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DMAC SIGS

Jan-June 1970

~~1ST~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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MEMORANDUM FOR DR. SCHLESINGER

SUBJECT: The NRO Charter

The current operating charter for the National Reconnaissance Office is at TAB A. It is called an Agreement for Reorganization of the National Reconnaissance Program, dated August 11, 1965, and signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. The document evolved through several earlier versions dating back to Presidential direction in 1960 to streamline the management of the satellite reconnaissance effort, and reflects to a considerable extent the recommendations made to the President by the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. It is an unusual mechanism for chartering a large intelligence activity. The National Security Council Intelligence Directive (NSCID) has regularly been used for similar purposes, and many agencies that the NRO must work with are chartered by NSCIDs. The 1965 document post-dated the early NSCIDs and hence took precedence over them, at least tacitly. And partly because it was an inter-agency agreement signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, it carried the weight in DOD needed to get the job done. The Agreement has pretty well stood the test of time--until recently.

Two developments lead me to believe that the NRO charter should be up-dated:

The first of these is the establishment of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence. In this job, Dr. Al Hall has tended to view the NRO along with all other DOD intelligence resources, subjecting the NRO to review and direction which was not envisioned in the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board report to the President and is not consistent with the 1965 Agreement.

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The second is the reorganization of the intelligence community directed by the President in November 1971. As a necessary part of this reorganization, the NSCIDs for national intelligence activities were up-dated, revised, and reissued. In this process, our 1965 Agreement became out-dated, and at least one substantive change in the scope of NRO authority was made. The new NSCID No. 6 provides for a division of SIGINT satellite payload responsibilities between the National Security Agency and the NRO; this change erodes my responsibility for total operational control of the program.

At present, therefore, I find that agencies all around the NRO are formally chartered: the USIB is established by NSCID No. 1; NSA by NSCID No. 6; and NPIC by NSCID No. 8. But the only current direction with respect to the NRO is the President's statement in his November 1971 reorganization directive: "I am directing the retention of the present management structure of the National Reconnaissance Office." I conclude that the NRO, which performs the collection activities bridging the NSC-chartered requirements and exploitation organizations, ought to be chartered in a similar way by a new NSCID. I have prepared a draft of this document, at Tab B.

In the draft NSCID I have proposed to incorporate the basic provisions of the 1965 Agreement, but with some changes:

1. The use of overhead collection by spacecraft sensors is emphasized. This is a broader connotation than the previous use of the term overflight.
2. The use of aircraft as an NRP asset is minimized. I believe the future value of the NRP lies primarily in the application of spacecraft payloads to overhead intelligence collection, and that is where our resources should be applied. And we are turning the bulk of all U-2 aircraft over to the Air Force, retaining but four U-2Rs for the CIA fleet. The proposed NSCID does not exclude aircraft from the NRP, but it is intended to pave the way to use aircraft or drone resources when more appropriate than spacecraft for NRP missions, without necessarily maintaining a dedicated capability.

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3. The proposed NSCID does not address the Satellite Operations Center, specified in the 1965 document. The trend toward dedicated ground stations and highly refined software for satellite reconnaissance vehicles gives us potentially greater flexibility in operations management than in the past. While the NRO must retain operational control over its missions, there may be more viable alternatives than a central SOC.

4. The role of the CIA in systems development has been de-emphasized, but not precluded. I believe the point can be made that the organization which specifies requirements should be removed from building complete systems for operations. I see a strong continuing need, however, to involve the CIA in the imaginative research and development of new sensor concepts.

5. I propose that the DNRO sit with the Intelligence Resources Advisory Committee on NRP matters, as I do now on the USIB.

The NRO has been a very successful venture over the years, and certainly important to the Nation. I attribute much of its success to the autonomous nature of the management structure, which has permitted technical and operational achievements second to none while maintaining excellent financial control. The alternative, toward which there is now a tendency and pressure to move, is a normalization of NRP management. I doubt that the Program could be as responsive as it has been if that occurs.

I would appreciate your ideas. Whether the final solution is an NSCID, or even a revised Memorandum of Agreement, I believe the provisions should be basically the same. And we should have this document soon.

John L. McLucas

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NSCID No.  
Draft Jan 2, 1973

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL INTELLIGENCE

DIRECTIVE NO.

OVERHEAD RECONNAISSANCE

(Effective Date)

Overhead Reconnaissance of foreign territories is a national responsibility, and must be so organized and managed as to aggressively and imaginatively exploit to the maximum technology, operational resources, and facilities of the Government to satisfy the intelligence requirements of the National Security Council and of the several departments and agencies of the Government.

Therefore, in the interest of national security and pursuant to the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, the National Security Council authorizes and directs that overhead reconnaissance be conducted as prescribed herein.

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A. The National Reconnaissance Program

1. There is hereby established a National Reconnaissance Program as a single, covert, national program for overhead collection of intelligence and mapping and geodetic information. Included are the development, management, control, tasking and operation of all spacecraft projects, both current or planned, employing image-forming sensors of reconnaissance quality, non-image-forming sensors designed for reconnaissance purposes, and signal and electronic intelligence devices. Overflights of denied territories by aircraft or drones are also the responsibility of the National Reconnaissance Program. Excluded are normal non-satellite peripheral reconnaissance operations and aircraft and drone reconnaissance in tactical theaters of operation.

2. The National Reconnaissance Program shall be responsive directly and solely to the intelligence collection objectives, requirements and priorities established by the United States Intelligence Board. Satellite, aircraft, and drone missions shall be subject to the operational approval of the 40 Committee.

3. It is the intent of this directive that the National Reconnaissance Program not engage in the production and dissemination of finished intelligence.

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**B. Management of the National Reconnaissance Program**

1. The Secretary of Defense is designated as the Executive Agent of the Government for the National Reconnaissance Program with the ultimate responsibility and authority for the management and conduct of the Program.

2. The National Reconnaissance Program Executive Committee will guide and participate in the formulation of the National Reconnaissance Program and approve or modify the Program and its budget.

3. The Director of the National Reconnaissance Office is responsible for implementing the National Reconnaissance Program.

4. The National Reconnaissance Office will be given support as required from normal staff elements of the departments and agencies concerned, although these staff elements will not participate in the Program or its projects except as the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office specifically requests, nor will the Program or projects be subject to normal Department of Defense staff review.

**C. The Secretary of Defense Will:**

1. Develop a single National Reconnaissance Program.



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2. Establish the National Reconnaissance Office as a separate operating agency of the Department of Defense.

3. Appoint the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office who will report to him and be responsive to his instructions, and will execute the National Reconnaissance Program.

4. Concur in the choice of the Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office who will report to the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office and be responsive to his instructions.

5. Sit with members of the Executive Committee, when necessary to reach decisions on issues on which Committee agreement cannot be reached.

D. The Director of Central Intelligence Will:

1. Sit as member of the Executive Committee.

2. Appoint the Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Defense.

3. Review and approve the National Reconnaissance Program budget each year.

4. Establish, in coordination with the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, separately identifiable units within the Central Intelligence Agency responsible for the

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conduct of those assigned portions of the National Reconnaissance Program. These units will function under the direct control of the Director, National Reconnaissance Office.

5. Provide security policy guidance and support to the Director, National Reconnaissance Office in the protection of sensitive National Reconnaissance Program activities.

6. Establish the collection priorities and requirements for the targeting of National Reconnaissance Program operations and the establishment of their frequency of coverage.

7. Review the results obtained by the National Reconnaissance Program and recommend, if appropriate, steps for improving such results.

E. The National Reconnaissance Program Executive Committee

1. The National Reconnaissance Program Executive Committee, consisting of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Director, Office of Science and Technology, will guide and participate in the formulation of the National Reconnaissance Program through the Director, National Reconnaissance Office. The Director of the National Reconnaissance Office will sit

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with the Executive Committee but will not be a voting member. If the Executive Committee cannot agree on an issue the Secretary of Defense will be requested to sit with the Committee in discussing this issue and will arrive at a decision. The National Reconnaissance Program Executive Committee will:

- a. Recommend to the Secretary of Defense an appropriate level of effort for the National Reconnaissance Program in response to reconnaissance requirements provided by United States Intelligence Board and in the light of technical capabilities and fiscal limitations.
- b. Approve or modify the consolidated National Reconnaissance Program and its budget.
- c. Approve the allocation of responsibility and the corresponding funds for research and exploratory development for new systems. Funds shall be adequate to ensure that a vigorous research and exploratory development effort is achieved to design and construct new sensors to meet intelligence requirements aimed at the acquisition of intelligence data. This effort shall be carried out by both Central Intelligence Agency and Department of Defense.

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d. Approve the allocation of development responsibilities and the corresponding funds for specific reconnaissance programs with a view to ensuring that the development, testing and production of new systems is accomplished with maximum efficiency by the component of the Government best equipped with facilities, experience and technical competence to undertake the assignment. It will also establish guidelines for collaboration between departments and for mutual support where appropriate.

(1) Assignment of responsibility for engineering development of sensor subsystems will be made to either the Central Intelligence Agency or Department of Defense components in accordance with the above criteria.

(2) The engineering development of all other subsystems, including spacecraft, re-entry vehicles, boosters and booster interface subsystems shall in general be assigned to Department of Defense component.

e. Periodically review the essential features of the major program elements of the National Reconnaissance Program.

2. The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of either the Deputy Secretary of Defense or the Director of

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Central Intelligence. All meetings will be attended by the Director and Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office and such staff advisors as the Deputy Secretary of Defense or the Director of Central Intelligence consider desirable.

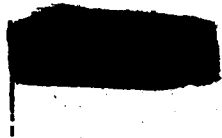
F. The Director of the National Reconnaissance Office Will:

1. Subject to direction and control of the Secretary of Defense and the guidance of the Executive Committee, have the responsibility for managing the National Reconnaissance Office and directing and coordinating the activities of all participating government agencies in executing the National Reconnaissance Program.

2. Subject to review by the Executive Committee, have authority to initiate, approve, modify, redirect or terminate all research and development programs in the National Reconnaissance Program. Ensure, through appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee for the assignment of research and development responsibilities and the allocation of funds, that the full potentialities of agencies of the Government concerned with reconnaissance are realized for the invention, improvement and development of reconnaissance systems to meet United States Intelligence Board requirements.

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3. Have authority to require that he be kept fully and completely informed by all Agencies and Departments of the Government of all programs and activities undertaken as part of the National Reconnaissance Program.

4. Maintain and provide to the members of the Executive Committee records of the status of all projects, programs and activities of the National Reconnaissance Program in the research, development, production and/or operational phases.

5. Prepare, defend and administer a comprehensive budget for all aspects of the National Reconnaissance Program.

6. Maintain fiscal control and accounting to ensure that all funds expended in support of the National Reconnaissance Program are fully accounted for and appropriately used by the agencies concerned. In particular, the budget shall show separately those funds to be applied to research and exploratory design development, systems development, procurement, and operational activities. Funds expended or obligated under the authority of the Director of Central Intelligence under Public Law 110 shall be administered and accounted for by Central Intelligence Agency and will be reported to the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office in accordance with agreed upon procedures.



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7. Sit with the United States Intelligence Board and the Intelligence Resources Advisory Committee on matters affecting the National Reconnaissance Program.

8. Obtain appropriate clearances from the 40 Committee for all National Reconnaissance Program missions.

9. Task the personnel, facilities and other resources of the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency, and other agencies as required to support the conduct of the National Reconnaissance Program.

10. Enter into such agreements with other departments or agencies as required in the implementation of this agreement.

11. Process, title, produce and deliver the collected product to the users as specified by the United States Intelligence Board.

G. The Deputy Director of the National Reconnaissance Office  
Will:

1. Serve full time in a line position directly under the Director National Reconnaissance Office.

2. Act for and exercise the powers of the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office during his absence or disability.

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H. The National Reconnaissance Office Will:

1. Be staffed jointly in such a fashion as to reflect the best talent appropriately available from the Central Intelligence Agency, the three military departments and other Government agencies.

2. Report to the Director, National Reconnaissance Office and the Deputy Director, National Reconnaissance Office and will maintain no allegiance to their agency or Department of origin.

I. Relationship With Other Departments and Agencies:

1. In the fulfillment of their respective responsibilities for the production of intelligence, the several departments and agencies shall not duplicate the intelligence collection and research activities of the National Reconnaissance Office, but shall make full use of existing capabilities of this element of the intelligence community.

2. To insure that all efforts involving spaceborne reconnaissance sensors are dealt with in a manner which will protect the interests of the United States Government including the National Reconnaissance Program, all departments and agencies

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must deal with the National Reconnaissance Office on all such activities.



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11 August 1965

AGREEMENT FOR REORGANIZATION OF THE  
NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM

A. The National Reconnaissance Program

1. The NRP is a single program, national in character, to meet the intelligence needs of the Government under a strong national leadership, for the development, management, control and operation of all projects, both current and long range for the collection of intelligence and of mapping and geodetic information obtained through overflights (excluding peripheral reconnaissance operations). The potentialities of U. S. technology and all operational resources and facilities must be aggressively and imaginatively exploited to develop and operate systems for the collection of intelligence which are fully responsive to the Government's intelligence needs and objectives.

2. The National Reconnaissance Program shall be responsive directly and solely to the intelligence collection requirements and priorities established by the United States Intelligence Board. Targeting requirements and priorities and desired frequency of coverage of both satellite and manned aircraft missions over denied areas shall continue to be the responsibility of USIB, subject to the operational approval of the 303 Committee.

B. The Secretary of Defense will:

1. Establish the NRO as a separate agency of the DoD and will have the ultimate responsibility for the management and operation of the NRO and the NRP;

2. Choose a Director of the NRO who will report to him and be responsive to his instructions;

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DoD Dir. 5200.10 does not apply.

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- 3. Concur in the choice of the Deputy Director of the NRO who will report to the DNRO and be responsive to his instructions;
- 4. Review and have the final power to approve the NRP budget;
- 5. Sit with members of the Executive Committee, when necessary, to reach decisions on issues on which committee agreement could not be reached.

C. The Director of Central Intelligence will:

- 1. Establish the collection priorities and requirements for the targeting of NRP operations and the establishment of their frequency of coverage;
- 2. Review the results obtained by the NRP and recommend, if appropriate, steps for improving such results;
- 3. Sit as a member of the Executive Committee;
- 4. Review and approve the NRP budget each year;
- 5. Provide security policy guidance to maintain a uniform system in the whole NRP area.

D. National Reconnaissance Program Executive Committee

1. An NRP Executive Committee, consisting of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, is hereby established to guide and participate in the formulation of the NRP through the DNRO. (The DNRO will sit with the Executive Committee but will not be a voting member.) If the Executive Committee can not agree on an issue the Secretary of Defense will be requested to sit with the Committee in discussing this issue and will arrive at a decision. The NRP Executive Committee will:

a. Recommend to the Secretary of Defense an appropriate level of effort for the NRP in response to reconnaissance requirements provided by USIB and in the light of technical capabilities and fiscal limitations.

b. Approve or modify the consolidated National Reconnaissance Program and its budget.

c. Approve the allocation of responsibility and the corresponding funds for research and exploratory development for new systems. Funds shall be adequate to ensure that a vigorous research and exploratory development effort is achieved and maintained by the Department of Defense and CIA to design and construct new sensors to meet intelligence requirements aimed at the acquisition of intelligence data. This effort shall be carried out by both CIA and DoD.

d. Approve the allocation of development responsibilities and the corresponding funds for specific reconnaissance programs with a view to ensuring that the development, testing and production of new systems is accomplished with maximum efficiency by the component of the Government best equipped with facilities, experience and technical competence to undertake the assignment. It will also establish guidelines for collaboration between departments and for mutual support where appropriate. Assignment of responsibility for engineering development of sensor subsystems will be made to either the CIA or DoD components in accordance with the above criteria. The engineering development of all other subsystems, including spacecraft, reentry vehicles, boosters and booster interface subsystems shall in general be assigned to an Air Force component, recognizing, however, that sensors, spacecraft and reentry vehicles are integral components of a system, the development of which must proceed on a fully coordinated basis, with a view to ensuring optimum system development in support of intelligence requirements for overhead reconnaissance. To optimize the primary objective of systems development, design requirement of the sensors will be given priority in their integration within the spacecraft and reentry vehicles.

e. Assign operational responsibility for various types of manned overflight missions to CIA or DoD subject to the concurrence of the 303 Committee.

f. Periodically review the essential features of the major program elements of the NRP.

2. The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of either the Deputy Secretary of Defense or the Director of Central Intelligence. All meetings will be attended by the DNRD and such staff advisors as the Deputy Secretary of Defense or the Director of Central Intelligence consider desirable.

2. National Reconnaissance Office

1. To implement the NRP, the Secretary of Defense will establish the NRO as a separate operating agency of the DoD. It shall include the SCC which shall be jointly manned.

2. The Director of the NRO shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense. The Director NRO will:

a. Subject to direction and control of the Secretary of Defense and the guidance of the Executive Committee as set forth in Section D above, have the responsibility for managing the NRO and executing the NRP.

b. Subject to review by the Executive Committee, and the provisions of Section D above, have authority to initiate, approve, modify, redirect or terminate all research and development programs in the NRP. Ensure, through appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee for the assignment of research and development responsibilities and the allocation of funds, that the full potentialities of agencies of the Government concerned with reconnaissance are realized for the invention, improvement and development of reconnaissance systems to meet USIB requirements.

c. Have authority to require that he be kept fully and completely informed by all Agencies and Departments of the Government of all programs and activities undertaken as part of the NRP.

d. Maintain and provide to the members of the Executive Committee records of the status of all projects, programs and activities of the NRP in the research, development, production and/or operational phases.

e. Prepare a comprehensive budget for all aspects of the National Reconnaissance Program.

f. Establish a fiscal control and accounting procedure to ensure that all funds expended in support of the National Reconnaissance Program are fully accounted for and appropriately utilized by the agencies concerned. In particular, the budget shall show separately those funds to be applied to research and exploratory design development, systems development, procurement, and operational activities. Funds expended or obligated under the authority of the Director of Central Intelligence under Public Law 110 shall be administered and accounted for by CIA and will be reported to DNR0 in accordance with agreed upon procedures.

g. Sit with the USIB for the matters affecting the NRP.

3. The Deputy Director NRO shall be appointed by the DCI with the concurrence of the Deputy Secretary of Defense and shall serve full time in a line position directly under the Director NRO. The Deputy Director shall act for and exercise the powers of the Director; NRO during his absence or disability.

4. The NRO shall be jointly staffed in such a fashion as to reflect the best talent appropriately available from the CIA, the three military departments and other Government agencies. The NRO staff will report to the DNR0 and DDNR0 and will maintain no allegiance to the originating agency or Department.

F. Initial Allocation of Program Responsibilities

1. Responsibility for existing programs of the NRP shall be allocated as indicated in Annex A attached hereto.

(signed) Cyrus Vance  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

(signed) W. F. Raborn  
Director of Central Intelligence

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