

National Aeronautics and Space Administration



Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001

June 16, 2021

Office of Communications

John R. Greenewald
27305 W Live Oak Road
1203
Castaic, CA 91384
john@greenewald.com

FOIA: 21-HQ-F-00507

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This responds to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated and received June 7, 2021 at the NASA Headquarters FOIA Office. Your request was assigned the above-referenced tracking number. Your request was for:

ALL emails sent to/from, bcc'd or cc'd, NASA Science Associate Administrator Thomas Zurbuchen which contain the following keywords:

"Unidentified Aerial"

and/or

"Unidentified Flying"

and/or

"UAP"

and/or

"UFO"

and/or

"Unidentified Spacecraft"

and/or

"Unidentified aircraft"

On June 10, 2021 you specified a date range of October 1, 2016 to date (June 10, 2021) for the search.

The program office located 17 pages in response to your request. We have reviewed these responsive records under the FOIA to determine whether they may be accessed under the FOIA's provisions. Based on that review, this office is providing the following:

 0 page(s) are being released in full (RIF);¹
 15 page(s) are being released in part (RIP);
 2 page(s) are withheld in full (WIF).

NASA redacted from the enclosed documents information that fell within the following FOIA Exemptions explained below.

Exemption 5, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5)

Exemption 5 protects “inter-agency or intra-agency memorandums or letters which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with the agency.” 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5). Courts interpret Exemption 5 to incorporate three primary privileges: the attorney work-product privilege, the attorney-client privilege and the deliberative process privilege. In this case, NASA invokes the deliberative process privilege.

The deliberative process privilege is intended to protect the decision-making process of government agencies and to encourage frank discussion of legal and policy issues. The scope of the privilege covers documents reflecting advisory opinions, recommendations, and deliberations comprising part of a process by which government decisions and policies are formulated. To qualify for the deliberative process privilege, a document must be both “pre-decisional” and “deliberative.” Documents are pre-decisional when they precede an agency decision and are prepared in order to assist an agency in arriving at its decision. Documents are deliberative when they comprise part of the process by which government decisions are made. The types of records/information NASA would withhold under this exemption consists of draft documents, portions of emails containing analyses, recommendations and/or opinions expressed by (an) employee(s). NASA considered the foreseeable harm that would result from the release of this information and determined that its release would hinder the decision-making process, create a chilling effect on internal deliberations, lead to uninformed decision-making, and public confusion.

Exemption 6, 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)

Exemption 6 allows withholding of “personnel and medical files and *similar files* the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.” *See* 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)(emphasis added). NASA is invoking Exemption 6 to protect personal contact information.

Fees for processing this request are less than \$50.00 and are not being charged in accordance with 14 CFR § 1206.503(f).

¹ All page counts are provided in approximate numbers.

You have the right under 14 CFR §1206.700 to appeal this determination within 90 days from the date of this letter. Your appeal must be in writing and should be addressed to:

Administrator
NASA Headquarters
Executive Secretariat
MS 9R17
Washington, DC 20546
ATTN: FOIA Appeals

Your appeal should be marked “Appeal under the Freedom of Information Act” both on the envelope and the face of the letter. A copy of your initial request along with a copy of this correspondence and any other correspondence with the FOIA office must be enclosed. In order to expedite the appellate process and ensure full consideration of your appeal, your appeal should also contain a brief statement of the reasons you believe this response to be in error.

For further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request you may contact NASA’s Chief FOIA Public Liaison at:

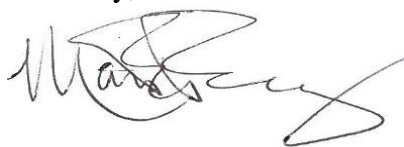
Stephanie Fox
Chief FOIA Public Liaison
Freedom of Information Act Office
NASA Headquarters
300 E Street, S.W., 5P32
Washington D.C. 20546
Phone: 202-358-1553
Email: Stephanie.K.Fox@nasa.gov

Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services it offers. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

Important: Please note that contacting any agency official including the undersigned, NASA’s Chief FOIA Public Liaison, and/or OGIS is not an alternative to filing an administrative appeal and does not stop the 90 day appeal clock.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at martha.e.terry@nasa.gov.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha Terry', written over a circular stamp or seal.

Martha Terry
NASA FOIA Officer
Headquarters, Office of Communications

This document is made available through the declassification efforts
and research of John Greenewald, Jr., creator of:

The Black Vault



The Black Vault is the largest online Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
document clearinghouse in the world. The research efforts here are
responsible for the declassification of hundreds of thousands of pages
released by the U.S. Government & Military.

Discover the Truth at: <http://www.theblackvault.com>

[EXTERNAL] Just a thought

From: (b) (6) @aura-astronomy.org>
To: Thomas Zurbuchen (b) (6) @nasa.gov, (b) (6) (HQ-DA000) <(b) (6) @nasa.gov>
Sent: June 11, 2021 9:39:32 AM EDT
Received: June 11, 2021 9:39:43 AM EDT

Hi Thomas,

If what Politico Space is reporting (below) is true, maybe pinning (b) (6) to lead some study would be fun. He is a deep skeptic of such sightings, and knows the Air Force lot quite well - it's like using a magician to investigate a "spiritualist". (b) (6) also bored...and everyone would trust what he comes up with.

How are you doing?

Cheers

(b) (6)

The truth may be out there: These days it almost seems obligatory to ask about UFOs, given all the debate about a forthcoming report to Congress from the director of national intelligence about recent sightings of "unmanned aerial phenomena."

"A couple of years ago, as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I was briefed on what those Navy pilots saw and I have talked to the Navy pilots," Nelson recalled. "They are quite convinced. And these are realistic folks. This isn't some UFO tin-foil hat kind. These are pilots who locked their radar on it. They tracked and then they saw it move so fast that they couldn't believe it. And then they went and tracked it again, locked their radar on it in a new position. So there's some phenomenon that we need to explain."

He said he's put Thomas Zurbuchen, who runs NASA's science directorate, in charge of looking into the reports. "I have had several conversations with him, most recently 10 minutes ago, about this very topic and about what he has been doing on SETI and now what he is further doing in an inquiry to see if we have any scientific explanation for some of this," Nelson said.

But why NASA? "NASA is a natural place," said Nelson, who served in the House and Senate from Florida. "Part of NASA's science missions is the search for extraterrestrial life."

Sent from my iPhone

FW: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

From: Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
To: Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Sent: January 4, 2021 2:27:22 PM EST
Received: January 4, 2021 2:27:23 PM EST

Thomas,

This came up during the extended federated board today. As an agency, we don't have anyone looking for UFO's, do we?? SMD looks for signs of life and near earth objects. If a UFO was identified as a result of our work, I'm guessing the science community would be thrilled – as long as they are friendly – however, we aren't searching for UFO's, we search for scientific discovery. What would your response be?

Sandra

Sandra Connelly

Deputy Associate Administrator

Science Mission Directorate

NASA Headquarters

300 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20546

[REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov

From: Feldstein, Karen C. (HQ-TA000) <[REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 1:55 PM
To: Cruz, Randy C. (HQ-AA000)[Affiliate] [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED] nasa.gov>; Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>; Gold, Michael N. (HQ-AA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Subject: Re: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

Hi Randy, looping in Mike as well.

Thanks,

Karen

From: "Cruz, Randy C. (HQ-AA000)[Affiliate]" [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Date: Monday, January 4, 2021 at 1:50 PM
To: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>

Cc: Karen Feldstein (b) (6)@nasa.gov>

Subject: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

Happy New Year Sandra and Karen!

There's been a lot of media discussion lately about UFO's, supported by 'leaked footage,' photos, etc. of things in LEO or well within earth's atmosphere. I imagine, at some point, NASA gets approached to validate and utilize our technologies/capabilities to monitor and/or analyze some of these claims. Who at NASA does this?

The Senate Intelligence Authorization Act for FY2021 directed an analysis of known incidents and a plan to report these phenomenon in the future. I imagine this will become an inter-agency effort.

V/r,

Randy

Randy Cruz

Senior Advisor to the Administrator

NASA Headquarters

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

National Academy review of UAP report data/findings

From: Lal, Bhavya (HQ-AA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
To: Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
Sent: June 10, 2021 3:15:12 PM EDT
Received: June 10, 2021 3:15:14 PM EDT

Do you think it would be a good idea?

(b) (5)



(b) (5)

OIIR Weekly Update

From: Gold, Michael N. (HQ-AA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
To: Bridenstine, James F. (HQ-AA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
Cc: Morhard, James W. (HQ-AR000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Sherman, Gabriel J. (HQ-AH000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Jurczyk, Stephen G. (HQ-AI000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Saunders, Melanie (HQ-AA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Cremins, Tom (HQ-AH000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Cruz, Randy C. (HQ-AA000) [Affiliate] (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Gillen, Suzanne M. (HQ-VA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Flaherty, Christopher J. (HQ-VA030) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Kerwin, Mary D. (HQ-IA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Inclan, Bettina (HQ-NA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Jacobs, Bob (HQ-NA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Bowersox, Kenneth D. (HQ-CA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Feldstein, Karen C. (HQ-TA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Thomas, Camden D. (HQ-AA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Mangum, Cathy H. (LARC-A) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Yunaska, Kyle R. (HQ-AH000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Lueders, Kathryn L. (KSC-CA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Kieffer, Margaret (HQ-TH000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Cremins, Tom (HQ-AJ000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>, Mangum, Cathy H. (LARC-AI000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>

Sent: September 13, 2020 1:02:25 PM EDT
Received: September 13, 2020 1:02:27 PM EDT
Attachments: Draft Strengthening Implementation of China Restrictions Clean 9.13.20.docx

Jim, good afternoon to you and the rest of the crew. Below is the top-level weekly OIIR update. As always, I'll provide additional context and information at our various gaggles over the course of the coming week.

Best,

- Mike

International

Telecon with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA): On Wednesday, September 16, I will speak with the Director of UNOOSA, Simonetta Di Pippo, to discuss the draft Memorandum of Understanding between NASA and UNOOSA for cooperation in a variety of areas including UNOOSA's "Access to Space for All" initiative.

Bolstering the Implementation of China Restrictions: Last week the informal China restrictions Tiger Team met for a second time to review proposed actions and assign responsibility for each task. Attached is a summary of both what is currently being done regarding China restrictions for research funded by NASA along with a series of holistic recommendations (divided into the categories of: identify, inform, prevent, and enforce) to further strengthen our efforts.

UAE Training Agreement Public Announcement Postponed: At the request of the Mohamad bin Rashid Space Center, the public announcement regarding the reimbursable agreement to train Emirati astronauts at JSC has been postponed until next week to avoid conflicting with the signing of the Abraham Accord on September 15th.

Marshall Association Artemis Accords Briefing: On Thursday, September 17, I'm speaking at a meeting of the Marshall Association (a professional, employee service organization at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center) to discuss the importance of the Artemis Accords and international relations.

HEOMD AA Meeting with European Space Agency (ESA): On Tuesday, September 15, HEOMD AA Lueders will hold a telecon with Dr. David Parker, ESA Director of Human Spaceflight and Robotic Exploration, to discuss the

International Space Station, Gateway, and potential future exploration cooperation.

Interagency

Sub-Interagency Working Group (IWG) Forward Harmful Biological Contamination: On Tuesday, September 15, NASA (OSMA and SMD) will lead a Sub-IWG virtual meeting on forward harmful contamination that will consider gaps and suggest inputs to the OSTP and NSpC-led IWG on planetary protection. OIIR will participate.

NASA-Department of Energy (DOE) Teleconference: On Wednesday, September 16, AA for Strategy and Plans Cremins and Deputy Chief of Staff Yunaska will participate in a weekly teleconference with DOE senior policy advisors regarding potential future activities. OIIR will participate.

Briefing on Activities of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF): At the request of the UAPTF, Joel Montalbano, Margaret Kiefer, Suzanne Gillen, and I will receive a briefing on activities of the Task Force via secure VTC. Per a public announcement, on August 4, 2020, Deputy Secretary of Defense David L. Norquist approved the establishment the UAPTF. The Department of the Navy, under the cognizance of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, leads the UAPTF. Additional information can be provided on the appropriate system.

Mike Gold

Acting Associate Administrator

Office of International and Interagency Relations

NASA Headquarters

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6) @nasa.gov

Re: Jurzyk talking points

From: Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
To: Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED] nasa.gov>
Sent: January 8, 2021 3:25:14 PM EST
Received: January 8, 2021 3:25:14 PM EST

Added some things are re-ordered

SMD/AA Tagup Jan 8, 2021

1. Clipper issues – JB
2. Ice-Mapper Pre ASM
 1. Why move to agency?
3. Perseverance landing
 1. What is 9th floor plan/desires?
 4. Sharing overguide materials?
 1. Pressure in planetary
5. Status of RPS Review Chair/Deputy chair selection letter
6. UFO's
7. OCOMM Situation
8. Personnel Update
 1. Joel Kearns
 2. HPD Associate for Flight,
 3. NMO

From: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Date: Friday, January 8, 2021 at 3:18 PM
To: "Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000)" [REDACTED] (b) (6) [REDACTED]@nasa.gov>
Subject: Jurzyk talking points

See attached.

Sandra Connelly

Deputy Associate Administrator

Science Mission Directorate

NASA Headquarters

300 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20546

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)@nasa.gov

RE: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

From: Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) <(b) (6)@nasa.gov>
To: New, Michael H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Hertz, Paul (HQ-DH000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Feldstein, Karen C. (HQ-TA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Cruz, Randy C. (HQ-AA000)[Affiliate] (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Gold, Michael N. (HQ-AA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
Sent: January 4, 2021 2:48:45 PM EST
Received: January 4, 2021 2:48:46 PM EST

Looped in TZ and Michael New. See below...

Sandra Connelly

Deputy Associate Administrator

Science Mission Directorate

NASA Headquarters

300 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20546

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From: New, Michael H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 2:41 PM
To: Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>; Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>; Hertz, Paul (HQ-DH000) (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
Subject: Re: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

To the best of my knowledge, we don't have any funded investigations on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena. At some level, I suppose, UAP might be considered a type of "technosignature" but I personally have never seen a proposal to scientifically analyze data on UAPs — and as the Program Scientist for the Exobiology Program, believe me when I say that I have reviewed numerous proposals on similar topics.

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Michael H. New, PhD

Deputy Associate Administrator for Research

Science Mission Directorate

Mary W. Jackson NASA Headquarters Building

300 Hidden Figures Way SW, Washington, DC 20546-0001

(b) (6)

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From: "Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
Date: Monday, January 4, 2021 at 2:32 PM
To: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Michael New (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, "Hertz, Paul (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
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Sandra – I am cc-ing in the experts on this...

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Deputy Associate Administrator

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(b) (6)@nasa.gov

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Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 1:55 PM

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Date: Monday, January 4, 2021 at 1:50 PM

To: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>

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Randy Cruz

Senior Advisor to the Administrator

NASA Headquarters

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To: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, Michael New (b) (6)@nasa.gov>, "Hertz, Paul (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>
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Deputy Associate Administrator

Science Mission Directorate

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Hi Randy, looping in Mike as well.

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Karen

From: "Cruz, Randy C. (HQ-AA000)[Affiliate]" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>

Date: Monday, January 4, 2021 at 1:50 PM

To: "Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000)" (b) (6)@nasa.gov>

Cc: Karen Feldstein (b) (6)@nasa.gov>

Subject: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

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V/r,

Randy

Randy Cruz

Senior Advisor to the Administrator

NASA Headquarters

(b) (6)

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Too many topics for Tomorrow Morning

From: Connelly, Sandra (HQ-DA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
To: Zurbuchen, Thomas H. (HQ-DA000) (b) (6) @nasa.gov>
Sent: January 5, 2021 7:44:57 PM EST
Received: January 5, 2021 7:45:00 PM EST

Thomas,

I have too many topics for tomorrow morning to cover all so I'm providing to you so that you can choose which one takes priority. I will need to either drop off promptly at 8 or get one of the deputies to strat the meeting.

1. STMD Budget – impacts to SBIR and SMD
2. OCT/OCS Chiefs – potential discussion with incoming administration
3. ICD MAPPER Pre-ASM to APMC – might not need to discuss since its on the agenda with Steve
4. Class D – In addition to your paper, need to summarize SPHEREX status and suggestion
5. OSMA is hiring deputy for Pete and also has greased skids for better coordination with centers – don't need to discuss
6. Mentor for Joel Kearns

Topics thus far for Steve J:

1. Sharing overguide materials
2. UFO's
3. Ice-Mapper Pre ASM
4. OCOMM Situation
5. NMO/Marcus
6. HPD Flight Director

Sandra

Sandra Connelly

Deputy Associate Administrator

Science Mission Directorate

NASA Headquarters

300 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20546

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