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PERCHERON CHRONOLOGY

Late September 1966

Based on the expected completion of the GAMBIT program in 1967, GE approached SAFSP with a proposal to explore the possible interest of other government agencies for use of the GAMBIT OCV. GE specifically requested permission to prepare a briefing for SAFSP approval prior to its making any outside contacts.

SAFSP gave GE permission to prepare such a briefing.

Early October 1966

SAFSP reviewed the GE material and revised it.

October 26, 1966

The GE briefing was presented to General Martin as PERCHERON. The briefing consisted of a general description of the vehicle, general performance capability, suggested possible applications and the message that GE had experience and competence in spacecraft work.

The briefing was approved for GE use, provided SAFSP was notified in advance of:

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October 26, 1967
(Continued)

- 1) who would receive the briefing, and
- 2) the fact that the entire audience had at least a SECRET clearance.

GE was not authorized to leave handouts of the charts or other data.

GE was specifically instructed not to refer to Program 206 (GAMBIT) or to SAFSP in its discussion. GE was also instructed not to discuss GAMBIT matters under any circumstances, irrespective of the fact that certain individuals involved had the necessary clearance.

Late 1966-Early 1967

Following preliminary meetings with NASA, GE requested permission to provide PERCHERON vehicle specifications (as described in its briefing) under a SECRET classification to potential customers.

SAFSP approved this request with instructions that a listing of all copies so distributed be maintained along with the names of the recipients.

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January 6, 1967

In a message (CHARGE 4180) to Dr. Flax,
General Martin:

1) listed planned GAMBIT launchings as follows:

<u>Vehicle #</u>	<u>Planned</u>	<u>Actual/Scheduled</u>
986	31 Jan 67	2 Feb 67 (4036)
987	14 Mar 67	22 May 67 (4037)
988	4 Apr 67	6 Jun 67 (4038)
989	16 May 67	
990	27 Jun 67	

2) stated that Vehicles 991 through 995 had
no Atlas/Agenas and were not scheduled for flight

3) recommended termination then of all GAMBIT
work other than that required to complete and fly
vehicles through Vehicle #990.

January 18, 1967

Dr. Flax (via WHIG 6093) approved General
Martin's recommendation to terminate all
GAMBIT work other than that required to complete
and fly vehicles through Vehicle #990.

Early 1967

Mr. Neill Hautt (GE) visited SAFSP with a revised
briefing titled "PERCHERON Suitability Applica-
tions A Payloads." SAFSP reviewed these
charts which were designed to show the usefulness
of PERCHERON to meet NASA's needs. The
charts had no reference to Air Force activity

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Early 1967
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such as launch base, the SCF, recovery and the like. The main point of the briefing was the matching of vehicle capabilities with the NASA payload requirements.

March 6, 1967

GE forwarded a copy of the "approved" briefing to SAFSP.

Since this date, SAFSP has received other versions of the briefing and a rather large volume on the subject. SAFSP has not approved any of these documents.

(Note: The latest GE version of the briefing which differs, of course, from that agreed upon with SAFSP and the large accompanying volume were used by GE in its presentation to NASA on April 28, 1967. See item below.)

April 1967

SAFSP received a request from GE for the residual GAMBIT inventory for application to its PERCHERON proposal. SAFSP, at this point, instructed GE to conduct a complete inventory of GAMBIT property and to report this inventory to SAFSP. SAFSP's purpose

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April 1967
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for such an inventory was to permit all NRO programs to screen for equipments that might be diverted for use on other projects.

April 28, 1967

GE, with the assistance of Lockheed, made the PERCHERON presentation to the NASA Photo Working Group (composed of representatives from NASA, DOD and the scientific community).

As a part of its "hard-sell," GE indicated to this group that the spacecraft were available and that the Air Force could and would launch these spacecraft for NASA from VAFB into polar orbit and would operate the satellites through the SCF and recover capsules upon reentry.

NASA, in general, and the NASA Photo Working Group in particular, is very interested in the GE proposal in that it offers 1) the possibility of initiating its NERSP without having to await the Apollo or LM&SS programs with 2) a tremendous savings in the purchase of already-developed spacecraft.

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May 1, 1967

NASA contacted the NRO with three questions:

1) GE claimed that it had to have NASA's reaction (decision to buy) to PERCHERON by May 1. NASA needed about 30 days to study the proposal further. Recognizing that the date was a matter of negotiation between NASA and GE--was there any DOD reason which would make the date unalterable?

2) Would there be any security complications in NASA's use of this spacecraft?

3) Would there be any problem in getting the spacecraft launched or its film recovered for NASA?

May 5, 1967

SAFSP provided some preliminary answers to these questions:

1) DOD had nothing to do with the GE selection of a May 1 date for a NASA response. SP felt that the May 1 date might be related to the fact that SP had asked GE for a completed property inventory and a report of the inventory. An early commitment from NASA could assist GE in retaining some of the property inventory and

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permit GE to make a lower cost proposal to NASA. SAFSP intends to screen the property irrespective of GE's desires.

2) Two security problem areas are apparent:

a) The security condition of the remaining inventory of vehicles. There are four complete OCVs at Vandenberg. There are two incomplete vehicles at GE which are to be used for spare parts if required. GE has estimated a cost of \$260K to sanitize the six vehicles to permit their being moved to a non-GAMBIT area for complete destruction by hydraulic press. GE has not yet estimated the cost to sanitize the vehicles for further use. We can assume that the latter cost would significantly exceed the \$260K. We would not pay to have the vehicles sanitized for NASA use.

b) The long term complication of NASA's wanting historical flight performance and flight qualification data. This would represent more of an irritation than a risk.

3) There are many unknowns with regard to launching and recovery for NASA.

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a) Assuming an Air Force support to NASA relationship (such as GEMINI), AFSC and NASA would be faced with a resources problem of some difficulty at Vandenberg and at SSD and probably at the STC.

b) Atlas SLVs will continue to be available with lead times varying from a few months for trades to 14 months on full re-order.

c) Launch pads and Atlas launch crews are more difficult.

Status of pads:

--SLC-4E is scheduled for conversion to THID beginning on 1 July 1967.

--SLC-3E will be placed in standby status on/about 1 January 1968 following PRIME. Reactivation would require from two to three months.

May 16, 1967

NASA (Mr. Jaffe) called the NRO Staff to say that he was preparing to discuss PERCHERON with Dr. Seamans and that he needed an answer to two questions:

1) Was GE's time-scale for the NASA decision dependent on any requirement imposed on GE by us?

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May 16, 1967
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2) Was GE peddling a bona fide offer or would the Air Force essentially scavenge the remains?

Our response:

1) We have imposed no requirement on GE which bears on the date of May 1 claimed by GE to be a "must" date for the NASA decision.

2) We have not yet received from GE a completed property inventory and hence are not in a position at this time to

a) make a decision on the remaining inventory, nor

b) ascertain whether or not GE has presented NASA a bona fide offer.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

to only the clean up. via
termination proceeding
underway and review of
residual inventory with
decision on disposition.

2) We are not obligated
to assist or finance
NASA desiderata in this
matter.

I did point out to
General Berg that the
pitch GE is presently
peddling (April 28 and
subsequent as evidenced
by handouts) bears
absolutely no resemblance

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

19 May 67

Colonel Worthman -

Prepared this chron
on PERCHERO at General
Berg's request. Dr. Flax
asked before leaving that
he and General Berg
discuss it on Monday,

May 22.

4 Col Gost

PS- Have recommended to
General Berg a hard line:
1) We are not obligated to
GE for any follow-on
help - we are committed

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

to that "approved" originally
by General Martin. GE
is essentially "on their
own" with a very hard
sell.

lt Col Post