

#183



RESEARCH AND
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: National Aerospace Plane Program - ACTION MEMORANDUM (U)

(S) A National Aerospace Plane Technology Program, addressing a single stage-to-orbit vehicle, was recently briefed to me. I believe this program to be of such significance that we should brief you as soon as possible. The program encompasses the Air Force's Military Aerospace Plane concept, the DARPA Hypervelocity Vehicle program, and NASA's efforts on a Transatmospheric Vehicle. The conclusion reached was that the critical technologies portion of this program is feasible requiring an investment of approximately \$600 million for the FY 86-88 period. Also it was recommended that we plan/program a follow-on flight vehicle demonstrator program. The cost for this effort would approximate \$2.5 billion. Funds for the critical technologies work have been identified by the Air Force, Navy, DARPA, SDIO, and NASA for FY 86 and 87. The outyear funds will be addressed in the FY88 POM process.

(S) The timeliness of this briefing is critical for two reasons. The DARPA program has been presented to the Congress in open testimony and discussed in the open literature. It is clear that it would be in our best interests to make a public announcement on this overall program before we have to respond to future inquiries. The second reason has to do with the upcoming Summit talks. An announcement prior to the talks would likely result in a reaction by the Soviets that could impart an additional strain on their economy. If no announcement is made prior to the talks there may be a perception by the Soviets that the President was not negotiating in good faith.

(U) For these reasons I would recommend that I schedule this briefing for your review at the earliest.

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WIIS
Date: 19 Jul 2014 Authority: EO 13526
Declassify: X Deny in Full: _____
Declassify in Part:
Reason: 5 USC 5701(c)
MDR: 13 -M- 4782

5 U.S.C. 552

Rich Wagner
for Donald A. Hicks

APPROVE: *OW*

DISAPPROVE: _____

OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b) (6)

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: 19 Jul 2014

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: EO 13526, as amended
Date: 19 Jul 2014
Chief, Rec & Declass Div, WHS

Prepared by: [Redacted]

CLASSIFIED BY: Multiple Sources
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RESEARCH AND
ENGINEERING

~~SECRET~~
OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

23 OCT 1985

COVER BRIEF

TO: UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING *Ldw*

THRU: DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND
ENGINEERING (STRATEGIC AND THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES)

FROM: ACTING ASSISTANT DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR OFFENSIVE AND SPACE SYSTEMS *Thomson*

SUBJECT: National Aerospace Plane Program (U)

DISCUSSION: (U) At the conclusion of the Air Force/DARPA briefing on the National Aerospace Plane program on 18 October you directed that arrangements be made to brief the Sec Def on this program at the earliest convenience.

(S) The proposed memorandum informs the Sec Def of the significance of this program and recommends that he be briefed. The timeliness is critical because the upcoming Summit talks and the fact that portions of this program have previously been presented in open testimony and in the open literature.

RECOMMENDATION: (U) That you sign the attached Action Memorandum.

COORDINATION: None

SUSPENSE NO: OSD: N/A R&E: N/A

Enclosure

OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b)(6)

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: 19 Jun 2014

Prepared by:

CLASSIFIED BY: ~~Multiple Sources~~
DECLASSIFY ON: OADR

~~DECLASSIFIED~~
Authority: EO 12958, as amended
Date: ~~05/22/2014~~
Chief, Rec & Declass Div, WHS