

~~TOP SECRET~~

HANDLE VIA  
**BYEMAN**  
CONTROL SYSTEM

~~181~~ NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE NRO STAFF

14 February 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR DIAXX3B ( [redacted] )

SUBJECT: Improper Marking of BYEMAN Document,  
BYE 77867-69

This office is in receipt of JCS Memorandum, dated, 11 February 1969, Subj: Very High Performance Reconnaissance, BYE 77867-69, which has been prematurely marked TAGBOARD.

As I have pointed out in our previous discussions, Project TAGBOARD is not at this moment an official, separate compartmentalization within the BYEMAN Security Control System. Presently, all BYEMAN information relating to the D-21 (Drone) is officially protected under Project OXCART. Consequently, the above referenced document should bear the OXCART markings.

It should be pointed out, however, that a recommendation has recently been made that all BYEMAN information relating to the D-21 (Drone) be protected under a separate and distinct TAGBOARD designator. It is assumed that this recommendation will be approved in the very near future, but, as yet, this approval has not been received, and the D-21 (Drone) remains under the protection of Project OXCART.

In light of the above, I do not feel that the subject document needs to be reaccomplished; however, it is requested that the initiator and recipients be advised of its security status, i.e., that it is to be protected as a Project OXCART document until such time as Project TAGBOARD becomes official.

[redacted signature box]

Dep Asst for Security  
NRO Staff

OXCART/TAGBOARD

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TOP SECRET HANDLE VIA BYEMAN CONTROL SYSTEMS

11 February 1969

NOTE TO HOLDERS

of

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."



Joint Secretariat

BYE-77867/69

11A 3



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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 embarrassing 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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~~TAGBOARD~~

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:



Colonel, USA  
Acting Secretary

Attachment

Copy to:  
Secretary of Defense  
DNRO (S)

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~~TOP SECRET~~ HANDLE VIA BYEMAN CONTROL SYSTEMS/PROJECT TAGBOARD

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

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3600 nm, at a constant M 3.25, from an initial cruise 1  
altitude of 80,000 feet to an end-of-mission altitude of 2  
95,000 feet. Guidance is provided by an inertial 3  
navigation system which, in conjunction with the stellar 4  
tracker in the launch aircraft, limits the maximum launch 5  
error to 1.7 nm and subsequent free-flight navigation error 6  
build-up to 1.5 nm/hour. With the currently installed 7  
camera system, the capability exists to photograph either a 8  
16 nm strip or a 28 nm strip the entire flight range. At 9  
the termination of a mission, in a predetermined recovery 10  
area, the camera, magazine, INS and computer, stabilization 11  
system, and certain other high-value components are 12  
jettisoned from the drone and are air recovered by 13  
specially configured JC-130 aircraft. Pyrotechnic devices 14  
installed aboard the drone serve two purposes. First, they 15  
can be used by the Launch Control Officer to destroy the 16  
drone manually anytime a malfunction of any of the several 17  
components, which are monitored via telemetry, is noted. 18  
Second, they are used to destroy the vehicle automatically 19  
at the completion of a mission after the sensor package 20  
has been ejected or if the drone descends through a pre-set 21  
altitude at any time during the operational portion of the 22  
mission. This feature precludes the vehicle from ever 23  
being recovered intact after any launch. 24

b. Assumptions 25

(1) US manned reconnaissance systems designed to obtain 26  
imagery of foreign targets will continue to be restricted 27  
from full operation in certain areas where national 28  
collection objectives are located because of the politically 29  
sensitive environment which will continue to exist during 30  
peacetime. 31

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(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) (S).

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The Director, National Reconnaissance Office (S), 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.

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- a. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will: 1
  - (1) Obtain approval from higher authority on either a 2  
monthly or individual mission basis for utilization of the 3  
TAGBOARD System. 4
  - (2) Direct the execution of each individual mission. 5
  - (3) Task appropriate commands to provide the requisite 6  
support for the mission. 7
- b. The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), will: 8
  - (1) Serve as the DOD representative on all intelligence 9  
matters associated with the TAGBOARD program and which 10  
require USIB attention. 11
  - (2) Register and levy the USIB established/approved 12  
imagery reconnaissance collection requirements developed 13  
for application to the TAGBOARD collection effort. 14
  - (3) Provide appropriate authorities with an assessment 15  
of any reactions to TAGBOARD operations. 16
  - (4) Provide technical or intelligence support when 17  
requested to assist the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the 18  
conduct of this program and in the evaluation of TAGBOARD 19  
operations. 20
  - (5) Provide photo processing, duplication, and 21  
exploitation support as directed by the DNRO (8) and 22  
the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 23
  - (6) Provide appropriate authorities with information 24  
pertaining to the degree of satisfaction of imagery 25  
requirements based on intelligence assessments of coverage 26  
acquired by the TAGBOARD program. 27
- c. The Commander in Chief, Strategic Air Command (CINCSAC), 28  
will: 29
  - (1) Prepare and forward to the Joint Chiefs of Staff 30  
for approval appropriate plans for the support and 31  
execution of the collection effort. 32

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- (2) Prepare mission profiles based on national imagery reconnaissance collection requirements levied through the DIA. 1  
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- (3) Conduct the operational mission when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 4  
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- d. Other commands will: 6
  - (1) Prepare appropriate plans, in coordination with CINCSAC, to provide the required mission support. 7  
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  - (2) Provide the necessary supporting forces and/or resources to ensure successful mission completion when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. 9  
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- e. Detailed responsibilities are set forth in the Annexes to this plan. 12  
13
- 5. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS. See Annex A 14
- 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. 15  
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- 7. COMMAND AND COMMUNICATIONS 19
  - a. Command Relations 20
    - (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. 21  
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    - (2) Direct liaison between appropriate commands is authorized. 25  
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  - 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. 27  
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- 8. Security. See Annex B to this Appendix. 31

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## ANNEX A

## CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

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|  | <u>1</u>  |
|  | <u>2</u>  |
| 1. (S) <u>GENERAL</u>  | <u>3</u>  |
| a. <u>Introduction.</u> TAGBOARD is a very high-altitude,    | <u>4</u>  |
| unmanned photographic drone which has been developed for     | <u>5</u>  |
| employment solely against objectives of national interest    | <u>6</u>  |
| and is under the operational control of the Joint Chiefs of  | <u>7</u>  |
| Staff. CINCSAC is the operational commander and as such      | <u>8</u>  |
| is responsible for mission planning and execution of each    | <u>9</u>  |
| mission when directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.          | <u>10</u> |
| 2. (TS) <u>MANAGEMENT CONCEPT.</u> This concept outlines the | <u>11</u> |
| objectives to be achieved and the responsibilities related   | <u>12</u> |
| thereto.   | <u>13</u> |
| a. <u>Objectives</u>   | <u>14</u> |
| (1) To augment present manned aircraft and satellite         | <u>15</u> |
| reconnaissance programs.                                     | <u>16</u> |
| (2) To contribute to the total national reconnaissance       | <u>17</u> |
| collection effort through utilization of the system in       | <u>18</u> |
| areas not satisfactorily covered by other reconnaissance     | <u>19</u> |
| systems.   | <u>20</u> |
| (3) To effect management of the TAGBOARD System at           | <u>21</u> |
| the national level by the Director, National Recon-          | <u>22</u> |
| naissance Office (DNRO)(S), and to insure that the system    | <u>23</u> |
| is employed on the basis of valid, national imagery          | <u>24</u> |
| requirements.  | <u>25</u> |
| (4) To effect operational control and utilization of         | <u>26</u> |
| the TAGBOARD System by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and        | <u>27</u> |
| its operational employment under their guidance, after       | <u>28</u> |
| operational and political factors have been considered.      | <u>29</u> |
| (5) To perform an objective, continuing evaluation           | <u>30</u> |
| of the adequacy of reconnaissance collection operations      | <u>31</u> |
| conducted by the TAGBOARD System.                            | <u>32</u> |

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(1) The tactical organization will be a SAC 2  
 element, consisting of three specially trained B-52H 3  
 flight crews and a minimum number of command, operations, 4  
 and maintenance personnel, based at Beale Air Force Base, 5  
 California. During the initial operating phase, all D-21 6  
 maintenance (airplane general, electronic, engine, 7  
 navigation, communications, sensor) will be performed 8  
 by a contractor team numbering approximately 70 personnel. 9  
 The head of this team will function as the Chief of 10  
 Special Maintenance for the Deputy Chief for Materiel of 11  
 the operating detachment. Maintenance of the complete 12  
 TAGBOARD System will eventually be assumed by SAC; however, 13  
 specialized contractor support is recognized as a continuing 14  
 requirement. B-52H aircraft support will be through normal, 15  
 established military channels; D-21 system supplies and 16  
 items peculiar to the mated system will be provided through 17  
 NRO (S) contracts on an annual basis. Base facilities 18  
 and services will be provided as necessary to support 19  
 operational and training requirements and to accomplish 20  
 maintenance and repair efforts beyond the capabilities 21  
 of the TAGBOARD element. 22

(2) The tactical organization will maintain a capability 23  
 to launch the maximum number of sorties authorized per 24  
 month. Currently available assets limit the maximum 25  
 authorization to two operational sorties per month. 26

c. Personnel 27

(1) Military personnel resources will be provided by SAC. 28  
 Flight crew-to-aircraft ratio will be maintained at 1½:1. 29  
 The US Air Force will provide for a two year stabilized 30  
 tour for assigned personnel with a planned personnel 31

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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.

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(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.

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d. Training

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(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.

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(2) During the operational validation phase, participating organizations will develop CFX 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.

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e. Operations

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(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

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air-refueling detachments will be provided 1  
sufficient flight plan data to allow necessary deployment 2  
and operational planning. 3

(2) Procedures will be established by CINCSAC, as 4  
operational commander, to monitor all phases of the weather, 5  
as forecast by the SAC Weather Center, and to pass all 6  
operational weather data to all concerned. 7

(3) Prior to launch of any TAGBOARD mission, SAC will 8  
notify the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Joint Reconnaissance 9  
Center) of the mission data (ETD, Route, ETA) and will 10  
request authority to launch the mission. If approved, 11  
SAC and the JC-130 recovery detachment will be directed 12  
by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to support the mission. 13

(4) Upon approval of the mission, the appropriate 14  
unified commands will be directed by the Joint Chiefs of 15  
Staff to execute applicable plans in support of the mission. 16

f. Reports. RECON and OPREP reports will be submitted 17  
in accordance with Volume I of this directive and applicable SAC 18  
reporting directives. 19

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ANNEX B

1

SECURITY

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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 Recon-  
 naissance Office (DNRO) (~~S~~), to the Director, Program D, NRO (~~S~~).

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

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a. Director, Program D, is responsible for:

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(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).

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(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~~).

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(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.

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(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~~).

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- (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. 1  
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- (6) Providing guidance to the SAC TAGBOARD Detachment Commander on matters related to security. 4  
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- (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. 6  
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- (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. 14  
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- (9) Insuring on behalf of CIA (Office, Special Activities (OSA)), necessary access to the SAC TAGBOARD Detachment and environs by contractor personnel. 19  
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- (10) Coordinating all actions related to TAGBOARD security at Area 51 with CIA (OSA). 22  
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- (11) Advising DNRO (S), through the NRO (S) staff, of all matters having a significant impact upon Project TAGBOARD security. 24  
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- b. The NRO (S) staff has been assigned the following responsibilities: 27  
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  - (1) Provide staff security guidance to the DNRO (S). 29

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- (2) Provide assistance to the Director, Program D, where necessary to the implementation of Project TAGBOARD security policies and procedures. 1  
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- (3) Provide communications security (COMSEC) support and guidance to the Director, Program D. 4  
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- (4) In concert with the intelligence "user" community, define security policy and procedures related to exploitation of the resulting photography. 6  
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- (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. 9  
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- c. CIA has been assigned the following responsibilities: 14
- (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. 15  
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- (2) Continue to exercise primary security responsibility for all activity conducted at or related to Area 51. 25  
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- (3) Approve "must know" for all CIA employees proposed for Project TAGBOARD access. Insure compliance with BYEMAN personnel security standards in such cases. 27  
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- (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. 30  
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- d. Director of Special Projects, OSAP, 1  
has been requested to define security procedures and to 2  
monitor activities related to requirements for support from the 3  
SCF to insure that no prejudice results to the security of 4  
other sensitive programs in which the SCF is involved. 5
- e. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and SAC will: 6
- (1) Insure the preparation of operational security 7  
instructions in conformance with Project TAGBOARD security 8  
policy and procedures. 9
- (2) Insure implementation of those contingency plans, 10  
approved by the DNRO (S) upon advice and guidance of the 11  
ICPC. 12
- f. The DIA will: 13
- (1) Manage that program related to the prerequisite 14  
personnel security review and certification of all DOD 15  
related personnel proposed for Project TAGBOARD access. 16
- (2) Insure the implementation of appropriate duty and 17  
travel restrictions to all DOD related personnel who are 18  
provided access to the project. 19
- (3) Provide access to DOD BYEMAN communications and 20  
security control facilities on request. 21
- (4) Insure the implementation of Project TAGBOARD 22  
security policy and procedures throughout all supporting 23  
military commands. 24
- (5) Maintain overall control and provide security 25  
policy directives for personnel access, dissemination 26  
of information, and security of facilities within DOD. 27

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