

#129

RESEARCH AND  
ENGINEERING

## THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

13 MAY 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
(RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND LOGISTICS)

SUBJECT: Vandenberg Shuttle Facilities

I want to update my guidance on the Vandenberg Shuttle facilities IOC date. At the time the RDA Staff Guidance was prepared, FY 1980 reprogramming actions necessary to cover the projected Launch Complex overruns were still pending. Congress has now approved the reprogramming and Construction Package II, which is on the critical path in determining when Vandenberg will be available, is now on contract. I recognize that the December 1983 date was considered to be dependent on having Package II on contract early last November. The six months delay encountered means we have to rework our VAFB acquisition plan and probably establish a new IOC date.

I would like to see a success oriented schedule established for VAFB - one that is tight but achievable. I believe we should define an initial operational capability date in June 1984, well before the actual launch date in 1984, so that we have four months schedule reserve at the very minimum. I expect this schedule to be reflected in the Air Force POM submission.

William J. Perry

Office of the Secretary of Defense 50552  
 Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
 Date: 17 Feb 82 Authority: EO 13526  
 Declassify: 4 Deny in Full:         
 Declassify in Part:         
 Reason: 50552(0)(6)  
 MDR: 13 -M-4728

Page determined to be Unclassified  
 Reviewed Chief, RDD, WHS  
 IAW EO 13526, Section 3.5  
 Date: 12 FEB 2016

13-M-4728



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DECLASSIFIED IN FULL  
Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: 12 FEB 2016

9 MAY 1980

COVER BRIEF

TO: UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING  
FROM: DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY (STRATEGIC AND SPACE SYSTEMS)

SIGNED  
DONALD A. VOBT  
BRIGADIER GENERAL, USA

PROBLEM: (U) To encourage the Air Force to establish a success oriented schedule for Shuttle facilities at VAFB, and to provide adequate resources in their POM FY82-86 submission.

DISCUSSION: (U) The Air Staff advises that even with the prompt Congressional approval obtained on our FY 1980 reprogramming actions, the December 1983 IOC for Shuttle facilities at Vandenberg is no longer achievable. A six months delay was encountered in placing Launch Complex Package II on contract. Package II is on the critical path in achieving an IOC. A delay to a June 1984 IOC may be the best we can achieve if we fully support this date with proper funding.

(U) We understand that the evolving Air Force POM currently has Shuttle program funding options for a June 1984 and an October 1984 VAFB IOC, both at the enhanced level. Funding differences are said to be small. A December 1983 IOC option is not included.

(S) The critical DoD launches at VAFB begin in October 1984 (FY 1985). Our latest mission model Revision 9, which will be made available to Congress, shows three critical SM-I launches in FY 1985. If VAFB delays cause two of these to be flown on Titan IIIs, and one to be flown from KSC on Shuttle (with some degradation in mission performance), there are no more SM-I launches until FY 1987. The other Shuttle launches from VAFB which start in FY 1986 are small payloads (like the weather satellite and SM-IV).

(U) These small payloads are not likely to be drivers in determining VAFB IOC. Thus, it might be argued from Revision 9 that if we cannot be ready at VAFB for the Shuttle in 1984, we do not need VAFB until perhaps 1987.

(U) Meeting the 1984 VAFB IOC is thus very critical. The December 1983 IOC gave us almost 10 months slack time in constructing VAFB. A June 1984 IOC gives us only four months. We should not let this small margin disappear now when we are only getting started on VAFB construction.

RECOMMENDATION: (U) That you sign the proposed memorandum (TAB A) to Dr. Hermann indicating your desires in establishing the IOC for VAFB.

CONCURRENCES: (U) None.

Prepared by: [REDACTED]  
O&SS/6May80/ec

Classified by DUSD(5435)

Declassify on \_\_\_\_\_  
Review on 6 MAY 1988

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OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)