

PROJECT OXCART OPERATIONAL  
CONCEPT FOR FY-1964 TO FY-1965

1. MISSION:

a. To develop, attain, and maintain an operational capability which will permit immediate and successful completion of aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas at the earliest possible date.

b. To conduct covert aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas, as directed by Project Headquarters, which will provide high resolution photographic intelligence.

2. DEFINITIONS:

a. PRE-OPERATIONAL PERIOD: (Prior to 1 September 1963)

The period preceding operational readiness to accomplish the primary mission.

b. OPERATIONAL PERIOD: (Subsequent to 1 September 1963)

(1) Emergency Capability: (1 September 1963 to 31 December 1963)

The capability to perform two (2) overflight missions per month on a "calculated risk" basis should be achieved by 1 September 1963. Lack of experience at design operational profile with full operational configuration will be the limiting factors during this period.

(2) Design Capability: (1 January 1964 on)

The capability to perform four (4) operational missions per month. A high degree of systems reliability and operational readiness will have been demonstrated prior to attaining this capability.

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3. TASKS AND OBJECTIVES:

a. PRE-OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

During this period the primary emphasis will be directed toward the accomplishment of the following major tasks;

(1) The development and procurement of new equipment and systems which will comprise the A-12 reconnaissance weapons system, allied systems and supporting equipment and systems.

(2) The completion of construction and readying of  airdrome and supporting facilities.

(3) The completion of construction and readying of facilities at designated supporting airbases. (See Attachment #2)

(4) The logistical build-up required to support the Pre-Operational Period and the continued build-up in logistical capability to support the Operational Period.

(5) The planning, programming and coordination required to be ready to implement the Operational Period programs to include environmental studies.

(6) The completion of specialized communications facilities required for the coordination and control of tactical and support aircraft movements.

(7) The training and familiarization of personnel with new systems and equipment preparatory to the commencement of A-12 operational missions.

(8) The training of selected operational pilots and Detachment personnel and the continued testing of the A-12 reconnaissance weapons system to an operational readiness status.

(9) The development and feasibility testing of air tactics and operational employment and control procedures.

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b. OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

During this period the following major tasks will be accomplished:

(1) The execution of aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas as directed.

(2) The continued testing of equipment, systems, and procedures in order to improve the operational capability and reliability.

(3) The continued proficiency training of operational pilots and Detachment personnel.

4. AIRCRAFT UTILIZATION AND CONTROL:

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a. A-12 AIRCRAFT:

(1) A-12 aircraft which are instrumented as flight test beds will be under the control of [redacted] Flight Test Center until their requirement as instrumented test beds no longer exists. At such time, to be determined by Project Headquarters, these aircraft will be transferred to the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be utilized as directed.

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(2) Other A-12 aircraft will be under the control of [redacted] Flight Test Center until their airworthiness has been proven, at which time they will be released to the operational control of the Detachment Commander for use in the flying training program. Aircraft acceptance procedures will be established by Project Headquarters.

(3) A-12 aircraft which are engaged in directed missions will be under the operational direction of Project Headquarters.

(4) See Attachment #1 for A-12 Flying Hour Projection.

b. F-101 AIRCRAFT:

These aircraft will be used for training and proficiency flying of the Detachment operational pilots and supervisory personnel under the operational control of the Detachment Commander. Thirty-five (35) flying hours/aircraft/month will be required.

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c. T-33 AND U-3B AIRCRAFT:

These aircraft will be under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be used as required for the following:

- (1) Training and proficiency flights for Detachment rated personnel.
- (2) The accomplishment of minimum annual flying requirements as prescribed in AFR 60-3.
- (3) Airlift, liaison, and other flying required to support the mission.
- (4) Forty (40) flying hours/aircraft/month will be required.

d. H-43 AIRCRAFT:

This aircraft will be used for search and rescue in the event of lost or downed Project aircraft in the immediate vicinity [redacted]. This aircraft is programmed to fly thirty (30) hours/month under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to include training flights.

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e. C-130 AIRCRAFT:

This aircraft will be under the operational control of the Detachment Commander to be used for the following:

- (1) Recovery aircraft to airlift necessary personnel and equipment in the event of an A-12 landing or accident away from [redacted]
- (2) Airlift of engines and other equipment as required.
- (3) Fulfill air evacuation requirements [redacted]
- (4) Ninety (90) flying hours/month will be required.

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5. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

a. PRE-OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

- (1) The flying training and flight test programs

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must be integrated to the fullest possible extent so that the maximum utilization of flying hours available is realized. The immediate objective will be to train two pilots to operational readiness at the earliest possible date whereby operational missions can be executed once the reconnaissance weapons system has demonstrated an acceptable level of capability and reliability.

(2) The A-12 flying training program must provide for attaining a high degree of proficiency and reliability in all operational phases of the primary mission profile. This will include day and night transition flying, instrument flying, aerial refueling, navigation, photographic flight line flying, systems operations, and emergency procedures.

(3) Air tactics must be developed and procedures for mission implementation and control established and exercised. This will include training deployments of KC-135 aircraft to designated forward bases (Eielson AFB, Alaska [redacted] to support simulated operational missions prior to attaining operational readiness.

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b. OPERATIONAL PERIOD:

(1) Operational missions will be planned, directed and controlled by Project Headquarters against approved targets received from the COMOR. Project Headquarters will be responsible for attaining political approvals and arranging for necessary mission support.

(2) Operational missions will be planned as required against the following concepts:

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(a) Prestrike and poststrike [redacted]

(b) Prestrike [redacted] and poststrike at either Eielson AFB, Alaska [redacted] or Kadena AFB, Okinawa.

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(c) Prestrike and poststrike from Eielson AFB, Alaska [redacted] or Kadena AFB, Okinawa, using the "fast-move" concept for single operational missions.

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(3) An airborne spare A-12 will be required for each operational mission.

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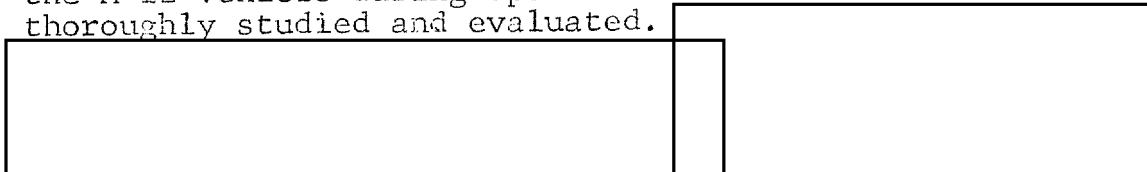
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6. SURVIVABILITY STUDIES:

a. The probability of detection and intercept of the A-12 vehicle during operational missions must be thoroughly studied and evaluated.

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b. FTD, OSI and other technical assessment centers should be enrolled to conduct these studies on a continuing basis. Procedures must be established for the prompt dissemination of survivability estimates to Project Headquarters.

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OSA/OD/OXC [redacted] (21 Mar 63)

Attachments - 2  
As noted above

Distribution:

- #1 - AD/OSA
- #2-3 OSA/C/FIN
- #4 OSA/C/MD
- #5 OSA/C/COMMO
- #6 OSA/C/DD
- #7 OSA/C/ADMIN
- #8 OSA/C/OD
- #9-10 OSA/OD/OXC
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