~~TOP SECRET~~ CONTROL SYSTEM ONLY TAGBOARD

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

SM-83-69
11 February 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief of Staff, US Army
Chief of Naval Operations
Chief of Staff, US Air Force
Commandant of the Marine Corps
Commander in Chief, Pacific
Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command
Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

Subject: Very High Performance Drone Reconnaissance ~~(S)~~

1. (U) Reference is made to SM-701-68, dated 24 October 1968, subject: "Operational Guidance for Peacetime Reconnaissance Programs and Certain Sensitive Operations (U)."

2. ~~(TS~~/B) The attachment hereto provides the guidance of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the operational employment of the TAGBOARD drone for collection against objectives of national interest which are located in areas where manned operations could provoke incidents potentially embarassing to the US Government. Addressees are requested to insert this directive in the referenced memorandum as Appendix C to Volume III.

3. ~~(TS~~/B) CINCSAC is requested to develop a supporting operation plan and forward it to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for approval. Subsequent to approval of the CINCSAC operation plan, distribution of the plan will be as directed by the Joint Chiefs

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TAGBOARD

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of Staff. CINCPAC is requested to develop a plan, in coordination with CINCSAC, which will provide support, as required, responsive to the utilization of the TAGBOARD drone in the PACOM area.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

[redacted]

Colonel, USA
Acting Secretary

Attachment

Copy to:
Secretary of Defense
DNRO ~~(8)~~

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APPENDICS AND ANNEXES TO VOLUME III

(13 pages)

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APPENDIX C TO VOLUME III

VERY HIGH PERFORMANCE DRONE RECONNAISSANCE

1. SITUATION

a. Background

(1) A continuing national requirement exists to conduct covert imagery reconnaissance operations against countries hostile, or potentially hostile, to the United States and, in some instances, against friendly or neutral countries when the information required is not obtainable through other means. This requirement includes the collection and exploitation of imagery on foreign military forces, activities, installations, objects, and other areas of interest.

(2) To satisfy this national requirement, programs utilizing both high performance manned aircraft and unmanned drone vehicles have been developed and are presently being utilized. In view of the political sensitivity to overflight of certain denied areas by manned collection systems and the technical and other limitations of the current satellite program, the TAGBOARD System has been developed to enhance the collection capability against objectives of national interest located in areas where manned operations could provoke incidents potentially embarrassing to the US Government.

(3) The TAGBOARD System consists of a very high-altitude, very high-speed, nonrecoverable drone vehicle which is air launched from a B-52 H aircraft. The drone power system incorporates both a solid propellant rocket booster engine which is jettisoned after burn-out and a RJ-43 Marquardt ramjet sustainer engine. The drone is capable of flying

3600 nm, at a constant M 3.25, from an initial cruise altitude of 80,000 feet to an end-of-mission altitude of 95,000 feet. Guidance is provided by an inertial navigation system which, in conjunction with the stellar tracker in the launch aircraft, limits the maximum launch error to 1.7 nm and subsequent free-flight navigation error build-up to 1.5 nm/hour. With the currently installed camera system, the capability exists to photograph either a 16 nm strip or a 28 nm strip the entire flight range. At the termination of a mission, in a predetermined recovery area, the camera, magazine, INS and computer, stabilization system, and certain other high-value components are jettisoned from the drone and are air recovered by specially configured JC-130 aircraft. Pyrotechnic devices installed aboard the drone serve two purposes. First, they can be used by the Launch Control Officer to destroy the drone manually anytime a malfunction of any of the several components, which are monitored via telemetry, is noted. Second, they are used to destroy the vehicle automatically at the completion of a mission after the sensor package has been ejected or if the drone descends through a pre-set altitude at any time during the operational portion of the mission. This feature precludes the vehicle from ever being recovered intact after any launch.

b. Assumptions

(1) US manned reconnaissance systems designed to obtain imagery of foreign targets will continue to be restricted from full operation in certain areas where national collection objectives are located because of the politically sensitive environment which will continue to exist during peacetime.

(2) Technical and other limitations preclude the satellite programs currently in operation or under development by this country from completely satisfying, as a sole system, the national collection requirements as contained in the current COMIREX target lists as approved by the US Intelligence Board (USIB).

(3) The TAGBOARD and other unmanned reconnaissance systems are capable of augmenting the manned aircraft and satellite collection programs and will be approved for employment in some areas which are presently, and very likely will continue to be, denied or impracticable areas for coverage by the other systems.

2. PURPOSE

a. To describe the TAGBOARD System.

b. To outline, in general terms, the responsibilities of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other commands and agencies involved in the employment of the system.

c. To explain the basic concept of operations.

d. To define the security management responsibilities of the TAGBOARD System.

3. SCOPE. The provisions of this Appendix apply to the peacetime employment of TAGBOARD against reconnaissance objectives of national interest. Detailed logistic support and further development of the system are not included herein but are provided for by separate directives issued by the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO) ~~(D)~~.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The Director, National Reconnaissance Office ~~(D)~~, in line with his responsibilities for the management and control of all projects for the collection of intelligence information obtained through overflights of denied areas is responsible for the management and control of the TAGBOARD System.

a. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will:

(1) Obtain approval from higher authority on either a monthly or individual mission basis for utilization of the TAGBOARD System.

(2) Direct the execution of each individual mission.

(3) Task appropriate commands to provide the requisite support for the mission.

b. The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), will:

(1) Serve as the DOD representative on all intelligence matters associated with the TAGBOARD program and which require USIB attention.

(2) Register and levy the USIB established/approved imagery reconnaissance collection requirements developed for application to the TAGBOARD collection effort.

(3) Provide appropriate authorities with an assessment of any reactions to TAGBOARD operations.

(4) Provide technical or intelligence support when requested to assist the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the conduct of this program and in the evaluation of TAGBOARD operations.

(5) Provide photo processing, duplication, and exploitation support as directed by the DNRO ~~(S)~~ and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(6) Provide appropriate authorities with information pertaining to the degree of satisfaction of imagery requirements based on intelligence assessments of coverage acquired by the TAGBOARD program.

c. The Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command (CINCSAC), will:

(1) Prepare and forward to the Joint Chiefs of Staff for approval appropriate plans for the support and execution of the collection effort.

(2) Prepare mission profiles based on national imagery reconnaissance collection requirements levied through the DIA.

(3) Conduct the operational mission when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

d. Other commands will:

(1) Prepare appropriate plans, in coordination with CINCSAC, to provide the required mission support.

(2) Provide the necessary supporting forces and/or resources to ensure successful mission completion when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

e. Detailed responsibilities are set forth in the Annexes to this plan.

5. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS. See Annex A

6. LOGISTICS. Logistic support for the TAGBOARD drone is the responsibility of the DNRO ~~(S)~~. Logistic support for the supporting and operational forces is the responsibility of the respective military service or command concerned.

7. COMMAND AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Command Relations

(1) Overall supervision and execution of operational missions will be as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the commanders of unified or specified commands exercising operational control over the units involved.

(2) Direct liaison between appropriate commands is authorized.

b. COMMUNICATIONS. All teletype communications and data transmissions will be conducted within the existing NRO ~~(S)~~ BYEMAN communications network and DOD BYEMAN communications channels if the NRO ~~(S)~~ system is not available.

8. Security. See Annex B to this Appendix.

ANNEX A

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. (S) GENERAL

a. Introduction. TAGBOARD is a very high-altitude, unmanned photographic drone which has been developed for employment solely against objectives of national interest and is under the operational control of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. CINCSAC is the operational commander and as such is responsible for mission planning and execution of each mission when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

2. (TS) MANAGEMENT CONCEPT. This concept outlines the objectives to be achieved and the responsibilities related thereto.

a. Objectives

(1) To augment present manned aircraft and satellite reconnaissance programs.

(2) To contribute to the total national reconnaissance collection effort through utilization of the system in areas not satisfactorily covered by other reconnaissance systems.

(3) To effect management of the TAGBOARD System at the national level by the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO)~~(S)~~, and to insure that the system is employed on the basis of valid, national imagery requirements.

(4) To effect operational control and utilization of the TAGBOARD System by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and its operational employment under their guidance, after operational and political factors have been considered.

(5) To perform an objective, continuing evaluation of the adequacy of reconnaissance collection operations conducted by the TAGBOARD System.

b. Organization and Support

(1) The tactical organization will be a SAC element, consisting of three specially trained B-52H flight crews and a minimum number of command, operations, and maintenance personnel, based at Beale Air Force Base, California. During the initial operating phase, all D-21 maintenance (airplane general, electronic, engine, navigation, communications, sensor) will be performed by a contractor team numbering approximately 70 personnel. The head of this team will function as the Chief of Special Maintenance for the Deputy Chief for Materiel of the operating detachment. Maintenance of the complete TAGBOARD System will eventually be assumed by SAC; however, specialized contractor support is recognized as a continuing requirement. B-52H aircraft support will be through normal, established military channels; D-21 system supplies and items peculiar to the mated system will be provided through NRO ~~(S)~~ contracts on an annual basis. Base facilities and services will be provided as necessary to support operational and training requirements and to accomplish maintenance and repair efforts beyond the capabilities of the TAGBOARD element.

(2) The tactical organization will maintain a capability to launch the maximum number of sorties authorized per month. Currently available assets limit the maximum authorization to two operational sorties per month.

c. Personnel

(1) Military personnel resources will be provided by SAC. Flight crew-to-aircraft ratio will be maintained at 1½:1. The US Air Force will provide for a two year stabilized tour for assigned personnel with a planned personnel

rotational program to preclude excessive losses of trained and cleared personnel at one time. It will also preclude the premature loss of specially trained personnel to US Air Force and SAC personnel levies.

(2) A modified TAGBOARD System Project Office (SPO) function will remain at Burbank under the control of the Director, Program D. Approximately two personnel will be assigned to interface between the contractor and SAC.

d. Training

(1) The flying hour program for the TAGBOARD program will be established by SAC. Flight crew checkout and proficiency training in the B-52H aircraft will be as prescribed by current SAC directives.

(2) During the operational validation phase, participating organizations will develop CPX and operational test plans which will be executed to determine the operational readiness capability of the TAGBOARD System as well as staff and operating organizations. The results of the validation tests will be submitted to the DNRO(~~S~~) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for review and evaluation.

e. Operations

(1) National imagery collection requirements applicable to the TAGBOARD System, established/approved by the US Intelligence Board, will be levied through the Defense Intelligence Agency in conjunction with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These requirements will reflect the established objectives of the system and will be used for mission planning. Currently, due to availability of assets, two operational missions per month should be planned. Computer flight plans will be developed by SAC covering these established objectives. JC-130 and

air-refueling detachments will be provided sufficient flight plan data to allow necessary deployment and operational planning.

(2) Procedures will be established by CINCSAC, as operational commander, to monitor all phases of the weather, as forecast by the SAC Weather Center, and to pass all operational weather data to all concerned.

(3) Prior to launch of any TAGBOARD mission, SAC will notify the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Joint Reconnaissance Center) of the mission data (ETD, Route, ETA) and will request authority to launch the mission. If approved, SAC and the JC-130 recovery detachment will be directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to support the mission.

(4) Upon approval of the mission, the appropriate unified commands will be directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to execute applicable plans in support of the mission.

f. Reports. RECON and OPREP reports will be submitted in accordance with Volume I of this directive and applicable SAC reporting directives.

ANNEX B

SECURITY

1. POLICY. Project TAGBOARD will be controlled and operated as a separate security compartment within the BYEMAN Security Control System. Overall management of Project TAGBOARD security has been assigned by the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO) ~~(S)~~, to the Director, Program D, NRO ~~(S)~~.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES. Specific responsibilities for the security of Project TAGBOARD have been defined as follows:

a. Director, Program D, is responsible for:

(1) Under delegation from the DNRO ~~(S)~~ exercising overall security management responsibility for Project TAGBOARD, to be operated in accordance with security policy guidance provided by the offices of the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI).

(2) In coordination with the Defense Intelligence Agency, Joint Reconnaissance Center (JRC), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Director, Special Projects, OSAF preparing a Project TAGBOARD Security Guide to be approved by D,NRO ~~(S)~~.

(3) Defining appropriate channels of communications for matters related to the security of Project TAGBOARD, to include primary responsibility for all security arrangements and coordination actions incidental to launch vehicle modification, reconnaissance system test, logistical and communications support, and operational coordination.

(4) Directing the implementation of Project TAGBOARD security policies and procedures throughout those facilities specifically established for control of this program by the NRO ~~(S)~~.

(5) Approving "must know" or provide advice and guidance to DNRO ~~(S)~~ related to individuals proposed for TAGBOARD access in all cases not specifically reserved to the CIA.

(6) Providing guidance to the SAC TAGBOARD Detachment Commander on matters related to security.

(7) Providing a qualified project security staff officer to operate under the direct supervision of the SAC TAGBOARD Detachment Commander. This individual, in addition to providing overall security support to the Detachment Commander, will be specifically responsible for the security of all interface with CIA industrial security and the Director of Special Projects, OSAF, Satellite Control Facility (SCF) supporting elements.

(8) Approving those portions of JCS and/or SAC operations orders that relate to operational security and otherwise respond as a mandatory point of coordination for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CINCSAC on all matters related to Project TAGBOARD operational security.

(9) Insuring on behalf of CIA (Office, Special Activities (OSA)), necessary access to the SAC TAGBOARD Detachment and environs by contractor personnel.

(10) Coordinating all actions related to TAGBOARD security at Area 51 with CIA (OSA).

(11) Advising DNRO ~~(S)~~, through the NRO ~~(S)~~ staff, of all matters having a significant impact upon Project TAGBOARD security.

b. The NRO ~~(S)~~ staff has been assigned the following responsibilities:

(1) Provide staff security guidance to the DNRO ~~(S)~~.

(2) Provide assistance to the Director, Program D, where necessary to the implementation of Project TAGBOARD security policies and procedures.

(3) Provide communications security (COMSEC) support and guidance to the Director, Program D.

(4) In concert with the intelligence "user" community, define security policy and procedures related to exploitation of the resulting photography.

(5) As the Executive Secretariat of the Interdepartmental Contingency Planning Committee (ICPC) insure the preparation and coordination, for DNRO ~~(S)~~ approval, of contingency plans as appropriate to 303 Committee requirements.

c. CIA has been assigned the following responsibilities:

(1) Through the CIA (OSA), continue to provide a BYEMAN industrial security program in support of Project TAGBOARD. This will include: (a) conducting prerequisite personnel security investigations and security determinations related to all contractor employees in accordance with BYEMAN standards: (b) making "must-know" decisions related to all contractor employees proposed for access, to be determined by the level of effort necessary under the contract; and, (c) overall supervision of Project TAGBOARD activities at contractors' facilities.

(2) Continue to exercise primary security responsibility for all activity conducted at or related to Area 51.

(3) Approve "must know" for all CIA employees proposed for Project TAGBOARD access. Insure compliance with BYEMAN personnel security standards in such cases.

(4) Through the Compartmented Information Branch (CIA(CIB)) maintain, as a service of common concern, a master list of all individuals approved for and indoctrinated into Project TAGBOARD.

d. Director of Special Projects, OSAF, has been requested to define security procedures and to monitor activities related to requirements for support from the SCF to insure that no prejudice results to the security of other sensitive programs in which the SCF is involved.

e. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and SAC will:

(1) Insure the preparation of operational security instructions in conformance with Project TAGBOARD security policy and procedures.

(2) Insure implementation of those contingency plans approved by the DNRO ~~(8)~~ upon advice and guidance of the ICPC.

f. The DIA will:

(1) Manage that program related to the prerequisite personnel security review and certification of all DOD related personnel proposed for Project TAGBOARD access.

(2) Insure the implementation of appropriate duty and travel restrictions to all DOD related personnel who are provided access to the project.

(3) Provide access to DOD BYEMAN communications and security control facilities on request.

(4) Insure the implementation of Project TAGBOARD security policy and procedures throughout all supporting military commands.

(5) Maintain overall control and provide security policy directives for personnel access, dissemination of information, and security of facilities within DOD.

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~~(S)~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

February 13, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. FLAX

SUBJECT: JCS Paper on "Very High Performance Drone Reconnaissance"

Attached on the right is a copy of the JCS letter providing guidance for the operational employment of the TAGBOARD drone. This letter asks the CINCSAC to develop a supporting operation plan for JCS review.

You will note the misuse of "TAGBOARD" as a codeword in both the JCS letter and the Appendix. [redacted] staff is presently preparing a memorandum for your signature to Mr. Helms asking his concurrence of the use of TAGBOARD as an official codeword for the drone project, in accordance with the operational concept paper approved by you on December 11, 1968. [redacted] has contacted DIA and asked that they correct the present misuse in all copies of the paper either by substituting OXCART/TAGBOARD as the codeword identifier or by caveating the paper to indicate that action to establish this codeword is currently in process.

William R. Yost
WILLIAM R. YOST
Lt Colonel, USAF

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11 February 1969

NOTE TO HOLDERS

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APPENDIX C, VOLUME III, SM-701-68

Because of the classification of the attached Appendix C, holders are requested to change the covers of Volume III of SM-701-68 to read "Handle via BYEMAN Control System Only."

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Joint Secretariat

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