



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, DC



MEMORANDUM FOR AF/CVA
CV
CSAF

FROM: AF/CVSM

SUBJECT: PREDATOR

The following trip report details observations and recommendations for the Predator System. Coordination and Predator orientation briefings and meetings were held at the Pentagon and HQ ACC with SAF/AQ, ACC/CV, ADO, DOU, JPO, and DARO. Based on those meetings the following TDY team was assembled.

Col James G. Clark	HQ USAF/CVS
Col Harold H. Barton, Jr.	HQ ACC/DOU
Lt Col William L. Goetz	JPO
Lt Col Stephen M. Tate	AFS/RAR
Maj Bruce Larsen	SAF/AQIJ

ITINERARY

11-12 Mar	HQ USAFE Ramstein AB, GE
13 Mar	HQ EUCOM Stuttgart, GE
14 Mar	HQ USAFE/WPC
15-16 Mar	16AF, Aviano
17-18 Mar	Taszar, Hungary
19 Mar	CAOC, Vicenza, IT
20-22 Mar	16AF, 31FW, Aviano

KEY INDIVIDUALS VISITED

Gen Ryan	CINCUSAFE
Maj Gen Short	USAFE/DO
Maj Gen Hawley	ACC/DR
Brig Gen Miller	EUCOM J-2
Brig Gen Peppe	CAOC
Brig Gen Hodges	USAFE/LG
Col Maddox	16AF/CV
Col Davis	16AF/DO
Col Witt	4100 Group (P)/CC
Col Mead	4400 Group (P)/CC
Col Baker	USAFE/IN
Col Shaka	USAFE/DOQ
Col Bullock	CAOC J-2

MAJOR AREAS REVIEWED

Overall evaluation
Politics
ACTD/Ops
Program Managership
Chain of Command
Contractor
Basing
Weather
Air Space
Taszar Support
Indian Springs
Personnel
Logistics
Maintenance
Modeling and Simulation
Concept of Operations
Recommendations

The purpose of the trip was to observe first hand deployed operations in EUCOM and provide CSAF and SAF/AQ with recommendations.

OVERALL OBSERVATIONS: Predator is a capable system that we have attempted to transition from an ACTD to operational system far too quickly. Add to that the political problem of multiple organizations involved, all with a set political agenda it is remarkable that the system works as well as it does is a tribute to some key individuals who have performed brilliantly in spite of these conditions, especially the 11RS personnel. They have tried to accept a new weapon system, step up a new squadron, upgrade the limited Indian Springs facilities, train personnel, maintain operations in Taszar with only 2 partial Predator systems with up to 200 days TDY. The problem with Predator is not the 11RS.

POLITICS: Clearly Predator's biggest problem is political. The Army is still mad that they lost the program after the ACTD. Their possible agenda is to prove that the USAF cannot properly support their ground commanders and to regain control of the Predator program or restore funding to their Hunter program (Atch 1). The 1st Infantry Division at Tuzla is keeping a daily detailed record of Predator support/non-support (Atch 2).

The Navy has direct control of the program through the Joint Program office and has express desires to have total control of the program. (Atch 3)

Predator has strong congressional interest and this has contributed to the overall political sensitivity.

ACTD/OPS: Moving from an ACTD to limited operational status without an Engineering Manufacturing Design Process was pre-mature and is the fundamental root to the Predator problem. Though Predator has provided some excellent capability to US/NATO commanders in Bosnia, this has been done at the expense of the orderly transition from ACTD to a proper initial operational capability. Over-aggressive marketing has led to an unrealistic expectation of the first successful ACTD system, especially in the harsh weather environment of the Bosnian theater of operations, and resulted in the frustration of all involved.

Ongoing 11RS operations in Taszar, Hungary has strained the system and personnel to the breaking point. I was very impressed that the 11RS personnel have maintained an outstanding attitude in spite of TDY rates of up to 200 days and living in the harsh tent city environment of Taszar with 2000 Army troops.

Exploitation of Predator data through the Global Broadcast System (GBS) is good, (Atch 4) but we must work on getting Predator data into AFMSS/CIS and PowerScene. The DARO has funded \$250K to correct this problem.

The contractor has also performed extremely well under these harsh conditions along with haphazard contracting support and funding. As long as operations in Taszar are maintained, Predator problems will continue.

PROGRAM MANAGERSHIP: The Joint Program Office (JPO) has not met the challenge of supporting operations in Tazsar and run an orderly transition from ACTD to formal acquisition and operations. They have not displayed the required sense of urgency in contract support to meet the mission needs in Tazsar. The USAF has no direct control over it's own destiny with Predator as long as the Navy is charge of the program office running the JPO. There needs to be a single USAF office to run the entire program.

CHAIN OF COMMAND: There are multiple players in the Predator "chain": SAF/AQ, USAF/XO, ACC, DARO, JPO, EUCOM, USAFE, SFOR, CAOC, 16AF, 57WG, 11RS. Things have improved in the last few months but there are still too many organizations involved in the process.

CONTRACTOR: General Atomics is a small company with a limited production capability of only 3 to 7 Predators a year. The aircraft and ground control systems are basically a custom hand built system with a 12 month lead time for most components that must be specifically tailored for the aircraft. This dramatically increases the time to modify radios, IFF and engines incorporated into the system. There is no surge production capability at this time. Slow contracting support from the JPO has only complicated this problem with replacement parts, documentation, T.O.s and system modification. RADM Tom Cassidy (USN ret) has strong personal support of Congressmen Jerry Lewis and Duke Cunningham which results in increased interest from staffers, Ms Letitia White and Ms Julie Pacquing. All production is sole source to General Atomics. Only they have the technical design specifications to build Predator.

BASING: Tazsar is the best of a bad list of options. Weather is bad throughout the area. Italian bases have better weather, but much longer transmit times and host nation problems. Tulza is closer to the target areas, but is limited by ramp space, higher security concerns and the weather is still bad. Albania is politically unstable. Other Croatian bases are not politically acceptable.

WEATHER: A combination of problems: take-off/landing winds, enroute winds, cross winds, rain, icing, visibility, cloud cover, single base operations, no weather alternates. We must accept the fact that winter operations in Bosnia are simply not practical. This system does not fly in bad weather.

AIRSPACE: Lack of a UHF Radio and IFF problems increase the danger of safety of flight problem. When airspace control is returned to Bosnia mode, we will have operational problems.

TASZAR SUPPORT: Quality of life at Tazsar is terrible. The Army run base has resulted in numerous problems for USAF personnel. Army regulations, policies and quality of life is different from USAF. 11RS personnel's long TDYs in the harsh Army tent city environment have an effect on morale.

Operational support is poor! Wood taxiway from Predator temporary hangar to runway. Operations are run out of tents and old Trojan Spirit equipment. If we are to continue long term operations at Tazsar, we must invest in better support and quality of life for our people.

INDIAN SPRINGS: Starting up a new squadron, new weapons system, and modifying old base facilities geographically separated from Nellis AFB has caused problems. These problems can only be resolved with additional funding and time to properly solve construction and infrastructure issues.

PERSONNEL: The 11RS have done an excellent job and kept high morale, in spite of extensive TDY (up to 200 days annually), all non-voluntary. Pilots are not receiving flying credit for UAV operations. Competing for promotion opportunities with the highly competitive Nellis environment of the Thunderbirds and Fighter Weapons School is difficult.

We must evaluate the possibility of transferring 11RS operations under the 9WG at Beale AFB and consolidating them with the U-2, SR-71, Reconnaissance Operations. We need to do a better job in supporting these people.

LOGISTICS: Predator is still an ACTD system for logistics purposes. No formal USAF logistics support must rely on contractor through JPO. No spare parts and it takes a long time for replacement parts that must be FED EX to Tazsar.

MAINTENANCE: Once again this is still an ACTD system. There are no Tech Orders and no ability to certify USAF people. Must rely on the contractor for support.

MODELING AND SIMULATION: Predator has been demonstrated and simulated in multiple exercises. MUSE (Multiple UAV Simulation Environment Atch 5) is the primary simulation for Predator developed and run by the Army. XOC has taken steps to get a copy of MUSE for the USAF and we have involved the Warrior Preparation Center to help. It will be used in UFL 97 and we will watch this very closely.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS: ACC has developed a CONOPS with many valuable lessons learned from operations in Tazsar. But as long as we try to maintain limited operations at Tazsar and attempt to transition the system from an ACTD to full operations, the CONOPS implementation will be a compromise at best.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Predator provides the warfighter with some excellent capabilities and proves the value of the ACTD program. But it also identifies the dangers of moving too quickly from ACTD to operations. There must be a reasonable amount of time to accomplish this. Predator has worked because of the extraordinary efforts on the part of the professionals at the 11RS. In fact, most people in the complicated chain of command have worked hard to keep Tazsar operations going.

Only time and additional resources will fix predator. The political issues must be resolved with the Army, Navy, OSD, and Congress at the CSAF level.

The Joint Program Office cannot solve the problem. Predator Program Management and Procurement responsibility must transfer to the USAF. There are short term solutions for Tazsar that needs to be accomplished quickly. The bottom line is Predator can and will work, but it will take time and a realistic expectation of what this system can and cannot do.



JAMES G. CLARK, Col, USAF
Executive Assistant to Asst Vice Chief of Staff
for Modeling and Simulation

Attachments:

1. Inside Army Article
2. 1 ID Predator Log
3. Navy E-Mail
4. PREDATOR Exploitation
5. MUSE
6. Pictures