

QUARTERS 1ST MISSILE DIVISION
Office of the Commander
Vandenberg Air Force Base
California

20 JAN 1959

Brigadier General O. J. Ritland
Vice Commander
Air Force Ballistic Missile Division (ARDC)
Air Force Unit Post Office
Los Angeles 45, California

wuzw
OJR.
SUGGEST JOINT MEETING PER LAST TP.

Dear Ossie:

My Staff has reviewed the STL Study, "Use of Vandenberg Air Force Base 65-1 Launchers in Operational WS 117L", forwarded with your 23 December 1958 letter. Pertinent comments are inclosed.

As pertains to your specific requests in the final paragraph of your letter, I have the following comments:

- a. In the overall sense, although there have been previous inter-staff discussions on this matter, I feel it is premature at this time to plan for eventual degradation of the combat capability of the initial ICBM Tactical Organization. I believe decision should be delayed until this squadron has demonstrated its capability and until more positive assurance is available as to the progress of subsequent tactical organizations.
- b. I view the analysis as questionable in the area of degradation of operational combat capability. The inclosed comments indicate to me that the Study underestimated the actual degree of degradation.
- c. The Range Safety assumption in the Study that a P_k of 10^{-3} is satisfactory, is in conflict with existing Pacific Missile Range Safety Criteria. Exit launch azimuths of 195° , however, appear satisfactory when proper precautions to reduce risk are taken.
- d. Should it become necessary to increase the number of launchers to support WS 117L beyond the one complex at Arguello, it is recommended that such launchers be sited on Vandenberg Air Force Base rather than on Arguello.

DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR
INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY
DECLASSIFIED. DOD DIR 5200.10

See W02-2-1-E TWX
4 Feb 59

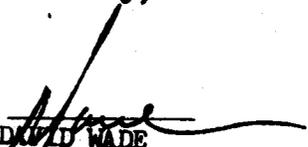
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[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

The above comments should not be construed as being in anyway derogatory to the Study or to the efforts of your people. Specifically these comments should not be interpreted to mean that conversion of 65-1 would not be acceptable, at a later date, and under the proper circumstances. I stand ready to make interested members of my Staff available for any mutual discussion concerning this matter.

Sincerely,


DAVID WADE
Major General, USAF
Commander

1 Incl
Comments

[REDACTED]

STAFF COMMENTS

[REDACTED]

1. EWO Degradation:

a. Degradation of SM-65 Operational Capability is a major concern of this Headquarters. Referenced Study throughout has apparently underestimated the actual extent of degradation.

b. The Study concludes degradation is not serious; however, the following is pertinent:

(1) Modifying each pad would remove it from operational capability for a period of two to three months.

(2) Replacement of weapon system time of two to three days is not in consonance with fifteen minute operational reaction time.

(3) The study omitted consideration of the time required to refurbish a pad following a WS 117L Launch.

2. Range Safety:

a. In paragraph II the Study assumes a P_k of 10^{-3} is a satisfactory range condition; however, Pacific Missile Range has officially stated a casualty risk greater than 10^{-5} will constitute a "hold order" on any launch into the Pacific Missile Range.

b. P_k of 10^{-3} risk can be reduced for military areas by evacuation of Vandenberg Air Force Base airfield and re-entry facility areas, the government lighthouse and Arguello areas.

c. P_k of 10^{-3} risk can be reduced for civilian areas by evacuation of Surf, Sudden Ranch and other areas.

d. Although modification may well be feasible in the 1961 time period due to technology advance, due consideration must be given to previously listed factors.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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