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OXCART/TAGBOARD

~~1ST~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

August 18, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. NITZE
MR. HELMS
DR. HORNIG

SUBJECT: Status of TAGBOARD

Attached is a summary paper on the background and status of the TAGBOARD Program. This subject will be discussed at the August 23, 1967 meeting of the Executive Committee.

Alexander H. Flax

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Attachment
Status of TAGBOARD

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Status of TAGBOARDBACKGROUND

In late 1966 the DNRO requested and received approval to reorient the TAGBOARD drone program to be launched from a B-52 instead of an A-12. This decision followed upon inconclusive findings of the investigation of the A-12 drone accident and the recommendation by the DNRO to use the B-52 instead of the A-12. Contractor go ahead was given in January 1967. Three flights were conducted by launch from the A-12 which demonstrated successful operation of the engine inlet, inertial navigation and flight control systems. These flights were respectively 125, 1100, and 1500 nautical miles. We have not yet demonstrated successful termination of flight to include recovery of the payload.

MILESTONES ACHIEVED SINCE PROGRAM REDUCTION

1. Modification of the first B-52 has been completed and work on the second aircraft is underway.
2. The inertial navigation system, including the star tracker, has been checked out in the B-52 with an average circular error of .7 nautical miles.

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3. The first mated flight with asymmetrical loading and dummy booster has been completed with all load and stability readings satisfactory.

4. In addition, and separate from the B-52 question, most of the radar cross section measurements for vulnerability studies have been completed and a first look suggests the possibility of TAGBOARD penetrations of denied areas without ECM.

NEW TESTING

Delivery and firing of the first hot booster on a test stand was successfully demonstrated August 14, 1967. Three more such test firings are planned prior to the launch of the first drone. This test series is late and is currently the critical pacing item of the program. In addition, four free launches of the drone will be conducted on the Pacific Missile Range from September through December to complete the test program. It should be recognized that every time a TAGBOARD is flown, the airframe (but not the sensor and certain other high cost components) is expended.

SUMMARY

1. At present it is anticipated that the conversion of the TAGBOARD from A-12 to the B-52 for launching of the drone will have been completed with testing by January 1968. However, further delay in rocket motor qualification or unanticipated problems in launch could slip this date.

2. A decision has been made to procure 12 drones with 1968 funds for delivery in FY 68 and 69. This was considered by the DNRO to be the best buy from alternatives available with a cost of approximately \$5 million more than the President's budget of \$31.6 for FY 68 in view of the high cost of a production gap which would occur with a smaller quantity buy.

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3. Consideration of the estimates for future years and specifically for FY 69 now estimated at \$36.9 million will be presented to the Executive Committee in December 1967.

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