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WORKING MATERIAL
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8 Sep 92

MEMO FOR 

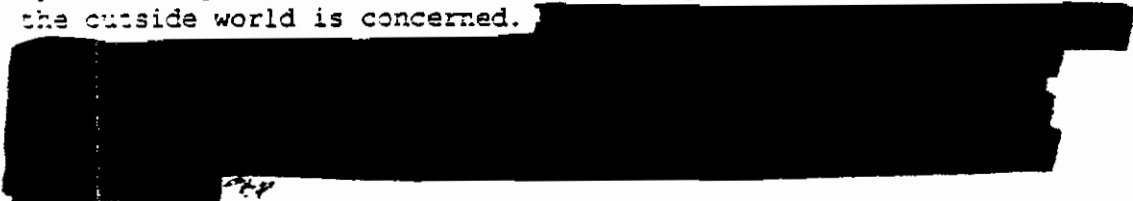
SUBJECT: NRO Personnel Disclosure Issue

REFERENCE: Your Issue Paper SSS, Same Subject, 8 Sep 92

I agree with the concept expressed this afternoon that guidance to the members of the NRO should be kept simple. This is vital if the message is to be passed on quickly and if people are to understand what they are to say, and why. Because the nature of our assignments varies so widely, I do not believe that we can have a single disclosure policy that will apply to everyone. I think maybe the right approach is somewhere between "one size fits all" and "expressly tailored for each individual."

The near-term guidance to the NRO should therefore read something like this:

Until we provide more specific tailored guidance for your specific organization or location, nothing will change as far as the outside world is concerned.



If asked about the NRO or any of the principals who will have publicly identified (Mr Faga, Mr Hill, or RADM March), deflect the question with a comment like, "Oh, I heard something, but even if I knew anything for sure, I probably couldn't talk about it." If the question is more direct concerning your activities, a comment like, "I don't talk about what I do," might be more appropriate. Any inquiries from the press or from people you do not know should be referred to your home organization's Public Affairs Office.

Those two paragraphs address only the near-term need. What we must also do is address the policy issue you raised in your Staff Summary Sheet. I agree that the basis ought to be the points you cite as your proviso, and that would be a good lead-in:

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It is the policy of the NRO that disclosure of individual involvement in the NRO [redacted] shall not be made if:

1. Such disclosure confirms or tends to confirm the existence of [redacted] other sensitive project, organization, or location;
2. The identity or location of and NRO ground station or classified facility; or
3. The identities of [redacted] NRO personnel.

Once these basic tenets were established, and perhaps elaborated on, if necessary, you could introduce the concept of risk and sensitivity as factors to be considered. To make it easier for the individual to determine what he or she ought to be doing, we could do the risk analysis for them and present a logic table which assigns a category to each and every element of the NRO. I suggest we use your three options as the basis, and add two more. Everyone would then know what category they were in, and the rules for each would be relatively simple. Instead of categories, we might choose a term that already has similar connotations, such as anonymity level, as is used by NSA. That is the term I'll use for the rest of this discussion, although I don't have any particular bias about any term.

Anonymity level Zero would be for those organizations which will function best as acknowledged elements of the NRO, and who would appear as such in their official personnel records. It may be that we do not want to put anyone except parts of ER into this level at this time.

Anonymity level One would be analogous to your Option One, where affiliation with the NRO could be disclosed [redacted]

[redacted] I would envision anonymity level one to include the NRO headquarters and staff, but a determination should be made for each individual element. For example, what might be

appropriate for the Dir of Security's immediate staff may not be right for the NRO [redacted] as a whole. "How to" guidelines would be needed on addressing and routing collateral and SCI correspondence [redacted]

Anonymity level Two would be analogous to your Option Two, where affiliation with the NRO could be disclosed [redacted]

[redacted] Regardless of the detail, I do believe there is a middle ground which might apply to some category of organization, such as a program office, where (without violating the precepts of policy on existence of a program, etc) there would be some benefit in identification with the NRO.

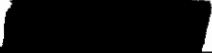

The point that must be made with either of the two levels described above (One and Two) is that no one is obligated to identify themselves as being with the NRO, and that use of the parent organization affiliation is, in fact, preferred.

The next Anonymity level, Three, is like your Option Three, in that affiliation with the NRO could be disclosed [redacted]

[redacted] Again the precepts would have to be kept in mind, but this category might be appropriate for acknowledgement of involvement in NRO operations without revealing geographic locations. Interaction between Ground station personnel and ultimate users (on neutral turf) might fit this category.

I would envision that references to reconnaissance activities could be made in unclassified performance reports for anyone in levels Zero through Three, provided that sensitive locations were not identified. [redacted]

I have added another Anonymity level, Four, to the options. These would be those locations or activities whose association

with the NRO must be kept in compartmented channels. 


The approach I've outlined appears to be more cumbersome than a single policy for everybody, and it will require careful thought and deliberation as the categories are decided and organizations sorted out among them. I think that it will be better in the long run, since the policy will bear a direct relationship to the risk for that particular unit or site, and will therefore stand more of a chance of being supported by the folks in the field.



DENNIS M. DRUMMOND
Colonel, USAF
Inspector General

