incorrectly labeled a submarine under construction as a rocket: The Source might then report that it will "blast off for the first time on May 10". While the identity of the object is incorrect, the date given can be understood by the Analyst as a prediction of the submarine's maiden voyage.

5. The Customer must always be mindful that Sources using this technology tend to answer questions very literally. Vagueness in questions will cause vagueness in answers. Questions/tasking must therefore be carefully formulated. The Customer must understand that the more precise he/she words a question, the more exact the Source's answer will be. The rule of thumb is to ask a question which, to the best of the Customer's knowledge, will have only a single, exact answer. Several examples may be used to illustrate this:

EXAMPLE: Time spans should be as exact as possible: "Where will Mr. X be next Thursday at 3PM?" is infinitely preferable to, "Where will Mr. X be next week?" The Customer should avoid questions containing phrases such as, "On or about...". A worst possible example of this would be, ""Where will Mr. X be within an actionable period of time?" If the Customer wants to know where Mr. X will be throughout the span of next week, it would be infinitely better to ask many questions of exact time: "Where will X be at 3PM Monday?", "Where will X be at 3PM Tuesday?", etc.

EXAMPLE: Locations should be as exact as possible: "Describe the den of X's home" is, on the surface, an exact question requiring an exact answer. If, however, the Customer knows that X has several homes and continually moves between them, it would be better to task the Source with, "Describe the den in X's Los Angeles home."

EXAMPLE: The best results are obtained when only one answer is expected to

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each question: It is better to task the Source with "Will X be at location A on Monday?", "Will X be at location B on Monday?", etc. than to ask "Which of 5 known locations will X be at on Monday?" (X may, in reality, visit several or none of them on Monday.)

Again, the rule of thumb is: Ask a question which, to the best of your knowledge, will have only a single, exact answer.

6. The Customer should be aware that, for reasons of security and operational effectiveness, Sources are not always given the background data which the Customer provides with the tasking questions. Therefore, Sources may tend to report extraneous data in their Summary Reports, which are attached to the main Reporting sheet. The Summary Report usually contains much irrelevant information, but may also contain choice tidbits of untasked information of possible value to the Customer's analysts, and may stimulate further tasking.

EVALUATION:

A separate reporting package is returned to the Customer from each Source. This package will include the Source's reporting sheet, the Source's Summary page, and the Project Officer's comments.

As the receiving Analyst reads the answers and uses the information in whatever way necessary, the EVALUATION WORKSHEET should be kept at hand. As each answer is read from each Source, the Analyst can mark the evaluation sheet to show the degree of usefulness that answer has been to him/her. The evaluation criteria have been kept very simple:

VERY USEFUL	USEFUL	MARGINAL VALUE	NO VALUE	CANNOT BE DETERMINED
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

When all Source Reports have been received and evaluated, please place a xerox copy of the evaluation into the self-addressed stamped envelope provided with it, and mail it to ACSI.

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