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IDEA-3351-66  
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26 September 1966

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Deputy for Materiel, Special Activities

**SUBJECT :** Prototype, Q-445 Seat Pack (ECP-266)

**REFERENCE :** (1) Memorandum from D/M/OSA dated  
25 August 1966; Subject: Same  
As Above (IDEA-3300-66).

(2) Memorandum from C/IDEA/OSA dated  
8 September 1966; Subject: Same  
As Above, (IDEA-3246-66).

1. I realize this memo is somewhat late but that is only because it has taken this long to get all the information required for a reply. For the record, there are several aspects of the LAC ECP-266 and reference #2 that should be clarified as follows:

a. The LAC ECP-266 was poorly written in that it stressed only that improvements in testing and maintenance would be realized, which in fact had little to do with the original desires of the Life Support Section at [ ] and my predecessor. LAC seems reluctant to call a spade a spade in this ECP in that the customer number 2 pack-to-ship disconnect was requested to replace a poorly designed and fabricated item that presently constitutes a danger to flight safety, while LAC indicated this item would only improve maintenance and testing. In every ejection made since the Q-445 seat kit was put into service this part has failed.

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b. The man-to-pack disconnect redesign was not requested primarily to preclude oxygen flow after separation of the two halves as indicated in the LAC ECP. This was a minor consideration only. The primary reason for the redesign was to again replace a poorly designed and fabricated item with an improved item that would preclude an inadvertant disconnect; something which can easily occur with the present system.

c. Reworking and redesigning the oxygen system was requested for the purpose of increasing the volume of the seat kit available for packing of survival items. The present oxygen system design is very inefficient in this respect.

d. In reference to paragraph 1 of reference #2, I can only say that 20-20 foresight is a desirable attribute seldom realized. The Q-445 kit replaced a system that was totally inadequate and the weak points of the Q-445 could only be ascertained with time and use.

2. I must agree in essence with paragraph 3 of reference #2, however with respect to the disconnects described above, flying safety has been jeopardized and accidents and/or incidents have only been avoided by a combination of extremely efficient and capable Life Support Personnel at  and a great deal of good luck.

3. I do not concur with the LAC proposal because of the high cost, long lead time and, in view of the U-2R, because many of the proposed items are not absolute requirements. However, immediate action should be taken to replace the disconnects of the present kit with more reliable and safer items.

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