

~~ORIGINAL INFORMATION~~

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EARDROP

1. History

EARDROP is a series of small packages to be used covertly on a space available basis in other programs, with approval by the SecDef, and with funding provided by the Air Force under the SAMOS project. These have been launched at various times since August 60, as part of a coordinated program to obtain critical information.

2. Funding

Funding is by the Air Force as a part of the SAMOS project. (\$2.5 M, FY 62; \$2.7 M, FY 63).

3. Management

Technical management of EARDROP is the responsibility of the Under Secretary of the Air Force, with delegation to the Director of Special Projects, who manages it through his SAMOS Program 102 project office.

The intelligence community participates through specifically designated working level individuals from NSA, CIA, and Intelligence activities of each Service. These persons (called the "Termites") are not organized into a named group, but contact or are contacted by the Project Director on a continuing daily working basis. They have the primary function of suggesting the kinds of signal collection which would be useful to the community, and are consulted concerning black box proposals which appear feasible within the constraints of the program. The formulation of the program, and the conduct of all orbital operations is the responsibility of the Project Director. Arrangements for processing of the collected materials is effected through the appropriate termites.

4. Security

EARDROP is a covert project, with need-to-know approval reserved to the Under Secretary of the Air Force, and the Director of Special Projects.

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC RECLASSIFICATION;  
DOD DIR. 5200.10 DOES NOT APPLY

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