



Hunger-strikers being force fed at Guantánamo Bay are shackled to a chair, fitted with a mask and have tubes inserted through their nose and into their stomachs for up to two hours at a time, according to revised guidelines in use at the camp.

The guidelines, which were updated after the latest protest by inmates began in February, detail the process of involuntary feeding and how after the sessions, detainees are kept in a "dry cell" to prevent them vomiting. News of the 30-page Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) manual – which was first published on Monday, by al-Jazeera, and has since been confirmed to be genuine by the US military – comes amid fresh questions over the ethics of force-feeding protesters at the prison.

It comes as consortium of human rights activists, pressure groups and law bodies issued a direct plea to US defense secretary Chuck Hagel to end the practice of force feeding at Guantánamo Bay.

Signed by 20 organisations including the American Civil Liberties Union, Human Rights Watch, the Center for Constitutional Rights and NYU School of Law's Global Justice Clinic, the letter to Hagel says the force-feeding of competent prisoners constitutes "cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment".

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