

in space. By 1960 Defense was ready to move the project into an operational phase under the control of NORAD. At that time Defense approached NASA with the proposal that NASA assume responsibility for reporting on all unclassified space launching and orbital information to the scientific and civilian community.

NASA-DOD REPORTING AGREEMENT

DOD felt that it should concentrate on only those phases necessary to meet its operational requirements. NASA agreed to accept this responsibility and in January 1961 an agreement was made which spelled out each agency's responsibilities. DOD agreed to make available to NASA all unclassified information available to NORAD for publication by NASA.

The first issuance under the new system was dated February 17, 1961. The new system was the subject of an exchange of correspondence between the chairman of this subcommittee and NASA's Administrator James E. Webb under dates of February 23, 1961, and March 8, 1961, in which, responding to the chairman's inquiry, NASA outlined its program.

NASA has been publishing the satellite situation report since that time. It has included all unclassified information made available to it by NORAD except for a period from January to April 1963 when it was thought, through a misunderstanding, that each agency, NASA and DOD, would handle its own reporting. NASA has resumed publishing all unclassified information received from NORAD.

It should be noted that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, from its own resources, can only develop information on satellites which operate on frequencies used by NASA satellites.

The Department of Defense and Russian satellites operate on frequencies different from those used by NASA. As a result, the latter's direct tracking information is only on NASA or NASA-sponsored satellites. The Smithsonian, under a grant from NASA, operates 12 Baker-Nunn satellite tracking cameras to obtain precision tracking information for scientific studies of earth shape, air density, and so forth. Because of workload limitations, such optical tracking of satellites is restricted to those of scientific interest.

In summary, NASA was never really assigned the responsibility for reporting satellite tracking information but did agree at DOD's request, when the DOD's space tracking effort became operational, to disseminate all unclassified information on satellites to the scientific community using the information made available to it by NORAD.

There apparently has been some variation in the type and scope of the information which Defense has made available to us. We have released all unclassified material received from NORAD without modification.

For example: In 1961 certain DOD launches were no longer given project or "code" names; in 1962, except for an occasional satellite, NORAD stopped naming DOD satellites, but orbital information was given, and also in 1962 information on Soviet space vehicles was apparently screened out by NORAD.