

Chronology of Events - C Program and Related Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
1956 July	AF initiated WS-117L contract with LMSD on basis of Rand study "Feed Back."
1957 Mar	Quarles named Dep Sec Def.
Oct	PFIAB asked for report on prospects for new recon capability (117-L or OX).
Oct	Sputnik I launched by Soviets (spent 3 mos. in orbit).
Nov	Sputnik II " " " " 5 " " "
8 Nov	Dr. James R. Killian appointed Spec. Asst. to DDE for S&T (sworn 16 Nov.).
19 Nov	RMB drafted reply to PFIAB (for AWD) on prospects for new recon system; described plans for OX.
1958 8 Jan	Gen. Bernard Schriever, CDR/BMD/ARDC, in closed session told Senate Preparedness Subc. he had go-ahead on program to launch earth satellite with recoverable capsule, using Thor booster. (This was interim plan to fill in until Sentinal program ready.) Portions of Schriever testimony made public 14 January 1958.
	Some time between December 1957 and February 1958, decision made to transfer management of the interim project to joint grp under Bissell/Ritland. Some people involved: Quarles, Richard Horner, Killian, Land, Schriever...
7 Feb	DOD Directive establishing ARPA gave it direction of advanced research and development in fields of space and technology; Dr. Roy W. Johnson, Director; Dr. Herbert York, Chief Scientist.
28 Feb	Dir/ARPA instructed Secty AF to cancel BMD interim Thor-boosted system and authorized use of balance of boosters for test on LMSC-developed Agena in furtherance of projected manned space exploration program.
24-26 Mar	Tech mtg at San Mateo with contractor reps (LMSC & subc. GE & FCIC) RMB and Ritland attending; Contract to be renegotiated, Dan Kelly, negotiator.

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In Accordance with E. O. 12958

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- 1958 Mar-Apr Competitive camera proposal by Itek (24-inch f/1) offered greater ground resolution--approx 20' compared to possible 40' of FCIC 6-in. f/1); decision made by RMB to shift to Itek.
- 1 Apr LMSC contracted for use of [REDACTED] and support personnel (project to occupy [REDACTED]).
- 1 Apr RMB title changed to Spec. Asst. for Planning and Development.
- 15 Apr C project outline with revised specs completed by RMB; approval in principle obtained from ARPA, AF, and Dr. Killian.
- 16 Apr C project outline delivered to Gen. Goodpaster at WH for clearing with DDE. Gen. Goodpaster reported approval in principle by Pres. later on the 16th.
- 25 Apr AWD approved drawing \$7 million from Reserve for FY 1958 costs for C.
- 29 Apr Letter contract with LMSC signed for first 12 C's.
- 5 May Itek subcontract to FCIC for building HYAC II panoramic signed.
- 23 June Initial C security plan issued to staff and contractors (later revised to attempt to separate its purpose from the balance of 117L program.
- 25 June RMB brought to Roy Johnson's attn. need for addtl. funds in view of prohibition by WH against use of AF funds; [REDACTED] for each of 12 Thor boosters then devolved on ARPA, causing big budgeting problems.
- 1 Aug 6593rd Test Squadron activated to deploy to Hickam for duty (beginning of Pacific Recovery Forces).
- 8 Aug Meeting on funding of C and 117L with Stans (BOB), Quarles (DOD), and Killian (WH); RMB instructed to prepare revised cost estimates.
- A protracted review of both projects ensued with numbers of individuals and organizations becoming involved. Robert Macy of BOB was particularly difficult to satisfy on program cost estimates. DOD program estimates

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were in a constant state of flux from week to week. RMB was "in the middle" -- he later said:

"For the record, the undersigned will never again assume any responsibility for the success of a major program without having a reasonable degree of control over its funding either through reliance on Agency funds or by means of an iron-clad agreement with the Department of Defense."

- 3 Dec Revised cover developed during fall 1958--DISC. Series; revealed in press conference by Roy Johnson of ARPA in attempt to separate purposes of C from those of 117L.
- 1959 1 Jan RMB appointed DDP.
- Jan-Feb Consideration given to necessity to extend C through 1960 in view of disappointing progress of AF program.
- 21 Jan First test of C - accidental firing of explosive bolts - fell apart.
- 16 Feb DPStaff became DPD/DDP; C only one of a large number of responsibilities of DPD C-cleared staff [REDACTED] Ch/Devel Br.; John P., Dep. Ch.; Gene Kiefer, Spec Asst for Tech Analysis...)
- 28 Feb DISC I - first actual firing-no capsule-radio antenna damaged at launch, orbit confirmed by radar skin-track.
- 11 Mar RMB drafted proposal for extension of C through 1960, restoring 4 canceled by ARPA from the 1959 series and establishing 8 more for 1960, a total of 20; addtl funding [REDACTED] required; approved after discussion in community.
- 13 Apr DISC II (mechanical mice), premature ejection over Spitzbeegen.
- 9 May Quarles died.
- 1 June Joseph V Charyk replaced Richard Horner as Asst Secty of AF for R&D.
- 1 June L/C Charlie Murphy assigned to A/P Facility, Palo Alto, as Proj. Hqs. liaison for C with contractors and AF Spec. Project Office.

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- 1959 3 June DISC III (live mice) Agena failed, down in Pacific.
- 23 June Dan Kelly replaced Geo K. as Chief, Contr Br, DPD.
- 25 June DISC IV w/1st C payload; Agena failed to orbit.
- Jun-Jul At Gen. Ritland's request [redacted] performed special independent analysis on basic specs and performance of C vehicle; recommended added velocity through weight reduction and increased thrust.
- 7 July [redacted] effort for Army Map Service added under cover of C; WH approved.
- 26 July Second C contract with LMSC for 8 systems (C').
- 13 Aug DISC V - orbited but cold temp problem; camera failure; no recovery.
- 19 Aug DISC VI - retro rocket malfunction and camera failure on 2nd rev; no recovery.
- 24 Sept Reorganization of space program gave USAF prime role in military space; ARPA relinquished supervision of development of C vehicle.
- 7 Nov DISC VII - Agena unstable, no recovery.
- 20 Nov DISC VIII - Eccentric orbit; instrument failure, no recovery.
- 30 Nov Meeting w/BMD. Schriever/Ritland wanted stand-down and investigation on failures from 5 through 8. A black picture painted by Schriever/Pitland with regard to probability of getting funds to continue program in view of record. RMB, however, felt that higher authority would go along with continuing program through 1960 because there was so much at stake.
- 1960 12 Jan Thomas S. Gates appointed SecDef by DDE.
- 4 Feb DISC IX - Agena failed to orbit.
- 19 Feb DISC X - Agena failed to orbit
- 15 Apr DISC XI - Spin rocket failure, no recovery, but camera operation o.k.
- 7 June Third contract with LMSC for C procurement (6 addtl C''' systems).

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1960 28 June USIB approved minimum standards for desirable resolutions from sat. photography; resulted in the later cancellation of the AF SENTINEL/SAMOS; AF then turned to "spotting" systems.

29 June DISC XII - diagnostic (no C carried) Agena failed to orbit.

10-11 Aug DISC XIII - first successful retrieval of nosecone from orbit (in the water), no C carried.

18-19 Aug DISC XIV, first successful air-catch, camera operated; first payload return.

13 Sept DISC XV, returned at bad angle; sank before recovery.

26 Oct DISC XVI, Agena B failed to orbit.

12-14 Nov Second successful airsnatch (partial payload success).

7-10 Dec Third successful airsnatch (payload o.k.).

1961 20 Jan JFK took office; new Cabinet and Sub-cabinet members (including: Rusk, Bowles at State, and McNamara, Gilpatric, and Nitze at Defense). McGeorge Bundy at White House, with WW Rostow as Deputy).

19 Mar ARDC became AFSC; Schriever, CDR; Ritland, CDR/SSD.

20 Mar Fourth procurement of C systems (6 additional C's - later increased to 22 systems in 1962).

4 May Dr. Killian named Chairman, PFIAB, by JFK.

3-4 June Kennedy Khrushchev Meeting, Vienna.

Aug Berlin Crisis. On 31 August USSR announced its unilateral breaking of test ban moratorium & resumption of nuclear testing.

6 Sept Initial agreement for an NR PLAN signed.

9 Sept USAF's third unsuccessful SAMOS exploded on ground; program phased out.

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1961 12 Sept First successful airsnatch of C, using C-130.

29 Nov AWD retired ( he had served as DCI from 26 Feb 1953). Died 29 Jan. 1969.  
(John A. McCone appointed by JFK, serving until 28 April 1965.)

1962 13 Jan Last DISC (listed as XXXVII) on which story hand-out was made to  
press by USAF. DOD (Gilpatric) Directive then took effect whereby  
all information re firings held classified.

31 Jan Gen. C. P. Cabell retired (served as DDCI from 23 April 1953).

17 Feb RMB resignation effective.

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