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From [Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press](#) | Original Article

The military commission at Guantanamo Bay today denied defense requests for television coverage of the upcoming 9/11-related trials, further hampering the media's efforts to cover the high-profile court proceedings.

"For something like the military commission, which was set up for a specific, secretive purpose, public scrutiny is important," said James Connell, attorney for accused 9/11 co-conspirator Ali Abdul Aziz Ali. "A lot of the rules that have been put in so far in Guantanamo are targeted at not letting the media and the general public know about the military commission and what the United States did to the defendants."

The orders, which were released to the involved parties today, have not yet been authorized for release to the public.

According to Connell, the Military Commission has limited video feeds of the proceedings to a small number of locations in the Northeast United States, including Fort Meade, Md., and a location in New York. But only one location is open to the public and to the media, he said. The Military Commission, which specifically prosecutes captured enemies for war crimes, also ruled that it did not have the authority to allow television coverage of the proceedings under Department of Defense regulations. Defense attorneys previously asked the Secretary of Defense to change the regulation to allow television coverage but that request was denied in November.

The September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, which is comprised of 9/11 victims, wrote a letter to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta in November calling for the "broad, unrestricted access to the televised legal proceedings currently at Guantanamo Bay."

"It is not enough to allow only September 11 family members, first responders and select representatives of the media and human rights field access to this legal struggle. Yet that is what the military proposes — the continuation of limited access to the trials via closed circuit TV, which the Department of Defense apparently regards as an act of public service. Wide broadcast via C-SPAN and other global news outlets would be one means of truly serving the public good," the letter stated.

The media has consistently argued for more access to the trials, which are based in Guantanamo Bay. In September 2011, the Department of Defense responded to the calls for transparency and [launched a website](#) that aimed to provide the public up-to-date information concerning the military proceedings. The media's struggle hit a peak in 2010 when the Pentagon banned several journalists from Guantanamo who they accused of publishing "protected" information that was discussed during a hearing, even though the facts were already publicly known. Officials reversed their decision several weeks later.

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press filed a [friend-of-the-court brief](#) in August with the military tribunal at Guantanamo Bay, arguing that a proposed government blanket prohibition on ever reporting the identities of Military Commissions panelists is an unconstitutional prior restraint on publication.