

30 AUG 1966

OFFICE OF SPECIAL ACTIVITIES
DD/S&T
CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

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1. OSA began its life organizationally in early 1955 as a small project group of about [redacted] people grafted onto the staff of R. M. Bissell, Jr., then Special Assistant for Policy Coordination, Office of the DCI (SAPC/DCI). The project, of course, was the covert development and operation of the U-2 aircraft in conjunction with the USAF, and was known as Project AQUATONE. A formal agreement with Air Force was signed by Mr. Dulles and General Twining in June of that year, delineating areas of responsibility for both parties to the pact.

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2. The SAPC/DCI relationship continued as the Project grew, but as it emerged and gave signs of surviving beyond the 13 to 17 months operational life forecast for it as the beginning, and as field detachments were deployed with more than [redacted] people each, by mid-1957, SAPC/DCI strength topped [redacted] people. Technically, this brought the on-board strength of the Director's Office to some [redacted] bodies, and when this was brought to Mr. Dulles' attention, he was horrified and directed that something be done to reduce the apparent swelling in his personal staff. The AQUATONE personnel were separated from Mr. Bissell's personal staff and renamed the Development Projects Staff, retaining their organizational affiliation with the Director only in the term DPS/DCI. Mr. Bissell wore two hats as SAPC/DCI and as Chief, DPS. The group which became later known as COMOR, was attached to SAPC/DCI as the ARC (Ad Hoc Requirements Committee), the first unified effort to codify strategic intelligence requirements and to differentiate them from tactical intelligence requirements.

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3. This condition pertained until February 1959, when Mr. Bissell became DD/P. At that point, the group was renamed Development Projects Division and was headed for the first time by an Air Force Officer, and at the same time, the old Air-Maritime Division of DD/P (which was by then all air and no maritime, and in reality, functioned as a staff supervising clandestine air operations around the world) was absorbed into DPD.

4. By the time DPD was blended into DD/P, it was no longer single project-oriented, even leaving aside the inclusion of AMD assets. In 1958, preliminary work had begun on a successor system to AQUATONE (by then named CHALICE) under the cryptonym GUSTO. Active work was under way on development of Project CORONA, a satellite photo system which emerged from the ashes of the abortive Air Force System 117L (Pied Piper), cancelled as a cover ploy in March 1958, to permit covert development of CORONA ostensibly under ARPA. In September 1959, OXCART became a project

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GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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Handle via [redacted]
Control System

Copy 7 of 14

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succeeding GUSTO, so on 1 January 1960, DPD was on the verge of launching with Air Force the first CORONA mission (it was unsuccessful), it was operating two major CHALICE detachments overseas (Turkey and [redacted] and it was starting to work cutting titanium for the first OXCART Mach 3 aircraft. It was also conducting, in the Air Branch, [redacted]

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[redacted]

25X1C

[redacted]

6. On 28 February 1962, with the resignation of Mr. Bissell as DD/P, DPD was transferred to the newly formed DD/R, coincident with its move in March of 1962 to the new building. It was also renamed OSA at the same time. [redacted]

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[redacted]

7. Following establishment of the NRO by DOD/CIA agreement of 13 March 1963, it was not long before satellite operations responsibility moved to the SOC of NRO in the Pentagon (1964). OSP was formed shortly after establishment of DD/S&T in the fall of 1963. OSP then assumed all responsibility for satellite systems and OSA reverted to concern only with manned reconnaissance systems (IDEALIST, OXCART) and development of downstream state-of-the-art manned systems like ISINGLASS. The new version of the U-2 will also be lodged in OSA.

MILESTONE DATES

24 November 1954

U-2 Project approved by President.

10 June 1955

USAF/CIA Agreement on Project AQUATONE.

June 1955

Project AQUATONE staff formed under SAPC/DCI.

6 August 1955

First flight of U-2, eight months after contract let.

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7 May 1956

First U-2 detachment deployed to [redacted]

20 June 1956

First U-2 overflight of Soviet Bloc countries.

4 July 1956

First U-2 flight over Russia.

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	20 August 1956	Second U-2 detachment deployed to Adana, Turkey.
25X6	11 September 1956	First U-2 overflight (of Middle East) from Turkey.
25X6	February 1957	Third U-2 detachment deployed to [REDACTED]
	20 June 1957	First U-2 overflight in Far East over Russia.
25X6	November 1957	First U-2 detachment disbanded at [REDACTED]. Assets divided between Turkey and [REDACTED] units.
25X6	March 1958	Project CORONA started; 117L system (Pied Piper) cancelled by USAF.
	1 September 1958	Land Panel approved GUSTO effort leading to OXCART; first GUSTO contract let.
	21 January 1959	First CORONA launch.
	June 1959	Presidential approval for OXCART advanced feasibility study.
	4 September 1959	Letter of intent with Lockheed for OXCART.
25X1A	November 1959	CORONA [REDACTED]
	November 1959	Presidential approval to proceed with OXCART.
	8 February 1960	Production contract for OXCART let.
	1 May 1960	Last U-2 overflight of Russia.
	20 August 1960	First successful CORONA flight after 13 failures.
25X1A	September 1960	[REDACTED]
25X1A	October 1960	U-2 detachment in Turkey returned to U. S. ; regrouped at [REDACTED].
	26 October 1960	First U-2 flight over Cuba from U. S.

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25X1C	November 1960	[REDACTED]
25X1C	14 December 1960	U-2 detachment in [REDACTED]
25X6	January 1961	[REDACTED]
	15-19 April 1961	Air operations, Bay of Pigs.
25X6	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
25X1A	26 April 1962	First flight of OXCART aircraft, [REDACTED]
25X1A	9 May 1962	First [REDACTED] flight of OXCART aircraft.
	5 October 1962	Last CIA U-2 flight over Cuba (50 flown in all).
	29 February 1964	A-11 surfaced by President.
25X1C	20 May 1964	First carrier mission for U-2 over [REDACTED]
25X1C	23 November 1965	OXCART declared operationally ready.

OSA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Developed and operated U-2 program for ten years (1956-66).
2. Developed first operational satellite reconnaissance system in world.
3. Developed first operational [REDACTED] aircraft in world.
4. Developed TALENT and TKH systems plus [REDACTED] system.
5. Established CIA world-wide security courier system and first CIA industrial security system.
6. Furnished entire air support to Cuban operation.
7. Established and operated first effective [REDACTED]
8. Located first SA-2 site in Cuba during 1962 missile crisis.

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9. Established first combined world-wide communications and avionics capability in CIA.
10. Established first and only CIA-industry secure communications network.

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11. Handled over [REDACTED]

SA/DD/S&T/JACunningham, Jr.:mep

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