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CONTROL SYSTEM~~TS~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

24 September 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. McLUCAS

SUBJECT: CORONA/HEXAGON Options

BACKGROUND

The matter of CORONA/HEXAGON launch schedules was discussed on your trip to SAFSP on 10 September. While no commitments were made, it was understood the NRO Staff would work toward a resolution of the situation (see para 4 and 5 of TAB A).

DISCUSSION

Displayed at TAB B are three launch schedule options for consideration. Option 1 can be regarded as our current baseline. Some cost considerations developed by [ ] for Options 2 and 3 are at TAB C.

Option 2 retains the remaining two CORONA vehicles as backup thru HEXAGON 1204. Because this option offers no opportunity for HEXAGON cost avoidance and extends CORONA funding, it would be the most expensive.

Option 3 utilizes each CORONA as a backup to a HEXAGON flight and as a primary area search mission between GAMBIT launches. CORONA backup to HEXAGON is maintained through HEXAGON No. 3 with the last CORONA launch in August 1972. This option is potentially least expensive since it provides for the greatest delay in HEXAGON procurement. Both near term funding needs (long lead items for system 13 and subsequent and any Block II funding) would be reduced as well as the total units procured over the next five years.

Introduction of a pipeline requirement would modify funding requirements somewhat; however, the above options should remain in the same relative order with respect to costs.

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Some additional advantages and disadvantages of Options 2 and 3 developed by SS-4 are at TAB D. It should be noted that intelligence collection aspects favor Options 1 or 2.

*→ The Program Officer have been asked for cost data to assist in selecting a course of action.*  
~~Before a decision can be made, guidance to the field is required to develop additional comparative data. In particular, serious consideration of Option 3 requires a coordinated and comprehensive examination of contracts status, schedules, renegotiation considerations, etc., by both SAFSP and the Agency. This would be a timely and useful exercise since the SAFSP and Agency schedules have become very disparate. SAFSP has attempted to match spacecraft deliveries to program delays, but the Agency has made only minimal adjustments to camera procurement. In addition, the matter of CORONA termination needs early resolution since current CORONA support runs out in January for SAFSP and in March for the Agency.~~

#### RECOMMENDATION

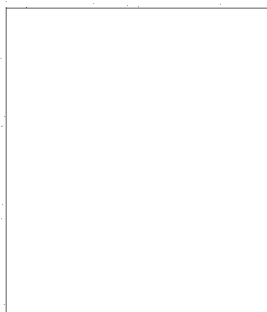
It is recommended that the message at the right be dispatched.



ROBERT A. SCHOW, JR.  
Major, SE, USA

#### Attachments

TAB A, CHARGE 5427  
TAB B, Chart  
TAB C, Cost Comments  
TAB D, Option Advantages  
and Disadvantages

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