

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20330



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: CC

2 OCT 1972

SUBJECT Declassification of DSAP Data (U)

TO SAF/US

1. This is in response to your memorandum of 31 August 1972 on the above subject. The Air Staff has studied your proposal for declassification of DSAP data. I do not anticipate any real problem with declassifying the data or providing them to NOAA on a routine basis. I am concerned, however, about the possible effects of declassifying the DSAP mission and issuing a press release at the next launch.
2. There are three areas of concern:

It therefore appears that the program history would have to be kept classified in order for the public to believe that FTV 6530 is the first operational satellite. Keeping this history classified may be difficult in the face of the speculation generated by publicly announcing the mission and issuing a press release on the launch.

b. In view of the drawdown in Southeast Asia and Congressional debate on the defense budget, the question would naturally arise: Why is the DCD now putting an operational meteorological satellite in orbit? This could lead to other questions which would be difficult to answer while avoiding any reference to the special strategic mission support.

c. Public disclosure of the program could bring queries and requests for readout both from Allied organizations such as NATO and from uncommitted nations. This could lead to proposals for cooperative ventures, again raising questions which would tend to impinge on the special strategic mission.

3. (U) Most of the conflict with historical fact could be avoided by more complete declassification; i.e., issuance of a press release summarizing the history of the program since its inception and justifying its existence. I do not recommend this approach, however, because it still would be subject to the concerns in paragraphs 2b and 2c above.

PRIDE IN THE PAST



FAITH IN THE FUTURE

DECLASSIFIED

Atach 4

UNCLASSIFIED



4. I believe the most prudent and productive approach at this time would be to declassify only the DSAP data, consistent with special strategic mission security requirements, and leave the other aspects of the program classified. The data could then be made available to NOAA routinely along with the technical information necessary for effective use of the data. Direct liaison between the Air Weather Service and NOAA could be authorized to work out details of data transmission and use. Questions about the source of the data could be answered by simply saying that they come from a classified military space program, without divulging which program or what its total mission might be. This approach does not appear to have any serious disadvantages, yet it would allow NOAA to begin immediately reaping the benefits of DSAP technology.

5. (U) This course of action agrees with the position of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on DSAP data declassification as outlined in JCSM 272-72, 9 June 1972. I will send a memorandum to the Joint Chiefs of Staff informing them of the action being taken.

6. With your approval, I am prepared to:

a. Direct the Air Force Systems Command to revise the DSAP Security Classification Guide to reflect this declassification of the data, and

b. Direct the Military Airlift Command to make arrangements to provide DSAP data to NOAA on a routine basis.

*John D. Ryan*  
JOHN D. RYAN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

*Concern in your plan of action*  
*M.L.*  
*40 J 72*

UNCLASSIFIED



Atach 4