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Oversight and Government Reform  
Committee

Transportation and Infrastructure  
Committee

**Congress of the United States**  
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July 7, 2026

The Honorable John Ratcliffe  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Director Ratcliffe:

I write to request the Central Intelligence Agency's prompt review and production to Congress of records responsive to CIA FOIA Reference No. F-2023-00442, hereto attached which sought records concerning U.S. government flights, transfers of materials, and coordination with Brazilian authorities during the period of January 14, 1996, through January 28, 1996, including activity in or near Campinas, São Paulo State, Brazil.

According to the CIA's final response dated January 10, 2025, the Agency neither confirmed nor denied the existence of responsive records, invoking FOIA exemptions (b)(1) and (b)(3). In other words, the requester received a Glomar response. While that may be the agency's position in response to a private FOIA request, Congress' oversight responsibilities are broader and cannot be satisfied by a public neither-confirm-nor-deny posture where credible questions remain regarding historic government knowledge, activities, and records.

This request concerns matters widely associated with the 1996 Varginha incident in Brazil, an event that has remained the subject of persistent public interest, press inquiry, witness testimony, and documentary investigation for nearly three decades. Whether particular claims about that incident are ultimately substantiated or not, the existence, scope, and disposition of U.S. government records relating to the relevant time period, locations, flights, intergovernmental coordination, and possible material transfers are plainly proper subjects for congressional review.

Recent public commitments to increased transparency regarding unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAP), including President Trump's February 2026 announcement concerning the release of additional UAP-related records, underscore the need for executive branch agencies to identify, preserve, and provide historically significant records that may bear on longstanding public controversies. In the same spirit, the purpose of the Task Force on the Declassification of Federal Secrets, of which I am a member, is established to review sensitive legacy matters to determine whether continued secrecy remains justified, to ensure that agencies do not withhold information reflexively or indefinitely, and to facilitate declassification where doing so would

not cause concrete harm to national security. This matter falls squarely within that broader transparency and accountability effort.

Accordingly, I request that the CIA:

1. Conduct a fresh search of all CIA components, holdings, indices, and retired records systems reasonably likely to contain material responsive to the subject matter of FOIA Reference No. F-2023-00442, including, but not limited to, the Directorate of Operations, Latin America-related files, station reporting, liaison records, transportation records, cables, memoranda, emails, situation reports, operational traffic, and any compartmented or special-access repositories reasonably likely to contain such information.
2. Preserve all records, regardless of format or classification level, responsive to this subject matter pending completion of congressional review.
3. Provide my office, in classified or unclassified form as appropriate, a description of whether the CIA possesses records concerning:
  - a. U.S. government flights to, from, or within Brazil during January 14–28, 1996, including flights associated with Campinas, São Paulo State;
  - b. any transfer, receipt, examination, transport, storage, or disposition of materials originating from Brazilian military or security custody during that period;
  - c. any coordination, cooperation, or liaison between CIA personnel and Brazilian federal, military, intelligence, or law enforcement entities relating to those matters; and
  - d. any subsequent internal CIA analysis, counterintelligence review, damage assessment, public affairs guidance, or interagency correspondence concerning the same.
4. Produce all responsive records to my office no later than 30 days from receipt of this letter, with classified annexes where necessary. For any material withheld from production, please provide a detailed itemization of the basis for withholding, including the specific authority invoked, the date range, originating component, and a description sufficient to allow congressional assessment of the claim.
5. Confirm whether the CIA has coordinated with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Department of War, the Department of State, the National Security Council, National Archives and Records Administration, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), National Labs, or any other federal or contracted entity concerning records tied to this matter and identify the offices involved.

Please also advise whether the CIA has undertaken, or will undertake, any declassification review of records responsive to this subject matter in light of current executive-branch transparency initiatives regarding UAP-related records.

The American public has a legitimate interest in knowing whether historic records exist concerning alleged U.S. involvement in events long discussed in connection with the Varginha case. Congress likewise has a duty to determine whether classification is being used narrowly to protect genuine national security interests or more broadly to shield decades-old information from appropriate review. At minimum, Congress is entitled to a complete accounting of the relevant records and the legal basis for any continued restriction.

Please provide an estimated production and briefing schedule within 10 business days. Please direct staff-level questions regarding this request to Aaron Jenks, Legislative Assistant in my office, at [Aaron.Jenks@mail.house.gov](mailto:Aaron.Jenks@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Burlison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "B".

Eric Burlison  
Member of Congress

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, DC 20505

10 January 2025



Reference: F-2023-00442

Dear Requester:

This letter is a final response to your postmarked 5 December 2022 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking documents, memoranda, cables and/or electronic records pertaining to the following:

- 1. U.S. government flights during the period 14 January 1996 through 28 January 1996 to and from the Federative Republic of Brazil, to include Campinas, São Paulo State, Brazil.**
- 2. Directorate of Operations/Latin America Division was cognizant of the transfer of materials from the custody of the armed forces of the Federative Republic of Brazil to the U.S. government during the period 14 January 1996 through 28 January 1996 to and from Campinas, São Paulo State, Brazil.**
- 3. Coordination, cooperation, and liaison between Brasilia Station and/or Brazilian Federal Police, National Public Security Force, the then Department of Intelligence (DI), the then Undersecretary of Intelligence (SSI) for the purpose of facilitating the transfer of materials from the custody of the armed forces of the Federative Republic of Brazil to the U.S. government during the period 14 January 1996 through 28 January 1996 to and from Campinas, São Paulo State, Brazil.**

We completed a thorough review of your request and determined that, in accordance with Section 3.6(a) of Executive Order 13526, the CIA can neither confirm nor deny the existence or nonexistence of records responsive to your request. The fact of the existence or nonexistence of such records is itself currently and properly classified and is intelligence sources and methods information protected from disclosure by Section 6 of the CIA Act of 1949, as amended, and Section 102A(i)(1) of the National Security Act of 1947, as amended. Therefore, your request is denied pursuant to FOIA exemptions (b)(1) and (b)(3).

As the CIA Information and Privacy Coordinator, I am the CIA official responsible for this determination. You may appeal this response to the Agency Release Panel, in my care, within 90 days from the date of this letter. Please explain the basis for your appeal.

Please be advised that you may also seek dispute-resolution services from the CIA FOIA Public Liaison or from the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) of the National Archives and Records Administration. OGIS offers mediation services to help resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies. Please note, contacting CIA's FOIA Public Liaison or OGIS does not affect your right to pursue an administrative appeal.