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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

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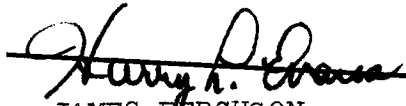
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEC 6 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Manned Orbiting Laboratory Monthly Status
Report

The attached Status Report on the Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL) Program covers activities through November 30, 1966 and is submitted in accordance with the November 14, 1966 memorandum from the Office of the Secretary.

for 
JAMES FERGUSON
General, USAF
Director, MOL Program

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a/s

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I. PROBLEMS

A. Status of Negotiations

Because of the continuing inability to compromise the differences between the Government and contractors financial positions, the decision was made to make a final offer to each of the contractors. If Douglas, General Electric and McDonnell refuse to accept the Government offer, the competition for the contract(s) refused will be reopened to bids by the other participating contractors and to a new contractor, possibly Lockheed Missiles and Space Company. If this action becomes necessary it is anticipated that there will be schedule slippage.

B. Revised Planning for the MOL Readout System

On November 23, the NRP Executive Committee disapproved the development of a readout capability for the GAMBIT-3 system. The MOL baseline includes a readout system consisting of on-board film processing, selection of suitable portions, laser film scanning and data transmission by wide-band link. The G-3 system had been determined to be satisfactory for MOL. Cancellation of G-3 support has caused a reexamination to determine the means for continuing the readout development and an appraisal of the desired schedule. It appears that part of the advanced technology work can be supported by NRO and other funding. Some additional sustaining funds may be needed from MOL and this matter is currently under study.

C. Aircraft Support for MOL Crew Members

The lack of aircraft to support MOL astronaut Space Flight Readiness (SFR) training was cited in last month's report. The HQ USAF response to the Director, MOL request for additional resources acknowledged the MOL requirement, but advises that aircraft priorities

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to support SEA requirements precludes assignment of the requested aircraft to MOL at this time. As an interim measure three T-33 aircraft, and some manpower spaces on an austere basis, are to be made available. Planning is underway to conduct SFR training at Los Alamitos Naval Air Station using the three T-33, and two T-38 aircraft which will be transferred from the MOL advanced training program at the Aerospace Research Pilot School. Transfer of the T-38s will necessitate deletion of T-38 flight training from the advanced MOL training curriculum. Follow up action with HQ USAF for additional aircraft support is not being considered at this time.

II. CHANGE PAST MONTH

A. T-III/MOL Support of Apollo Applications Program (AAP)

A NASA report, "Apollo Applications Program Use of Titan III-MOL Systems", dated November 2, 1966 was received from DDR&E on November 15 for review and comment. This report was based on a NASA study in response to a BOB question of whether an AAP manned space flight program could be structured around the Titan III-MOL system plus the Saturn V-Apollo systems. Data on T-III and MOL systems which had been requested from DoD by NASA over the past several months were incorporated into the study.

The MOL Program Office review identified and discussed certain discrepancies, deficiencies and questions pertaining to the content and findings of the subject NASA study. A recommendation was made to DDR&E that DoD not concur with the report.

B. MOL Manpower Package

The Director, MOL, in a memorandum for the Secretary of the Air Force dated July 5, 1966, requested the Secretary's assistance in obtaining 296 (later changed to 293) manpower spaces to support the MOL program. 115 officers and 31 airmen spaces requested for FY 1967 have been reprogrammed from within current Air Force resources. The November 1966 Manpower Authorization Voucher includes these military manpower spaces and they will be effective the 3rd Quarter FY 1967. The 38 military manpower spaces for FY 1968 will be acted upon at a later date. The Air Force cannot fund the 109

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civilian authorizations required for FY 1967 and 1968. A letter requesting DoD to raise the Air Force manpower and RDT&E budgetary ceilings for FY 1968 by the 109 civilian authorizations as required by the MOL program has been prepared and is currently in SAF-RD.

C. Briefing of Senior AFSC Personnel

On November 14, the MOL Program Office briefed the following AFSC Officers:

Lieutenant General W. A. Davis
Major General J. J. Cody
Major General G. F. Keeling
Major General W. E. Carter
Brigadier General W. R. Hedrick
Brigadier General F. M. Rogers
Colonel J. D. Lowe
Colonel L. W. Lilley

The briefing included a review of current program status, the design baseline, the photographic system, test operations, astronaut training, funds and schedules.

D. Phase II Contracts Technical Review

During the week of November 7, the MOL Program Office conducted a review of the work statements and specifications for the MOL Program Phase II contracts. The purpose of this review was to insure that the technical and engineering requirements of the different contractor efforts were not duplicative or contradictory and that where there were interfaces, these were properly provided for in the contracts.

Based on the report of the review team, the technical aspects of the MOL program contracts were determined to be complete and adequate. These findings will be reported to General Keeling, AFSC DCS/P&P. They will be considered a part of his contract review and validation process when the contracts are negotiated and submitted to AFSC for Procurement Policy Committee review and General Keeling's signature.

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E. MOL Monthly Management Meeting

Dr. Flax and General Ferguson attended the Monthly Management Meeting held on November 17 at SSD. The principal agenda items were the status of negotiations and fund requirements. These items were also discussed at the MOL Policy Committee Meeting on November 22. The results of these meetings is covered in paragraph II F.

F. MOL Policy Committee Meeting

A meeting of the MOL Policy Committee was held in Washington on November 22 to review the status of Phase II contract negotiations and attendant financial implications. The planning schedule for accomplishing negotiations was presented along with the areas of agreement, disagreement, cost data and expenditure rate, and manpower buildup for each contractor. In the discussions which followed the presentations, the committee indicated that the MOL system requirement was still valid, and that the funding rate should be limited only by the lead time of the optical system.

The committee was informed that if the Government/ Contractor contract price impasse continued, it could cause the program to stretch out. The committee concurred with the formulation of a plan that could exercise the option of reopening the competition, but suggested that the contractors be advised of our intentions prior to initiating such an action.

The committee also noted that the FY 68 budget is not likely to be greater than \$480 million and every effort should be made to settle below the AF budget position if possible.

The subject of a DX priority for the MOL Program was discussed briefly. It was agreed that the time to request a DX priority is after negotiations have been completed and schedules and costs are better defined.

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G. Heat Shield Test (HST) Launch

The Heat Shield Test launch was made on schedule on November 3, 1966. All flight characteristics for the Gemini spacecraft and cylindrical test structure were nominal and objectives achieved. The modified Gemini heatshield including a hatch for crew transfer successfully survived re-entry temperatures with splash-down approximately 6 miles from predicted point. The recovered spacecraft is now undergoing examination and analysis as part of the Gemini B engineering program.

III. CURRENT STATUS

A. MOL Launch Complex

The VAFB MOL Launch Complex has been re-designated Space Launch Complex 6 (SLC-6).

Invitations to bid for construction of the launch complex are to be issued on December 2; the bid opening date is January 17, 1967.

B. Electromagnetic Pointing System (EPS)

The NSA evaluation of the utility of combined photo/ELINT data to the intelligence analyst was received early in November. NSA's analysis indicates that the bi-sensor approach has a unique potential for high-priority intelligence collection and that addition of the automatic ELINT system in the MOL platform is definitely desirable. This potential will be effected by the capabilities of the astronauts and the optimality of the system bandwidth. The analysis concludes that the EPS could significantly enhance the value of the MOL Program, but that consideration should also be given to EPS as part of future unmanned programs. Further study of incorporating the EPS into the MOL vehicle will be conducted after the baseline configuration is firm. Ground simulation and analysis to better estimate the quantitative intelligence gain by bi-sensor correlation will be initiated.

C. MOL Funds Status

The issuance of Obligational Authority totaling approximately \$30.5 million to MOL activities was requested from AFABF during November. Of this amount,

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\$14.5 million completed the release of FY 1966 funds and \$16.0 million represented the initial release of FY 1967 funds. The total of funds released against the MOL line item since program approval in August 1965 is approximately \$182.2 million through November 30. A balance of \$34.0 million of FY 1967 funds is held by the Director, MOL Program.

D. MOL Recovery Forces

The Secretary of Defense has requested the DoD Manager for Manned Space Flight Support Operations to convene representatives from the JCS, Navy and Air Force for a joint review with NASA representatives of operational requirements, force capabilities, recovery support techniques, cost estimates, and funding responsibilities for force augmentation in support of the manned space recovery mission. A report and recommendations were requested to be made by December 8, 1966. The outcome of review is not expected to affect the MOL requirement for an aircraft staging base on Easter Island for launch abort recovery.

IV. FORECAST FOR FUTURE

Monthly Management Meeting

The next monthly management meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 9, 1967 on the West Coast. The principal agenda item will be Phase II contractual status resulting from the December final offers to Douglas, General Electric and McDonnell.

V. DUE DATE FOR NEXT PROGRESS REPORT

The next monthly MOL Progress Report will be submitted January 9, 1967.

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