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DD/S&T 2357-66

20 June 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant to the DD/S&T
SUBJECT : Comments on the Design Review Board Procedures
REFERENCE : DD/S&T 3146-66, dtd 14 June 1966

1. The three-day deadline for responding to this memorandum did not permit this Office to give sufficient reflection and consideration to the proposed design review procedures. The press of present programmatic activities in our various projects found this past week too hectic for necessary deliberations. We, therefore, wish to request an extension of your deadline to permit a proper review.

2. There are some comments which come immediately to mind which we will pass on at this occasion. We submit that it would be extremely difficult to establish or conduct the proposed design reviews unless there were some prior agreement and approval of data requirements to be submitted by the contractors. Data such as specifications, design analysis reports, and contractor plans are really the only measure that the project officer can use to determine if the contractor fully understands first of all the requirement for the equipment and the necessary physical and operating characteristics, the performance expected, the environment in which it must be used, and not least of all the user's capability and resources required to operate and maintain the equipment. As a minimum the following data would be required to support any preliminary or critical design review and a first article compliance inspection for complex and costly equipment.

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- a. Program plan including schedules and milestones
- b. End item specifications
- c. Performance specifications
- d. Design and analysis reports
- e. Test plans and procedures
- f. Drawings
- g. Reliability and maintainability plans and/or specifications
- h. Interface control documents and specifications
- i. Interchangeable requirements
- j. Process specifications

The above data are not designed to be limiting in any sense if other data were required to support a particular equipment or procurement.

3. A good many of the procedures set forth in the proposed draft appear to be too detailed, and, we suggest, actually burdensome to the Government personnel. A design review is something which cannot be arbitrarily suggested by the Government, but rather, must follow from a mutual understanding between contractor as well as the Government as to the status of the program and the fact that the contractor and the contract in question is ready for such a design review. We do not suggest that the contractor be at liberty to select this date, but rather, the emphasis should be on the "mutualness" in determining the schedule for such design review.

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4. Although a third or disinterested party would permit a "critique" during a design review, it would seem much more productive if the Design Review Board were chaired by the responsible project officer inasmuch as the burden and responsibility for the program rests on his shoulders. It also would be helpful if the intended user or the office which established the requirement for the system also participated in the design review activity.

5. The formalization of design review procedures as suggested by the memorandum will indeed require an artificial program adherence to the dictates of the memorandum. While recognizing the validity of design review and the assurance that such reviews encompass certain selective procedures, we cannot subscribe to the dictate that within two working dates such and such be done and within three working days something else. In order to cut down on the amount of Government manpower which must be applied should the like of the proposed draft be carried out, it is recommended that the contractor be charged with the responsibility for preparing any minutes which would include the recommendations and conclusions arrived at by the Design Review Board and that the Chairman of the Board should approve the minutes so prepared. The contractor also should sign the minutes indicating his understanding and acceptance of the direction described therein. Hopefully, this could be accomplished long before the three-week deadline proposed by the procedures. Care also must be taken to insure that any changes approved by the Review Board be effected through the contracting officer to insure proper contractual proceedings.


6. Design review boards and their like are essential items in the management of a program; this we subscribe to wholeheartedly. We do suggest that some consideration be given in the application of the Design Review Board vis-a-vis type, size, the dollar value of the program involved. One should always bear in mind that the imposition of specific procedures in the conduct of programs will require increased data, travel, manpower,

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and the like which cannot help but be additives in cost to the over-all program. A fine distinction must be made to insure that there is a proper ratio of management control and practices to cost value.

7. Again, we request the opportunity to review this procedure in depth before its submission to Dr. Wheelon for approval. Request you advise the acceptability of a week's delay.

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**Acting Director
Office of Special Projects**

cc: EO/DD/S&T

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