

~~TOP SECRET~~

FILE: NRO

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

December 10, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Management of CORONA Project

In accordance with our discussion of 27 November 1963, I request that the proposed memorandum to Directors of NRO Programs A and B forwarded to you on 28 October on this subject under [redacted] be returned. I am submitting herewith a revised proposed directive that more clearly defines the assignment of responsibilities for the conduct of the CORONA Program. To summarize this directive briefly, to Director, Program A, it assigns responsibility for: projecting vehicle and payload requirements and launch schedules, based on DNRO guidance developed in response to USIB requirements; directive control for launch, orbital and recovery operations, in accordance with detailed procedures already in effect; technical direction to contractors for day to day engineering, and for minor product improvements exclusive of major developments, making use of the advice and recommendations of the CCB and of all the technical resources of the NRO; contractual direction of CORONA contracts through a CIA contracting officer to be assigned to the Program A staff; programming, budgeting, and progress reporting on all assigned projects.

As you will recall, a meeting with General Carter, Dr. Wheelon, and [redacted] took place on 7 November for the purpose of reviewing possibilities of further integration of DOD and CIA resources into the NRO. As a result of that meeting, I am now preparing a memorandum to you that will identify certain positions within both the NRO Staff and the Office of Director, Program A, that I believe should be manned by technically qualified individuals with CIA experience. This memorandum will be forwarded soon.

Declassified and Released by the NRO

In Accordance with E. O. 12958

NOV 26 1997

on _____

Handle via [redacted]

Control System

~~TOP SECRET~~

[redacted]

3

[redacted]

One subject touched on briefly during our meeting on 27 November was that of assigning responsibilities within the NRO for advanced technical planning of major system or component developments, as distinct from minor product improvements on systems already assigned to appropriate Program Directors. This function is important in determining the most promising avenues of study and development if we are to continue to improve our national reconnaissance capability.

I share your concern that we must make maximum use of the initiative, imagination, and technical capabilities of all agencies and resources available to us. The concept I propose recognizes that each Program Director must have a small office of highly qualified individuals engaged in advanced planning in relation to his assigned projects. I would expect him to use this office to assist him in his assigned responsibilities for improvements to the systems in his care, and also for developing recommendations for new studies or development tasks. These he would act upon or forward to the DNRO as he judges their importance and scope.

In the staff of the NRO, I propose a small Advanced Planning Office manned by individuals of the highest qualifications we can command. This office would be responsible, under direction of the DNRO, for planning the whole content of the advanced development program of the NRO. I am in the process now of developing detailed guidance for the conduct of this function. It is already clear that the group must be responsible: for review and analysis of projects already in being, and of proposals received from Program Directors; for insuring that all technical resources available to the NRO contribute effectively to shaping of the program; and for developing the criteria, and assembling the information, upon which decisions for major new developments can rationally be based.

Responsibility for initiating major developments or developments directed toward new capabilities will remain with the DNRO, subject to the policies and guidance of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence as provided for in the

trans via [redacted]
Central System
TOP SECRET

[redacted]
2 of 3 pages
[redacted]

agreement of 13 March 1963. Responsibility for execution of such developments will be assigned by DNRO. I expect that many study efforts in support of the advanced planning function will be set as tasks by the DNRO upon the Program Directors and upon other DOD and CIA organizations not formally in the NRO.

The proposed directive attached hereto sets up an authoritative operating management for the CORONA project under the kind of structure that I have just outlined. It retains for the DNRO approval authority over all major changes or new developments; it does not delegate to the Director, Program A, exclusive responsibility to plan such changes or developments; and it retains for the DNRO the authority to execute changes or developments through the agencies of his choice. In order that we may proceed with the urgent task of clarifying the operating management of the CORONA project, within the framework of the objectives that were discussed in our 27 November meeting, your cooperation in concurring with the attached directive will be appreciated.

Brockway McMillan
Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

Attachment

~~Handle via~~ [redacted]
~~Control System~~
~~TOP SECRET~~

[redacted]
3 of 3
[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~

FILE: NRO

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

December 10, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, NRO PROGRAM A
DIRECTOR, NRO PROGRAM B

SUBJECT: Responsibility for Operating Management of the
CORONA Project

At the present time, and for historical reasons, the management of the CORONA project is divided, with the Director, Program B, responsible for "black" contracts, and the Director, Program A, responsible for the remaining contracts, for launch, and for conduct of orbital operations. Under this arrangement, there is no place in the NRO, short of my office, where the authority resides to review all applicable contracts for consistency and completeness, to exercise continuing contractual and technical surveillance over contractors and over the Service agencies, and to issue direction to contractors on all aspects of the program.

I feel that it is essential to establish a single point of authority within the NRO to which I can assign full responsibility for achieving consistently successful results that realize the maximum potential of the present system. After a careful analysis of the situation, I am convinced that the Director, NRO Program A, is the appropriate single point of authority. At the present time he is responsible for all operating aspects except contracting for procurement, engineering, and check-out of the camera payloads and recovery vehicles.

I hereby assign to the Director, NRO Program A, the full responsibility for the successful conduct of the CORONA project. In more detail, these responsibilities include:

1. Programming and procuring vehicles and payloads based on program and schedule guidance from DNRO;

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE
DATE 08-01-80 BY 6000.10 DOES NOT APPLY

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~Control System~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Control No. [REDACTED]
Page 1 of 3 Pages

~~TOP SECRET~~

2. Launching, tracking, on-orbit control, and recovery operations, and delivery of product, in accordance with approved schedules and following procedures already in effect;

3. Reliability of operations, responsiveness of operations to schedules as promulgated by DNRO, and quality of product;

4. Technical responsiveness of the program to the needs of the intelligence community;

5. Engineering soundness of the vehicle-payload system and its integration;

6. Insuring that the necessary technical resources of the DOD and the CIA are brought to bear in the discharge of (4) and (5);

7. Recommending to DNRO any steps he considers necessary under (4), (5) and (6) which cannot be accomplished within his authority;

8. Annual program and budget forecasts in accordance with guidance from DNRO;

9. Reporting to DNRO on technical status, financial status, and progress against schedules and such other criteria as DNRO may direct.

In discharge of these responsibilities, the Director, Program A, will have authorities for the following:

1. Technical direction over all CORONA contractors;

2. Management direction, within the legal limits presently assigned to him, over all CORONA contracts;

3. Establishment of such management reviews of and controls over performance under CORONA contracts as in his judgment may be required, including the stationing at his discretion of representatives at contractors' plants;

~~TOP SECRET~~

4. Such control over NRO personnel stationed at contractors' plants as may be required to exercise the authorities (1), (2), and (3) above in connection with CORONA contracts;

5. Initiation of such changes or improvements in the CORONA system or its operation as are in his judgment minor in scope and necessary under his responsibilities.

In exercising his judgment under (5), immediately above, the Director, Program A, is accountable to the DNRO and only to the DNRO. Major changes to the CORONA system will be undertaken only by direction of the DNRO.

In discharging his responsibilities, I expect the Director, Program A, to establish a Configuration Control Board advisory to him and incorporating qualified representatives of the CIA, the NRO staff, and of his own staff. Matters will be referred to the CCB, and action will be taken on the recommendations of the CCB, at his discretion. In exercising this discretionary authority he is accountable to the DNRO.

I expect the Director, Program B, to make available to Program A the advice, consultation, and assistance of appropriate CIA personnel as members of the CCB and as individual consultants. Program B will continue to provide Program A with security support and film courier support.

By this directive, management authority is now vested in the Director, Program A, over certain CORONA contracts, listed in the attachment, which are presently administered by a CIA contracting officer stationed at Langley. To facilitate the exercise of this authority, it is directed that these contracts be made the responsibility of a CIA contracting officer attached to the staff of the Director, Program A, and responsive to his management direction. I have considered as an alternative that these contracts can be terminated and re-instituted by Director, Program A, under Air Force "black" procedures. If this alternative appears simpler to both the Director, Program B, and the Director, Program A, I will authorize it. Date of transfer, by whichever mechanism we finally choose, will be as agreed upon by both Program Directors.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Director, Program A, is requested to submit for my approval a plan for consolidating the management responsibilities hereby assigned to him into an organization directly responsive to him as [REDACTED]. This plan is to include phased termination of Program [REDACTED].

Brockway McMillan
Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

Attachment

CONCUR:

John A. McCone
Director of Central Intelligence

Handle via [REDACTED]
Control System
~~TOP SECRET~~

[REDACTED] Copies
7 of 5 Pages
Encl No. [REDACTED]

CORONA/MURAL Black Contracts to be Transferred
from CIA Procurement East to CIA Procurement West

<u>Contract No.</u>	<u>Application</u>	<u>FY 1962</u>	<u>FY 1963</u>	<u>FY 1964</u>
---------------------	--------------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

Lockheed:

[REDACTED]

22 M Payloads
20 J "
6 M S/By P/L

[REDACTED]

Itek:

[REDACTED]

27 M Payloads
15 J "
6 M S/By P/L

[REDACTED]

General Electric:

[REDACTED]

61 Recov Vehicles

[REDACTED]

Other Black Contracts to be
Considered for Transfer

Lockheed:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
A

[REDACTED]

Itek:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
5 L S/I & Misc

[REDACTED] - - .2

Number [REDACTED]
Control System
~~TOP SECRET~~

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]