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PRIORITY [REDACTED] INFO PRIORITY [REDACTED] DITTO.
HANDLE VIA BYEMAN CHANNELS ONLY
GAMBIT/HEXAGON

[REDACTED] FOR DR. HERMANN, J. HILL, [REDACTED] INFO: [REDACTED]
FOR L. CRESS, DITTO FOR [REDACTED]
FROM: MAJ GEN KULPA, COL MC CHRISTIAN
SUBJ: SLC4W GAMBIT LAUNCH PLANNING
REF: A. [REDACTED] 1626, DTD 11 DEC 80
B. KUBISON 2986, DTD 23 DEC 80

1. WE HAVE COMPLETED OUR DETAILED ASSESSMENTS OF THE GAMBIT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT A LAUNCH OF DUAL MODE GAMBIT VEHICLE 52 BY 1 MAR 81 (REF A). AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE LAUNCH BASE (SLC4W), BOOSTER, SATELLITE VEHICLE, AND PAYLOAD CAN SUPPORT A LAUNCH OF GAMBIT G-52 ON 26 FEB 81.
2. WE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PROTECT THE OPTION OF LAUNCHING EITHER GAMBIT VEHICLE 52 OR 51 UNTIL LAUNCH MINUS 30 DAYS (27JAN 81). HOWEVER, SHOULD SCHEDULE CONFLICTS ARISE, VEHICLE 52 WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY SINCE OUR SCHEDULES ARE BUILT ON A NO-FAIL BASIS AND DO REPRESENT SOME RISK WITH THE SIMULTANEOUS PREPARATIONS OF G-52 AND G-51. THE CONTRACTORS AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO ACCELERATE THEIR SCHEDULED EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE G-51 AND G-52 LAUNCH OPTIONS. THIS IS BEING DONE WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT ADDITIONAL PROGRAM COSTS.
3. TO ACHIEVE THE 26 FEB LAUNCH, THE FOLLOWING KEY DECISIONS ARE REQUIRED:
 - 28 DEC 80 - CUSTOM FILM LOAD DEFINITION. IF CUSTOM FILM LOAD DEFINITION IS NOT RECEIVED BY THIS DATE WE WILL PROCEED WITH THE PREVIOUSLY DEFINED STANDARD LOAD.
 - 27 JAN 81 - FINAL MISSION PROFILE DEFINITION (G-52 VS G-51, ALTITUDES PROFILES, ETC.). IF MISSION PROFILE DEFINITION IS NOT RECEIVED BY THIS DATE WE WILL PROCEED WITH MISSION PLANNING FOR G-52 IN A SPLIT LOW/HIGH MISSION.

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE DECISION DATES, THE FOLLOWING HARDWARE PROCESSING DATES SUPPORT THE 26 FEB LAUNCH DATE.

- 7 JAN 81 - SHIP BOOSTER TO VAFB
- 8 JAN 81 - ERECT BOOSTER SLC4W
- 19 JAN 81 - DUAL MODE (G-52) OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT REHERSAL
- 6 FEB 81 - SHIP AGENA SATELLITE CONTROL SECTION TO VAFB
- 9 FEB 81 - SHIP PHOTOGRAPHIC PAYLOAD SECTION TO VAFB
- 26 FEB 81 - LAUNCH

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4. AS DISCUSSED IN REF B, WE HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCING HIGHER DRAGS THAN PREDICTED DURING [REDACTED] HEXAGON MISSION 1216. IF THIS TREND CONTINUES, THE RECOVERY OF RV-4 COULD OCCUR DURING A WINDOW OF 21 THROUGH 25 FEB 81 VICE THE PREPLANNED DATE OF 6 MAR 81. AS STATED IN REF B, WE DO NOT INTEND TO LAUNCH GAMBIT WITHIN TWO DAYS AFTER RV-4 RECOVERY, OR WITHIN THREE DAYS PRIOR TO RV-4 RECOVERY. WE EXPECT TO HAVE SUFFICIENT DRAG UPDATES BY MID-JANUARY TO CONFIDENTLY PREDICT THE PLANNED RV-4 RECOVERY DATE. AFTGER THE RV-4 RECOVERY DATE IS ESTABLISHED, THE LAUNCH DATE OF GAMBIT MAY REQUIRE SOME ADJUSTMENT BASED ON THE ABOVE RESTRICTIONS.

5. IN SUMMARY, THE GAMBIT PROGRAM CAN SUPPORT A 26 FEB 81 LAUNCH OF GAMBIT 52 OR 51. SELECTION BETWEEN GAMBIT 52 OR 51 IS REQUIRED NO LATER THAN LAUNCH MINUS 30 DAYS (27 JAN 81). DRAG UNCERTAINTIES INFLUENCING THE RECOVERY DATE OF HEXAGON 1216-4 MAY REQUIRE SOME ADJUSTMENT TO THE GAMBIT LAUNCH DATE. BY MID JANUARY, A MORE DEFINITIVE PLANNING SCHEDULE FOR BOTH PROGRAMS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE. WE WILL KEEP YOU ADVISED OF ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS AREA.

REVW 23 DEC 80

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