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**Report to the Director  
of Central Intelligence**

**DCI Task Force  
on  
The National Reconnaissance Office**

**Final Report**

**APRIL 1992**

**(With Cover Letters)**

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**RECOMMENDATION #4. The DCI and SECDEF should merge the three programs managed by the DNRO (NRP, DRSP, and ARSP) into a single NFIP Program, defined as follows:**

**"Overhead Reconnaissance Program (ORP): A single program designed to meet the intelligence requirements of the nation that can best be satisfied by overhead reconnaissance. This program will be responsive to and will provide services to all levels of the government, including operational military organizations. The ORP does not include organic assets of the DoD."**

**IV. NRO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

**A. TOP-LEVEL NRO MANAGEMENT:**

We recommend that the DNRO continue to have a second "hat" as an Air Force official in order to facilitate coordination of the many Air Force-NRO interactions. In light of the high priority of the NRO mission and the DNRO's need for frequent and direct contacts with the many Air Force functional elements directly supporting the NRO and with the DCI, the SECDEF, and other cabinet-level officials, that second hat should be as Under Secretary of the Air Force.

**RECOMMENDATION #5. The DNRO should continue to have a second "hat;" it should be as Under Secretary of the Air Force.**

The NRO must have a full-time Deputy Director, because the DNRO has an important second position. A career CIA official is appropriate, since the CIA is a primary contributor of resources to the NRO.

The Deputy Director for Military Support (DDMS) should continue to have a "second hat" in the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) structure. Assisted by a Military Support Staff reporting directly to him, the DDMS provides connectivity to the JCS and other operational users, and acts as the focus for NRO efforts to improve their understanding of overhead intelligence. The DDMS draws on the entire resources of the NRO in carrying out this work.

**B. RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE CHANGES:**

We concluded that the current NRO line structure, involving three acquisition elements (Programs A, B, and C) organized by government agency affiliation (Air Force, CIA, and Navy) does not enhance mission effectiveness. Rather, it leads to counterproductive competition and makes it more difficult to foster loyalty and to maintain focus on the NRO mission. In order to foster an improved NRO corporate spirit, and to better serve the intelligence needs of the nation, we are recommending a restructure of the NRO based on intelligence discipline (IMINT and SIGINT) lines. We recognize that such a restructure will lessen competition between NRO program offices as a driving force for creativity, but believe that the DNRO will be able to find other and more effective ways of eliciting the most creative and effective ideas for meeting the nation's intelligence needs.

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Specifically, in addition to retaining the Office of Plans and Analysis (P&A), recommend the formation of three line acquisition/operations organizations within the NRO: IMINT, SIGINT, and COMMS & LAUNCH, as shown in Figure 2 below:

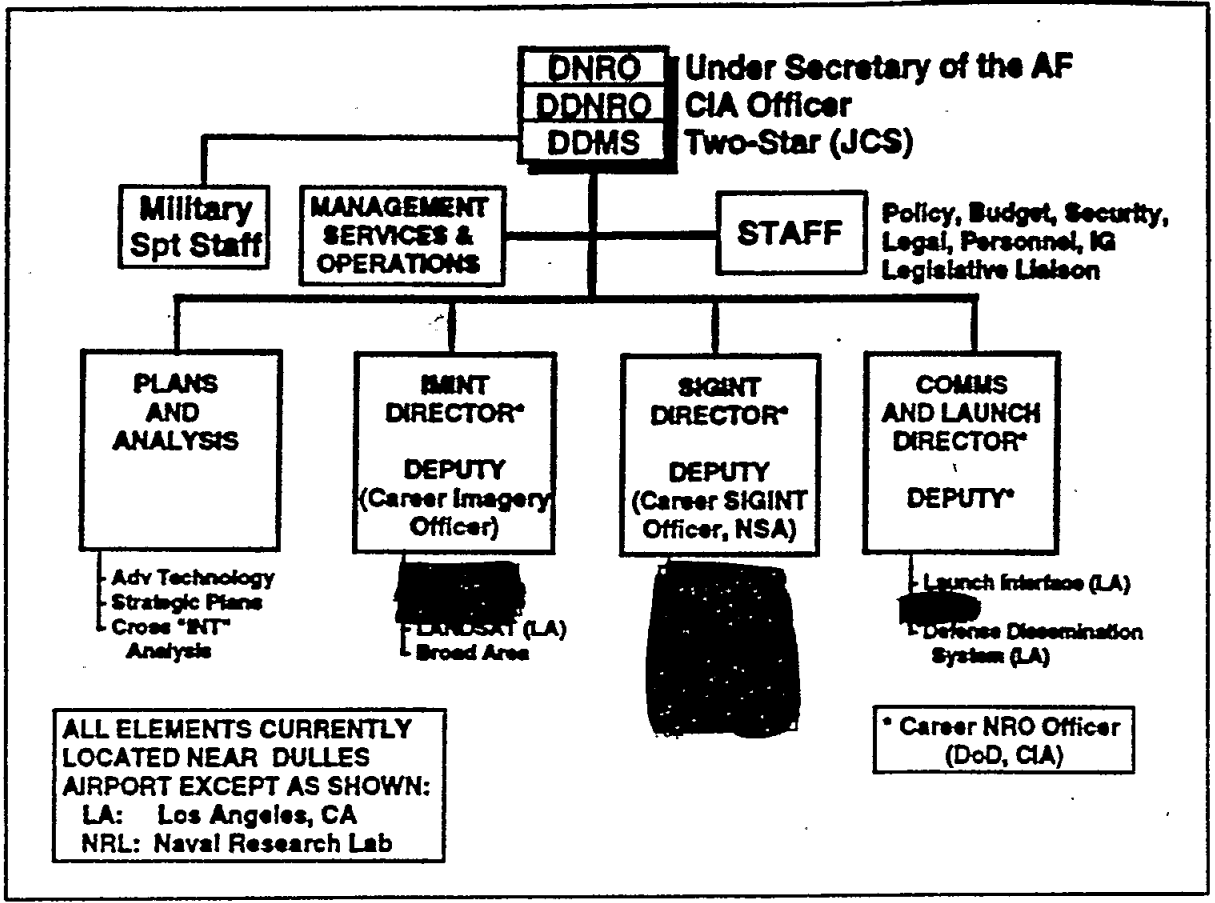


Figure 2. RECOMMENDED NRO STRUCTURE

The IMINT and SIGINT organizations should each have a career NRO officer<sup>1</sup> as Director; well qualified Deputies should be appointed from the Imagery Authority and the National Security Agency (NSA). (This structure is expandable if additional "INTs" are identified in the future.)

We observed that the NRO has two significant services of common concern: launch services for all its satellites; and data communications, including relay satellites. We recommend they be placed in a separate Directorate, with Career NRO Officers as Director and Deputy. The placement of communications reflects our belief that the communications architecture should include the needs of both the IMINT and SIGINT satellite systems. The placement of Launch responsibilities reflects the need to support both SIGINT AND IMINT launch integration, and to provide a single NRO Mission Director for all NRO launches.

<sup>1</sup> A Career NRO Officer is a DoD or CIA Officer who has spent the majority of his or her career in NRO work.

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On a related point, we believe that a single Air Force organization should be responsible for acquisition and launch of complex, sophisticated satellite boosters (in much the same way as the NRO is the single organization responsible for acquisition and operation of reconnaissance satellites). Therefore, we urge the DNRO to influence Air Force decisions to this end.

The NRO Office of Plans and Analysis (P&A) performs a number of valuable and necessary functions and should be retained. Its Director and Deputy should be chosen on a "best qualified" basis from the total pool of available personnel in the NRO and the Intelligence Community. With the restructure of the NRO along "INT" lines, P&A would concentrate on strategic planning, cross-INT analysis, advanced technology efforts, and development of analytical tools.

An NRO Staff with traditional staff functions (Inspector General, Budget, Legal, Legislative Liaison, Personnel, Policy, and Security) should be retained. All "housekeeping" support (facilities, logistics, graphics, administration, etc.) should be provided by a Management Services and Operations (MSO) function. Other necessary elements and functions [redacted] Security Center, the NRO Operations Support Facility, Exercise and Training Support, etc.) should be located within the structure at the discretion of the DNRO.

The Defense Support Project Office (DSPO) should be disestablished. This recommendation is tied to our recommendation for consolidating the DRSP into the ORP, and the recommendation later in this report concerning declassification of the "fact of" the NRO. This change emphasizes the importance of military support in the NRO by focusing on the DDMS with a supporting staff. Again, we believe that military support should be an integral part of the NRO mission and organizational structure, not something "added on."

Separate Air Force, CIA, and Navy organizational elements would no longer exist within the restructured NRO. Nor do we believe that the NRO should foster rivalry or "separateness" between the new line elements. We recommend that the DNRO actively encourage a "one NRO" view of the organization at every opportunity. The senior member of each agency within the NRO would be responsible for recruiting highly qualified personnel and for monitoring the career development and training of all personnel from that agency.

In keeping with the change in the NRO Mission Statement and our recommendation that the DCI commit to supporting the operational users, the Program Office for the Defense Dissemination System (DDS), used to transmit overhead imagery to military combatant commanders worldwide, should be transferred from the Air Force Space Systems Division into the Communications & Launch organization of the NRO.

C. IMMEDIATE TRANSITION STRUCTURE. We envision the structure changes outlined above being accomplished in a two-phase process. The first phase, which can be accomplished immediately, involves re-subordinating the existing NRO elements (and the DDS Program Office) along the lines indicated above. The new line Directorates would be established in the same facility as the NRO Headquarters and P&A, and the old Programs (A, B, and C) would be disestablished. System program offices would not immediately relocate. This first

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phase would have the immediate benefit of reducing counterproductive competition between program offices and permitting easier trade-offs between systems in the same "INT."

**RECOMMENDATION #6.** The DNRO should take immediate action to realign existing NRO elements along INT lines. At the same time, the old Program Designations (A, B, and C) should cease to be used within the NRO.

**D. COLLOCATION:**

The NRO has been protecting an option for full collocation of all NRO elements to a single location in the Dulles Airport area. We believe it is time to resolve the issue. Full Collocation implies that all NRO program offices and NRO management are located in a single facility (or a few very close facilities). [REDACTED] and the NRO would continue to maintain a Pentagon office. An NRO interface for launch vehicle programs would remain collocated with the responsible Air Force organization. Security or customer support requirements might require that a few specific functions be separately located, but the intent of full collocation is that essentially all NRO research, development, and acquisition would be managed and executed from one place.

Collocation is driven by a number of imperatives. The primary one is that collocation is necessary to permit efficient management of an NRO restructured along INT lines as recommended above. Without collocation, each of the three line acquisition organizations would contain program offices on both the East and West coasts. Even with modern transportation and communication, this is not an effective management arrangement. Additionally, collocation will put all the programs closer to their customers. In time, this will have a positive effect on the Intelligence Community's requirements process, and also on user perceptions concerning the NRO. With all program elements in close proximity, it will be much easier to accomplish long-term planning, budgeting, and NRO studies.

While collocation will have some disadvantages—temporary disruption of many lives, possible short-term loss of momentum for certain programs, and loss of some key talent—we believe the advantages of a well-managed collocation effort far outweigh the disadvantages. By the end of 1993 or as soon as possible, the NRO should physically relocate all the existing program management offices intact to the Washington area. If a single facility cannot be made available in time, a few interim facilities, very closely located, would be acceptable, with the goal that each line organization has all of its elements in a single building.

**RECOMMENDATION #7.** By the end of calendar year 1993 or as soon as possible, the NRO should complete full collocation within the Washington area.

We are concerned, however, about the "Service Mix" issue. We believe that the military services provide an important source of skill and experience in acquisition, development, and operation of complex space systems. Active duty military personnel also bring insight into DoD requirements and are much more readily accepted by the combat forces than civilian intelligence personnel.

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**RECOMMENDATION #8.** The DNRO and DCI, with SECDEF support, should take action to ensure that a continuing mix of intelligence civilians and military people—particularly those with expertise and experience in the development, acquisition, and operations of space-based intelligence collection systems—is assigned to all levels in the NRO.

## V. THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY REQUIREMENTS PROCESS

A. **BACKGROUND.** In our discussions with Intelligence Community personnel and our review of various criticisms about the NRO, two consistent themes emerged:

First, the NRO is tasked to meet the needs of a wide range of customers and users. In this process, the NRO is asked to do "all things for all users."

Second, the Intelligence Community requirements process has been unable to provide validated, prioritized, cross-discipline collection requirements with any sense of fiscal reality for use by the NRO in developing future systems. While we fully appreciate the difficulty of forecasting collection requirements and of arbitrating the many different users' needs, the Community at large needs to find a way to give the NRO a solid statement of requirements. Without solid requirements, the NRO cannot develop the most capable systems within available funding, and it becomes virtually impossible to support the systems in the budget process.

B. **REQUIREMENTS: DEFINITION OF TERMS.** Within the context of this report, we have adopted two definitions concerning intelligence requirements. The term "systems requirements" is used to denote those long-term intelligence requirements necessary for the acquisition process—to build new collection systems or significantly modify existing systems. We use the term "tasking requirements" for those current intelligence needs against which current collection assets are tasked for near-term operations. While similar Intelligence Community mechanisms are used for validating and prioritizing system requirements and tasking requirements, the end objective and the time frames within which the processes occur are significantly different.

C. **NRO CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS.** We believe that the NRO's relationship to its customers and users needs to be better defined. Our approach, shown in Figure 3, identifies four agencies as the customers of the NRO and a wide range of organizations as users of intelligence products based on NRO collection. The NRO should work to understand both its users and its customers; but formal requirements come only from the customers.

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