

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-03

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R 142256Z JAN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECDEF

CNO

COMNAVELECSYSCOM

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 009066

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD; COMNAVELECSYSCOM FOR PME 119

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, AS, US

SUBJECT: OMEGA AUSTRALIA

REF: CANBERRA 6938

1. REFTEL ADVISED THAT FINAL REPORT OF AUSTRALIAN JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON OMEGA MIGHT BE COMPLETED IN FOUR OR FIVE WEEKS. REQUEST ADVISE STATUS AND PROSPECTS.

2. CONTINUED INDECISION BY GOA ON AUSTRALIAN OMEGA STATION POSES SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR WORLDWIDE SYSTEMS
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INTEGRITY AND MANAGEMENT. SEVEN OF THE PLANNED EIGHT

STATIONS ARE EITHER OPERATIONAL OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION. FULL OPERATION OF THESE STATIONS IS ANTICIPATED BY JANUARY 1976. WITH THE US HAVING THE LEAD ROLE IN ESTABLISHING THE WORLDWIDE OMEGA NETWORK, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON US EITHER TO CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GOA OR SEEK OUT SOME OTHER ALTERNATIVE THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE OTHER PARTNER COUNTRIES INVOLVED SO THAT THEIR OMEGA INVESTMENTS PROVIDE ACCEPTABLE USER UTILITY IN TERMS OF THE STANDING AGREEMENTS. WITH THE OTHER SEVEN STATIONS NOW SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN CY 1975, THE LOCATION OF THE EIGHTH STATION IS BECOMING CRITICAL FROM INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT STANDPOINTS.

3. WE RECOGNIZE THAT FURTHER APPROACH TO GOA ON OMEGA MUST BE PLACED WITHIN CONTEXT OF DISCUSSIONS WITH GOA ON US DEFENSE-RELATED INSTALLATIONS IN AUSTRALIA. HOWEVER, WIDESPREAD RECOGNITION IN GOA AND JOINT COMMITTEE THAT OMEGA WOULD NOT BE A DEFENSE INSTALLATION SHOULD ALLOW GOA TO CONSIDER IT ON ITS OWN MERITS.

4. FUNDS FOR OMEGA IN AUSTRALIA ARE CURRENTLY INCLUDED IN THE US NAVY'S FY 76 BUDGET. MOREOVER, THE NON-AVAILABILITY OF OMEGA FUNDS IN THE FY 75 BUDGET DOES NOT PRECLUDE THE SIGNING OF AN AGREEMENT PRIOR TO THE END OF THIS FISCAL YEAR. THE US NAVY IS PREPARED TO COMMENCE SURVEYS AND OTHER NECESSARY PRECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IMMEDIATELY UPON CONCLUSION OF AN OMEGA AGREEMENT WITH THE GOA.

5. WITH THESE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, REQUEST EMBASSY APPROACH SENIOR WORKING LEVEL OF GOA, EMPHASIZING NEED FOR LOCATING STATION IN AUSTRALIA AND MAKING POINTS IN PARAGRAPH 2. EMBASSY MAY WISH TO DRAW ON FOLLOWING POINTS IN SUPPORT OF ITS ARGUMENT:

(A) ABSENCE OF GOA IN PREPARATION OF WORLDWIDE MANAGEMENT POLICIES MAY PRESENT COMPLICATIONS IN LATER INCORPORATING GOA INTERESTS. DISCUSSIONS ARE ALSO PLANNED LEADING TO POSSIBLE ICAO ENDORSEMENT
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OF OMEGA AS VALUABLE CIVILIAN AIR NAVIGATION AID.

(B) LOCATING STATION IN ANOTHER COUNTRY, IF INDEED THIS IS POSSIBLE, COULD RESULT IN SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED NAVIGATIONAL COVERAGE AND LESS DESIRABLE GEOMETRY, ESPECIALLY IN SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE WEST OF 150 DEGREES EAST LONGITUDE WHERE AUSTRALIAN INTERESTS ARE IMPORTANT.

(C) FAILURE TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FROM EIGHTH STATION BY 1977/78 WOULD IMPACT ON GENERAL AREA NAVIGATION CAPABILITIES OF ALL REGIONAL USERS, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF PLANNED PHASEDOWN OF LORAN-A AFTER 1977.

(D) GOA SHOULD CONSIDER PRESENT WORLDWIDE INTEREST IN OMEGA BY COMMERCIAL AND CIVILIAN COMMUNITY AND INHERENT GOODWILL IT WOULD GAIN BY BECOMING PARTNER COUNTRY IN SYSTEM.

(E) INSTALLATION WILL PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO SURROUNDING AREA.

(F) GOOD OMEGA COVERAGE IN AUSTRALIAN WATERS WILL BE MAJOR SAFEGUARD AGAINST MAJOR OIL SPILLS AS A RESULT OF INADVERTENT GROUNDINGS INVOLVING DEEP-DRAFT SUPERTANKERS.

(G) OMEGA COVERAGE OF IMPORTANT TRADE ROUTES BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND JAPAN WOULD APPEAR TO BE A MAJOR ECONOMIC ASSET TO GOA.

(H) OMEGA SYSTEM COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS ON AUSTRALIAN COMMERCIAL NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT INVESTMENTS.

(I) WORLDWIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL RESCUE ALARM NET (GRAN) IS DEPENDENT ON GOA DECISION, TO ACCEPT STATION. THIS SYSTEM, ONCE PROVEN, WILL USE OMEGA TRANSMISSIONS TO PROVIDE A LOW-COST SEARCH AND RESCUE SYSTEM.

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6. DEPENDING ON NATURE OF REPLY TO PARAS ONE AND FIVE ABOVE, AND TIME FRAME REQUIRED FOR GOA DECISION, USG MAY BE FORCED TO APPROACH NEW ZEALAND WITH REQUEST THAT GONZ CONSIDER COMMENCING NEGOTIATIONS FOR OMEGA SITE IN NEW ZEALAND IN ATTEMPT TO GET EIGHT STATION COVERAGE BY 1977/78.

7. FOR CANBERRA: REQUEST EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON POSSIBLE TERMINATION OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH GOA ON OMEGA, AND ON GOA ATTITUDES TOWARD A POSSIBLE USG APPROACH TO NEW ZEALAND.

8. FOR WELLINGTON: REQUEST EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON FEASIBILITY OF APPROACH TO GONZ SHOULD WE FAIL TO MAKE ADEQUATE PROGRESS WITH AUSTRALIA. KISSINGER

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