

TCS-1802-57
Copy 3 of 6

6 August 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Coordination)

SUBJECT : Request for Establishment of TALENT Positions

REFERENCES : A. TCS-1646-57, dated 1 July 1957
B. TCS-1582-57, dated 15 July 1957

1. In Reference A you requested (in Paragraph 1) that three members of your Staff receive TALENT clearances. You also requested (in Paragraph 3) that the same three members "be indoctrinated into Project AQUATONE". Reference B advised you that all three members of the Staff had received TALENT clearances, [REDACTED] on 25 June and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on 2 July, as you requested. 25X1A9a

2. Since requests for TALENT clearances are not brought to my personal attention, I did not learn of your request in Reference A until today when the AQUATONE Project Security Officer referred the second part of your request to me. I have instructed him to grant a limited AQUATONE clearance only to your secretary, [REDACTED] and to withhold clearances for the other two members of your Staff. I have also directed him to advise the personnel of HTAUTOMAT and others with whom your Staff may come in contact of this action. The main purpose of this memorandum is to explain my reasons for so doing. 25X1A9a

3. As you are aware, I have been under instructions from the Director since the inception of AQUATONE to maintain the highest possible degree of security around it. It would be most unrealistic to deny that there has been, despite our best efforts, a continuous erosion of that security, especially within the Air Force. It has been our concept that knowledge of such an activity should be available only to individuals who have in a very narrow and literal sense a "need to know" about equipment, procedures, or actual operations. We have argued that such circumstances as rank, a legitimate interest in research and development and therefore in all types of new equipment, or a legitimate need to have access to the raw intelligence collected through this Project, definitely do not justify access to full knowledge

- 2 -

about it. We have found that this whole concept of tight compartmentalization is foreign to normal Air Force procedures. Nevertheless, we have fought a vigorous, if inevitably losing, battle to limit the wider and wider spread of knowledge concerning it in the Pentagon.

4. Partly in order to set a good example but also partly because we do believe compartmentation is essential if security is to be preserved, we have applied the same standards within this Agency in the granting of clearances and have been far more successful in so doing. The result is that today only a handful of Division Chiefs in the whole of the Clandestine Service are witting of AQUATONE and an absolute minimum of persons in such components as the Office of Security and the Office of Communications on which this Project is heavily dependent for support. A wider circle of persons has become aware in the last year that some such project exists as they have had access to the intelligence it has produced. Nevertheless, we have limited most sternly access to any information about technical and operational matters. I am sure you will agree that this policy should apply "across the board".

5. This leads to the question of whether your two Staff members are likely to be confronted with tasks or problems of interagency coordination which will require that they have rather full knowledge of the organization and method of operation of this Project. It is my feeling that they will not and that, in any event, further clearance and indoctrination should await the time when such a concrete need does arise. It is of course apparent that this Project, which is a joint undertaking of this Agency and the Air Force, has raised many problems of interagency coordination. On the operational side, however, special arrangements for the provision of support by the Agency and the Air Force and for control of it by the two parent Services were established more than two years ago and summarized in a written agreement between the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force. More recently, detailed arrangements for operational coordination with appropriate components, both in the ZI and overseas, were put into effect and have been operating satisfactorily for some months. This type of coordination, then, is part of the day-to-day business of conducting operations. It is and should be handled, I believe, through operational channels. The policy issues which have arisen from time to time concerning such coordination have usually been handled by me or by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence directly with the Air Force.

6. The foregoing remarks have to do with the coordination of logistic support and of operational matters. The other major areas in which problems of coordination arise are (a) the collection, study, and screening

~~SECRET~~
- 3 -

of requirements and of the coordination and (b) the control and use of the end product. The former of these two problems was recognized at an early date and the Ad Hoc Requirements Committee (ARC) was established under Mr. James Q. Reber's chairmanship to perform this task. The Committee still exists to keep requirements under review and to list and screen new spot requirements that arise. It has functioned with great effectiveness and no major policy questions have arisen for a long time concerning either substantive priorities or the procedure for collection requirements and assigning priorities to them. I believe it unlikely that policy problems will arise in this area of a sort that cannot be solved readily through the machinery of the ARC itself.

7. There is finally the matter of coordination of the use of raw intelligence obtained through AQUATONE. In this area, there are, perhaps, at least latent problems of a scope extending well beyond this Project and of such a character that your Office might find itself concerned with them. I refer to such questions as the degree to which the several Services and this Agency are really pooling their resources in order to make the National Technical Processing Center (NTPC) an effective facility and whether it would be desirable to have a similar joint facility for the analysis of photographic intelligence. These are questions that involve intelligence from many other sources as well as from this Project and they are long-run problems which will outlive this Project. I can well understand, therefore, why you desire to have your Staff members receive clearances that will enable them to familiarise themselves with the HTAUTOMAT facility, the NTPC, and others. I assume that their TALENT briefings have removed any obstacles to any such access.

8. The circumstances briefly described above seem to me, however, to support the conclusion that few problems having to do with the coordination of support, operations, or requirements are likely to arise out of AQUATONE which will merit the attention of your Office. I feel that when and if problems arise in these areas which cannot be satisfactorily handled through existing channels, they are almost certain to be so serious as to require your personal attention. It is difficult to believe that any member of your Staff could be of much assistance to you in the event that your review of a major problem of coordination or your intervention in our behalf should have to be sought. It is for these reasons that I believe their TALENT briefing should meet the matter of the situation for the present and that the so-called AQUATONE briefing on technical, organisational, and operational matters should be withheld unless and until a concrete need for it materializes.

- 4 -

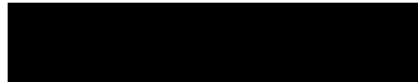
9. I have welcomed this opportunity to set down in writing at least the above comments on the problems of the coordination that have arisen in this Project and the manner in which they have been handled. I would be glad to discuss these matters with you further if you so desire and, of course, to consider further with you the request which is the subject of this memorandum.

(sgc) Richard M. Bissell, Jr.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, Jr.
Project Director

25X1A9a

cc:



RMB:gjg (6 Aug 57)

Distribution:

Copy 1

2

3



4-Proj Sec Offr

5-Proj Dir Chrono

6-TCS Chrono (Hold-319 Admin)

25X1A9a