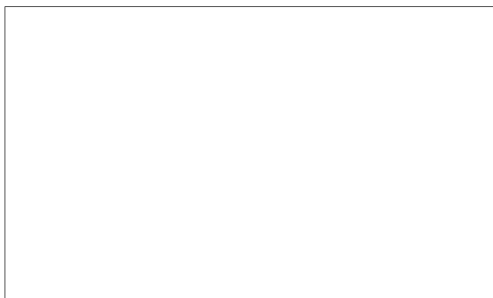




Balloon, Hawk 25X1



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Research under Contract [redacted], "Balloon-LTA Concept Study," has been exploratory in nature. The results cannot be fairly evaluated at this time. It is hoped, of course, that some of the new ideas, techniques, and fundamental information will have their impact on increasing the capability of future powered lighter-than-air vehicles and [redacted] which employ airships.

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By proposal number 11510 of 12 September 1957, "Small Plastic Airship," you have suggested a follow-up research effort, more applied in scope, which would result in a preliminary design of a relatively small [redacted] airship with specified capabilities. In a sense, therefore, the work proposed is the first step in an overall program. The end product or objective of the program is envisioned as a prototype vehicle meeting the performance characteristics outlined on page 3 of your proposal.

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From a consideration of [redacted] it is quite obvious the prototype vehicle has a very limited application. From another viewpoint, however, the vehicle could serve to demonstrate the principles conceived under Contract [redacted]. It is thus possible for a modest [redacted] airship to make a significant contribution to the area of powered lighter-than-air vehicles and exert a pronounced effect on subsequent planning for operational vehicles.

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In view of the above it is necessary at this time to consider the program which includes the prototype vehicle rather than the referenced proposal by itself. It appears logical that the program includes three phases which are noted below:

a. Phase I - Preliminary Design

Research, as outlined in [redacted] proposal number 11510, will be conducted. The end product or result of this phase will be a preliminary vehicle design.

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b. Phase II - Final Design

This phase of the program is expected to include the development of a flying test vehicle based on the Phase I design. After flight tests a final design will be engineered. The end product of this phase will be appropriate engineering drawings and specifications of the final vehicle design.

c. Phase III - Prototype Vehicle

A full size prototype vehicle will be developed as per the Phase II final design. Flight acceptance tests will be made by the contractor to determine whether or not the vehicle performance characteristics are adequate and consistent with the operational characteristics specified in the Phase I proposal.

From a technical consideration it is necessary to evaluate the program outlined above versus other proposed programs. It is likely that only one at most will be supported in the field of powered lighter-than-air vehicles. It is therefore imperative that your best estimate of both time and funds be made available for Phases II and III outlined above. This information is considered essential in an evaluation of the various programs. This, in turn, will help determine whether or not your proposal 11510 will be supported.

If there are any questions regarding the information above please do not hesitate to contact me

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Sincerely yours,

Copy to:

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