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IPMEDIATE WHIG.

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GAMBIT/HEXAGON [REDACTED]
FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

WHIG FOR DR MARR [REDACTED]

FROM: GEN KULPA

SUBJECT: GAMBIT PROGRAM (WHIG 1280)

1. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROPOSED GAMBIT PROGRAM ALTERNATIVE TO BE CONSIDERED IS AS FOLLOWS:

A. VEHICLES 50 AND 51 TO BE MAINTAINED IN CURRENT CONFIGURATION THROUGH MID-1980. VEHICLES WOULD BE IN A REDUCED CALL-UP STATUS WITHOUT A PLANNED LAUNCH.

B. DUAL MODE TO BE IMPLEMENTED FOR VEHICLE 52. THIS VEHICLE WOULD BE LAUNCHED MID-1980 TO DEMONSTRATE THE CAPABILITY IN BOTH HIGH RESOLUTION AND SEARCH MODE.

C. VEHICLES 50 AND 51 TO BE RETROFITTED TO DUAL MODE CAPABILITY IF NOT PREVIOUSLY LAUNCHED AS CALL-UP VEHICLES.

D. VEHICLES 50, 51, 53, 54 TO BE MAINTAINED AS DUAL MODE

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VEHICLES IN A REDUCED CALL-UP CONFIGURATION THROUGH AT LEAST 1983.

E. SEPARATELY IDENTIFY EFFORT FOR TRANSITIONING THESE VEHICLES TO SHUTTLE IN POST-1983 TIMEFRAME.

2. WITH THE ABOVE DESCRIBED EFFORT, WE BELIEVE THAT THIS ALTERNATIVE IS PROBABLY MORE EXPENSIVE THAN THE BASELINE FOR TWO-PER-YEAR FLY-OUT (POSSIBLY [REDACTED] IN THE FY 78-83 PERIOD). THIS IS BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

A. IMPLEMENTING DUAL MODE IS AN INCREASE IN COST IN FY 78-80.

B. ALTHOUGH VEHICLES 50 AND 51 ARE NOT SCHEDULED FOR LAUNCH, THEY MUST BE PROCESSED AND PLACED INTO A TESTING RECYCLE TO MAINTAIN A CALL-UP CAPABILITY. THIS REQUIRES A SLIGHT INCREASE IN TEST TEAM SIZE AND ADDITIONAL COST.

C. WITHOUT ANY SCHEDULED LAUNCHES IN CY 78 AND 79, A DECREASE OR ELIMINATION OF LAUNCH-RELATED SUPPORT COSTS MIGHT BE ENVISIONED.

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HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT THE CASE BECAUSE LAUNCH COSTS ARE SHARED RESOURCES AND THE ALLOCATION FOR GAMBIT WOULD EITHER REMAIN THE SAME OR HAVE TO BE ABSORBED BY ██████████ HEXAGON ██████████ AND ██████████ THESE SUPPORT EFFORTS MUST BE CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN THE LAUNCH CAPABILITY AT SLC-4.

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D. THE RETROFIT COSTS OF VEHICLES 50 AND 51 TO A DUAL MODE CAPABILITY ARE AN INCREASE TO ALL ALTERNATIVES, SINCE THESE VEHICLES WILL REQUIRE DISASSEMBLY, REASSEMBLY, AND TEST.

E. THE MAINTENANCE OF A REDUCED CALL-UP CAPABILITY FOR VEHICLES 50, 51, 53 AND 54 AS DUAL MODE VEHICLES INTO THE 1983 TIMEFRAME LEADS TO INCREASED COSTS SINCE THE TEST TEARS NEED ALPHENATION, VEHICLES MUST BE RETESTED TO INSURE VEHICLE HEALTH, AND THE PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE EXTENDED.

F. SHUTTLE TRANSITION EFFORT WOULD BEGIN IN THE 1980 TIME-FRAME TO MEET A CAPABILITY IN THE 1983 ERA. THIS WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT COST INCREASE BECAUSE VEHICLE MODIFICATION, CRABLE DESIGN, AGE DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT FOR A NEW LAUNCH PAD ARE ALL COST FACTORS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN ANY PRIOR SUBMISSION.

3. I FEEL THIS ALTERNATIVE POSES RISKS TO THE GAMBIT PROGRAM THAT ARE NOT READILY APPARENT. THE GAMBIT PROGRAM IS ONE IN WHICH EXTREME CARE IS EXERCISED AT EVERY STEP, AS IT IS A HIGHLY COMPLEX AND SOPHISTICATED SYSTEM. IT WAS NOT DESIGNED ORIGINALLY AS A QUICK REACTION VEHICLE AND IS NOT READILY ADAPTABLE WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT REDESIGN TO MEET THE POSSIBLE LONG STORAGE REQUIREMENTS AND QUICK REACTION CAPABILITIES. TO ACQUIRE RELIABLE PERFORMANCE ON PAR WITH THE CURRENT PROGRAM; TO MAINTAIN A

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CONSTANT STATE OF READINESS FOR BOTH HARDWARE AND OPERATIONS; AND TO DEVELOP NEW APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES, EXTRA CARE AND ADDITIONAL HIGHLY QUALIFIED PEOPLE (BOTH CONTRACTOR AND MILITARY) WILL BE REQUIRED. I AM ALREADY EXPERIENCING TO A NOTICEABLE DEGREE SOME EVIDENCE OF DETERIORATING EXCELLENCE IN THE GAMBIT PROGRAM WHICH I BELIEVE IS DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND ABLE PEOPLE LEAVING THE PROGRAM AT BOTH LPSC AND EK. THESE CONCERNS AND THE NECESSARY CORRECTIVE ACTION COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE COST OF THIS ALTERNATIVE OVER AND ABOVE THAT PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED.

4. THE SUGGESTED APPROACH TO GAMBIT DUAL MODE OBVIOUSLY IDENTIFIES ALL COSTS TO A BACKUP MISSION. FOR THIS REASON AND THE VERY REAL HARDWARE AND OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS WHICH STORAGE OF GAMBIT VEHICLES ENTAIL, I HAVE IN THE PAST SUPPORTED AN APPROACH WHICH TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE UNIQUE INTELLIGENCE CONTRIBUTION OF GAMBIT BY CONTINUING

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TO FLY THEM AT SOME MINIMUM RATE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME
ESTABLISHING A PIPELINE SUCH THAT A GAMBIT WOULD BE
AVAILABLE FOR LAUNCH ON A VERY SHORT CALLUP BASIS.

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IN THIS MANNER ONLY THE RELATIVELY SMALL DELTA COST
COULD BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE BACKUP MISSION.

5. IN SUMMARY, OUR PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THIS
ALTERNATIVE IS TECHNICALLY AND PROGRAMMATICALLY
FEASIBLE WITH SOME LOSS OF RELIABILITY. HOWEVER,
IT LEADS TO COST INCREASES FROM THE BASELINE AND FLY-OUT
OPTIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO GATHER COST DATA RELATIVE
TO THIS OPTION AND PROVIDE THAT INFORMATION IF YOU ARE
STILL DESIROUS OF EXPLORING THIS ALTERNATIVE.

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