



# NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE OFFICE

2 March 2000  
NROD 120-4  
Personnel

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**SUBJECT: National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program**

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**A. SYNOPSIS.** The National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program is designed to honor individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to national reconnaissance.

**B. PURPOSE.** This Directive provides information about the Pioneer Recognition Program nomination criteria, nomination procedure, appointment of the Pioneer Selection Board, the methods of recognition, and the responsibilities of offices and individuals involved in the program.

**C. APPLICATION.**

1. Pioneer Selection Criteria. The Pioneer Recognition Program was established to provide a means to acknowledge and honor persons who have made significant and lasting contributions to national reconnaissance. The Pioneer Recognition Program serves important corporate goals: to enhance the morale, welfare, and esprit de corps of its current work force; to honor pioneers who contributed to the organization's success during the past forty years; and to posture the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) to face future challenges.

a. Affiliation and Status. All persons who have made lasting and significant contributions to national reconnaissance, regardless of their organizational affiliation and status, are eligible to be nominated as a "National Reconnaissance Pioneer."

1) Nominees need not be employees or alumni of NRO.

2) Nominees may be, but are not limited to, current or retired military, government civilian, contractor, or academic personnel.

3) Nominees may be living or deceased.

4) The Pioneers Recognition Program will exclude candidates previously honored by the Director, NRO (DNRO) on the Directors', Deputy Directors', and Program Directors' walls.

b. Significance of Contribution. While countless people have made important contributions to national reconnaissance over the years, the eligibility criteria to be designated as a "National Reconnaissance Pioneer" will require significant contributions and achievements that meet the following standards.

1) "National Reconnaissance Pioneers" shall be individuals who have made contributions to national reconnaissance of such significance as to have changed the direction or scope of: (a) national intelligence collection and analysis; (b) aerospace and reconnaissance technology; or (c) reconnaissance-based information operations.

2) A "National Reconnaissance Pioneer" is an individual who played a unique and pivotal role in national reconnaissance activities such as:

a) Conceiving and planning, or successfully developing, a new sensor, aerial or satellite system, communication system, or orbital application that greatly improved overhead intelligence collection.

b) Organizing, leading, or successfully managing the teams that designed, fabricated, launched, or operated a new and complex reconnaissance system that greatly improved overhead intelligence collection.

c) Conceiving and planning, or successfully developing, a new technique, procedure, or method that greatly improved the evaluation, interpretation, cryptanalysis, information processing, or dissemination of information collected by overhead reconnaissance systems.

d) Conceiving and planning, or successfully developing, a new acquisition technique or contracting procedure that greatly benefited the government in the procurement of overhead reconnaissance systems.

3) The contributions and achievements of "National Reconnaissance Pioneers" will be "time-tested" for historical impact. It is often difficult to recognize the historical significance of more recent contributions. Because of this, the Pioneer Selection Board typically will defer the consideration of any candidate whose contributions and achievements were made for activities that occurred within the past five years.

2. Pioneer Nomination Procedure.

a. Who May Submit Nominations? Any U.S. citizen (federal employee, private sector employee, or retired person) may submit a nomination.

b. Where to Submit Nominations? Nominations should be submitted to the National Reconnaissance Office, Executive Secretary of the Pioneer Selection Board, 14675 Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 20151-1715.

c. Format for Nominations. All nominations should be consistent with the following format:

1) Limit the length of the nomination to one page, single-spaced.

2) Ensure the nomination:

a) Describes the nominee's contributions.

b) Identifies the criteria (in paragraph C.1.b.) to which the nominee's contribution relates.

d. Deadline for Nominations. Nominations may be submitted at anytime, but must be submitted no later than 1 January of each year. Applications submitted after this deadline may be deferred for consideration for nomination in the following year.

e. Selection of Pioneers. A Pioneer Selection Board will review all nominations and make recommendations to the DNRO. The Board will submit its recommendations to the DNRO no later than 1 March. The DNRO will make the final selection

and will inform the Board of the final decision by 1 April.  
(See Attachment 3 for Selection Board nomination form.)

3. Pioneer Selection Board. The Pioneer Selection Board is an advisory board composed of senior, distinguished members of the intelligence and space communities. The Board's responsibility is to review nominations and recommend "National Reconnaissance Pioneers" to the DNRO.

a. Appointment of Board Members. The DNRO will look to the NRO Board of Directors and other interested parties to nominate individuals to serve on the seven-member Pioneer Selection Board. The nominations for Board membership should be sent to the attention of the Executive Secretary of the Pioneer Selection Board. The Executive Secretary will consolidate the nominations and submit them to the DNRO for decision. From these nominations, or from the DNRO's discretion, the DNRO will appoint seven individuals to serve on the Board.

b. Composition of the Board. Individuals who are involved with national reconnaissance activities represent an enormous diversity of interests. Membership will reflect a range of constituency interests to ensure that a wide perspective of interests is represented on the Board. Often, an individual board member might represent more than one interest constituency.

c. Secretariat for the Board. The NRO Office of Policy (OP) will provide secretariat support for the Board.

4. National Reconnaissance Pioneer Hall. A "Hall of National Reconnaissance Pioneers" will be established at the NRO headquarters. This Hall of Pioneers will serve as a permanent tribute to the extraordinary contributions of the "National Reconnaissance Pioneers." It will be established at the NRO Westfields headquarters complex (on the first floor spline of Tower 4). The Hall will showcase individual plaques that display the Pioneer's name and a brief statement of the pioneer's contributions to national reconnaissance. (See Attachment 1 for the design of Hall.)

5. Pioneer Induction Ceremony. The NRO will hold an annual ceremony to honor and induct "National Reconnaissance Pioneers" into the Hall of Pioneers. For the first induction ceremony (to be held in the Fall of the Year 2000), an initial 40 pioneers (in recognition of the NRO's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary) will be inducted into the Hall of Pioneers. At the subsequent annual Fall induction ceremonies, two to three additional Pioneers will be selected from any time period in the history of national reconnaissance.

a. Award for Pioneers. As a part of the induction ceremony, the DNRO will present each Pioneer with a memento of the induction ceremony.

b. Announcement of Selections. The DNRO will customarily announce the newly selected "National Reconnaissance Pioneers" annually on 31 August, the anniversary date for the creation of the NRO. (On 31 August 1960, the Secretary of Defense established the Office of Missile and Satellite Systems [MSS] within the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force [SAF]. The following year, SAF/MSS was redesignated as the NRO.)

**D. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

1. The DNRO.

a. Appoints individuals to serve on the Pioneer Selection Board.

b. Receives recommendations from the Board and designates those individuals to be selected as National Reconnaissance Pioneers.

c. Hosts the Pioneer Induction Ceremony and presents newly designated pioneers with an award.

2. Pioneer Selection Board.

a. Evaluates nominations for "National Reconnaissance Pioneers."

b. Recommends to the DNRO those nominees that should be inducted into the Hall of Pioneers.

3. The NRO OP.

a. Serves as the office of primary responsibility for implementing the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program.

b. Provides the Pioneer Selection Board with secretariat support that is drawn from the OP policy research and analysis team, the OP Center for the Study of National Reconnaissance.

c. Provides advice and counsel on the policy aspects of the Pioneer Recognition Program.

4. Office of Corporate Communications (OCC).

a. Manages and directs the public events aspects of the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Program.

b. Provides the DNRO and the Pioneer Selection Board with advice and counsel pertaining to public perception matters.

c. Fosters internal NRO and public understanding of the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Program.

d. The Director, OCC will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Pioneer Selection Board.

5. Office of the NRO Historian.

a. Provides the DNRO and the Pioneer Selection Board with advice and counsel pertaining to historical issues.

b. The NRO Historian will serve as an *ex officio* member of the Pioneer Selection Board.

6. General Counsel.

a. Provides the DNRO and the Pioneer Selection Board with advice and counsel pertaining to the legal aspects of the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program.

b. Oversees ethical issues related to the operation of the Pioneer Selection Board and the designation of "National Reconnaissance Pioneers."

7. Office of Security.

a. Provides the DNRO and the Pioneer Selection Board with advice and counsel pertaining to the security aspects of the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program.

b. Oversees all security matters related to the operations of the Pioneer Selection Board.

8. Management Services and Operations Directorate.

a. Responsible for building and maintaining the Hall of Pioneers.

b. Provides logistical and facilities support to the National Reconnaissance Pioneer Recognition Program.

c. Provides the DNRO and the Pioneer Selection Board with advice and counsel pertaining to logistical and facilities matters.

/Signed/

Keith R. Hall  
Director

Attachments:

1. Design and location of Hall of Pioneers
2. Hall of Pioneers Plaque
3. Nomination Form

OPR: Office of Policy (CSNR)

[Classification, If Appropriate]

**[S A M P L E   N O M I N A T I O N   L E T T E R]**

[Date]

TO: Director, National Reconnaissance Office  
ATTN: Executive Secretary  
Pioneer Selection Board  
14675 Lee Road  
Chantilly, VA 20151-1715

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I nominate [name], who served as [position] of the [program/activity], to be selected as a National Reconnaissance Pioneer.

[Name] was responsible for [specify the major contribution of the nominee]. He/She is considered [summarize the record and reputation that this individual has in the discipline of national reconnaissance.]

[Explain the complexity of the national reconnaissance challenge and how the nominee uniquely contributed to meeting that challenge.]

[Relate the nominee's contribution to the selection criteria in paragraph C.1.b. of this Directive.]

[Close with a statement that could summarize how the nominee changed the direction or scope of national reconnaissance.]

Sincerely,

[Classification, If Appropriate]



~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

ATTACHMENT 1

DESIGN AND LOCATION OF HALL OF PIONEERS BEING PREPARED

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~

ATTACHMENT 2

HALL OF PIONEERS PLAQUE DESIGN BEING PREPARED

~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~