

Report: Blackwater camera call denied

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The private U.S. security firm Blackwater USA, now ordered to use cameras in vehicles, requested installing them in Iraq in 2005 but was denied. Internal company documents seen by The Washington Times show the company that provides security for U.S. diplomats asked the State Department's Bureau of Diplomatic Security for permission to install cameras on May 17, 2005, after it claimed false accusations had been made against its employees. A day later, records show a bureau employee called the company denying the cameras, because the legal department "had some issues" with the proposal, the Times said. Cameras would have been critical in determining what happened Sept. 16 when at least 17 Iraqi civilians were killed in Baghdad by Blackwater employees. The agents claim a motorcade came under attack and they returned fire. The Iraqi government is investigating, along with the U.S. State Department and FBI. On Oct. 5, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ordered cameras placed in Blackwater vehicles, nearly 28 months after the company suggested the practice, the Times said.

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