

STRATEGIC DEFENSE:
FOUR DECADES OF PROGRESS

by

JAMES A. WALKER,

FRANCES MARTIN

and

SHARON S. WATKINS

HISTORICAL OFFICE

U. S. ARMY SPACE AND STRATEGIC DEFENSE COMMAND

1995

- 11 July 1967 - First meeting of the Montgomery Committee. This group was established by the Department of Defense to review the Chinese threat. It was created at the direction of Secretary of Defense McNamara. Their report, dated 15 August, "[indicated] that the NIKE-X DEMOD 1-67 constituted an adequate base for proceeding."
- 18 September 1967 - In a speech to the United Press International Editors and Publishers in San Francisco, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara announced the decision to deploy some NIKE-X components as an Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM), the SENTINEL System, a limited deployment production decision consistent with NIKE-X Deployment Model 1-67. Its purpose was to provide protection for urban/industrial areas against possible ICBM attacks by the People's Republic of China. It would also serve as a defense against accidental launch and an option to defend the Air Force's MINUTEMAN missile sites. Seventeen sites were proposed to provide area defense to the Continental United States, Alaska and Hawaii. The SENTINEL System was composed of SPRINT and SPARTAN missiles, the Perimeter Acquisition Radar (PAR) and the Missile Site Radar (MSR).
- 15 October 1967 - United States Corps of Engineers Huntsville Division was organized as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers NIKE-X Division. They were a separate Class II activity under the command of the Chief of Engineers, but, by memorandum of agreement they were under the operational control of the SENTINEL System Manager. Their mission was "to develop criteria; design and construct developmental, training, support, and tactical facilities; and to include the provision of Tactical Support Equipment for the SENTINEL program (General Order 17, 9 October 1967).
- 1 November 1967 - The Department of Defense announced the locations of the first ten SENTINEL sites: Boston - PAR and MSR; Chicago - MSR; Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota - PAR and MSR; Salt Lake City - MSR; Detroit - PAR and MSR; Seattle - PAR and MSR; Hawaii - MSR; New York - MSR; and Albany, Georgia - MSR. Three additional sites were added in May 1968 (San Francisco and Los Angeles, California, and Sedalia, Missouri) and two others on 13 November 1968 (Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming and Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana). Two additional sites, Washington, D.C. and Fairbanks, Alaska, were never publicly announced.
- 15 November 1967 - SENTINEL System Command (SENSCOM) established as a Class II Activity under the direction of the SENTINEL System Manager. The system manager position was created within the Office of the Chief of Staff. The NIKE-X Systems Office and Project Office were discontinued and personnel and resources transferred to this new SENTINEL System Organization. This body included the SENTINEL System Office in Washington, D.C., the SENTINEL System Command in Huntsville, Alabama, and the Sentinel System Evaluation Agency in White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico (General Orders 48, 15 November 1967).
At the direction of the DoD, the SENS.COM focused on systems/operations of the SENTINEL system, while a parallel command, the Ballistic Missile Defense Research Office was created for further R&D efforts. In March 1968, the research office, also a Class II Activity, was renamed the Advanced Ballistic Missile Defense Agency (ABMDA). They reported to the Army's Chief of R&D. The two bodies, SENS.COM and ABMDA, were collocated and coordinated both in Washington and in Hunts-

ville. General Order 48 also created the SENTINEL System Evaluation Agency as a Class II Activity located at White Sands Missile Range, replacing the NIKE-X Engineering/Service Test Office.

- March 1968 - At the direction of the Secretary of Defense, the ARPA's research effort into advanced BMD concepts, Project Defender, transferred to the Army. The Ballistic Missile Defense Research Office was subsequently renamed the Advanced Ballistic Missile Defense Agency (See above).
- 15 April 1968 - Kwajalein Test Site was redesignated the Kwajalein Missile Range (General Orders 16, 16 April 1968).
- 15 April 1968 - SENTINEL Logistics Command established. It was a major subordinate command of the AMC and was organized as a Class II Activity of Headquarters, AMC (AMC General Orders 30, 18 April 1968). This command moved to its permanent location in Huntsville on 26 August.
- 30 June 1968 - NIKE-X Development Office was created as a Class II Activity of the Chief of Research and Development. Located in Huntsville, the office was under the command jurisdiction of the ABMDA and was responsible for the Army advanced ballistic missile development program. The office incorporated the Advanced Development Directorate of SENSOCOM and the ARPA's Project Defender (NXDO General Order 1, 30 July 1968).
- 20 January 1969 - President Richard M. Nixon took office and initiated a Department of Defense review of strategic offensive and defensive priorities. On 6 February, Secretary of Defense Laird ordered a temporary halt to SENTINEL deployment pending the results of this review of all major weapons systems.
- 14 March 1969 - President Richard M. Nixon redirected the BMD program. Nixon specified three defense objectives: "Protection of our land-based retaliatory forces against a direct attack by the Soviet Union;" "Defense of the American people against the kind of nuclear attack which Communist China is likely to be able to mount within the decade;" and, "Protection against the possibility of accidental attacks from any source." The primary new focus for the program is the defense of twelve U.S. land-based ICBM sites. Components remained unchanged but deployment concepts were redrawn. Authorization was subsequently given for only two MINUTEMAN bases, Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota and Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana. This new SAFEGUARD System was to be a phased deployment, rather than the SENTINEL's fixed deployment schedule. Annual reviews would assess technical developments, threat and diplomatic context.
- 25 March 1969 - SENSO becomes the SAFEGUARD System Office. Similarly the SENTINEL System Command, SENTINEL System Manager, and System Evaluation Agency were redesignated SAFEGUARD (General Orders 18, 25 March 1969). A separate order renamed the SENTINEL Logistics Command, the SAFEGUARD Logistics Command (AMC General Order 71, 9 May 1969).

- 1 May 1969 - NIKE-X Development Office was redesignated the Advanced Ballistic Missile Defense Agency, Huntsville. The mission was unchanged. It also remained under the control of ABMDA.
- 16 June 1969 - SAFEGUARD Communications Agency established at Ft. Huachuca, Arizona. This agency is part of the U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command (General Orders 115, 16 June 1969).
- November 1969 - Strategic Arms Limitation Talks began between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. New role attributed to the SAFEGUARD System was that of "bargaining chip" in these talks. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird declared that a unilateral cut in SAFEGUARD funds, or discontinuance of the ABM deployment would impair the U.S. position in these talks.
- 30 January 1970 - President Nixon announced his decision to extend the deployment of SAFEGUARD. The recommendation included a third site (Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri) and advance preparation for five additional sites (in the Northeast, Northwest, Washington, D.C., Warren AFB, Wyoming, and in the Michigan-Ohio area). There was no deployment commitment for the latter sites.
- 24 February 1970 - Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird recommended to Congress a Modified Phase II SAFEGUARD program to add a site at Whiteman AFB, additional SPRINT missiles at the first two sites and advance preparation work at five other sites.
- 17 June 1970 - The Senate Armed Services Committee voted approval of funds for a SAFEGUARD installation at Whiteman AFB and for advanced preparation at Warren AFB.
- 14 January 1971 - Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard decided to proceed with a new facet in the BMD development, the Hardsite Defense (HSD) Project Office. Deployed in groups to protect MINUTEMAN sites and each other, the HSD concept called for a phased array radar, an interceptor, and commercial data processing equipment. Site Defense would be capable of handling a larger, more sophisticated threat than SAFEGUARD. The Project Officer was under the SAFSCOM.
- 25 February 1971 - In his Foreign Policy Report to Congress, President Nixon announces that: "I will continue a SAFEGUARD program designed to provide maximum flexibility in the conduct of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. We are doing nothing which precludes any possible agreement at SALT."
- 15 April 1971 - SAFEGUARD Depot Activity created as a subordinate organization to the SAFEGUARD Logistics Command. After training, the depot commander and cadre will be located at Glasgow, Montana (General Orders 71, 15 April 1971).
- 26 May 1972 - The Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty, popularly known as SALT I, signed by the United States (President Richard Nixon) and the Soviet Union (General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev) and agreed to a limit of two ABM sites each - one near the capital and the other near an ICBM complex. Each ABM site could have 100 miles and 100 launchers and 15 additional launchers at test sites. In addition, the treaty regulated the type of

radars for the ABM site. Finally, the agreement also prevented each country from defending its entire territory, thereby negating the deterrent effect.

An interim accord, signed at the same time, set maximum limits for each country's ICBM and sea-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) for five years. The U.S. was allowed 1,054 ICBMs, the amount it had had since the mid-1960s, and 710 SLBMs with 44 ballistic missile submarines. The U.S.S.R. was allowed 1,618 ICBMs, 950 SLBMs and 62 submarines. The treaty was ratified by the Senate on 3 August 1972.

- October 1972 - The decision was to terminate the SAFEGUARD Central Training Facility at Ft. Bliss, Texas. An exception was made for missile equipment training. Materials were shipped to the North Dakota site or the Supply Center in Glasgow, Montana.
- 15 November 1972 - The Site Activation Command at Malmstrom, Montana, was deactivated as a result of the limitations made by the ABM Treaty. Construction at this SAFEGUARD site had been suspended in May when the treaty was signed.
- 15 January 1973 - SAFEGUARD Logistics Command and the SAFEGUARD Depot Activity discontinued. Personnel and equipment transferred to the SAFSCOM (AMC General Orders 3, 4 January 1973).
- 15 January 1973 - The Logistics Management Directorate was created, from the Logistics Command and assigned to the SAFSCOM. The same order reorganized the Huntsville based SAFSCOM and assigned it to the SAFEGUARD Systems Organization (SAFSO). Two other organizations were also reorganized and subsequently assigned to the SAFSCOM, although they continued under the operational control of the Site Activation Directorate. These were the SAFEGUARD System Site Activation Command - Grand Forks, located at Langdon, North Dakota, and the SAFEGUARD Site Activation Command - Ballistic Missile Defense Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado (General Orders 1, 15 January 1973). The Logistics Management Directorate and two others were disestablished on 30 June 1973.
- 1 July 1973 - Major reorganization of the SAFEGUARD System completed. Personnel strengths are now at 58% of that allowed prior to the ABM Treaty.
- 31 August 1973 - Secretary of Defense signed an Amended Program Decision which placed funding and operational constraints on the SAFEGUARD program and funding constraints on the Site Defense program.
- 1 March 1974 - United States Surveillance Battalion Grand Forks Site was reorganized at Cavalier, North Dakota to "provide long-range surveillance and early warning of a ballistic missile attack against the continental United States." It is assigned to the U.S. Army's Air Defense Command (General Orders 32, 5 February 1974).
- 1 March 1974 - SAFEGUARD Command Grand Forks Site was reorganized and assigned to the U.S. Army's Air Defense Command. Located at Langdon, North Dakota, its mission was to "defend selected retaliatory missile sites against a ballistic missile attack" (General Orders 33, 5 February 1974).

- 20 May 1974 - The SAFEGUARD System Organization was redesignated the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO). Similarly, the SAFEGUARD System Manager, SAFEGUARD System Organization and the SAFSCOM became the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Program Manager, BMD Program Office and Ballistic Missile Defense Systems Command, respectively.

The General Orders created a new body, the Ballistic Missile Defense Advanced Technology Center (BMDATC), as a field operating agency under the BMD Program Manager. The BMDATC replaced the ABMDA, which had reported to the Chief of Research, Development and Acquisition.

The BMD Program Manger was assigned as principal advisor to the Office of the Chief of Staff (General Orders 12, 22 May 1974).

The mission is to deploy and operate the SAFEGUARD System, execute the Site Defense program, conduct research and development in advanced BMD technology, and manage KMR.

- June 1974 - The SAFEGUARD System Evaluation Agency (SAFSEA) was transferred to the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). Mission and personnel absorbed by the specially created TRADOC Systems Analysis Activity.
- 21 June 1974 - SAFEGUARD tactical facilities in North Dakota designated the Stanley R. Mickelsen SAFEGUARD Complex. The term complex was chosen to emphasize the geographical dispersion of the MSR, PAR and four remote SPRINT launch sites (General Order 21, 21 June 1974).
- 3 July 1974 - Protocol added to the ABM Treaty (SALT I). It limits each country to one ABM site, located at either the National Command Authority or an ICBM complex. The document was signed by President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev at the second Moscow summit.
- 3 September 1974 - The following elements were relieved from assignment to U.S. Army Air Defense Command: U.S. Army SAFEGUARD Command, U.S. Army Surveillance Battalion (PAR), U.S. Army Ballistic Missile Defense Center, and the U.S. Army Ballistic Missile Defense Operations Activity (General Orders 30, 3 September 1974).
- 1 October 1974 - The Stanley R. Mickelsen SAFEGUARD Complex was officially accepted by the Army and dedicated to LTG Stanley R. Mickelsen. It is the first new military installation in the United States since World War II. The system reached initial operating capability in April 1975 and full operational capability in September 1975.
- 1974 - Congressional guidance calls for end of prototyping, thus limiting Site Defense, now known as the Systems Technology Program, to R&D at the subsystem and component level.
- 1 January 1975 - The BMD Program Office was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Staff. The new mission was to assist the Program Manager in the following: the development of a program which insures operation of the SAFEGUARD BMD System; the execution of the Site Defense Program; conduct R&D in advanced BMD technology; and, management of the Kwajalein Missile Range as a National Range (General Orders 18, 12 December 1974).

- 1 April 1975 - The SAFEGUARD System reached initial operating capability and the “fully netted” system was turned over to the Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Air Defense Command for operational control. On 30 June 1975, this command was inactivated and the Air Defense Command assumed responsibility for U.S. air defense and aerospace surveillance.
- 28 September 1975 - Stanley R. Mickelsen SAFEGUARD Complex reached full operational capability, following the installation of the missiles - 30 Spartans and 70 Sprints. Per the Secretary of Defense’s direction, SAFEGUARD was used as “a base for obtaining experience with installation, test, and operation of a deployed BMD site.”
- 28 September 1975 - The House Appropriations Committee recommended deactivation of the SAFEGUARD site by the end of fiscal year 1976: “Because of the improved capability of the Soviet Union’s new MIRVed missiles, the limited effectiveness of the SAFEGUARD system to provide the protection it was originally intended to provide and the diminished benefits available from operating the facility for only a single year.”
- November 1975 - The ABM Treaty and Protocol are ratified by the U.S. Congress and later signed by the President in May 1976.
- 18 November 1975 - Senator Edward Kennedy introduced an amendment to the fiscal year 1976/77 Appropriations Bill. The amendment specified that funds provided for the ABM facility (other than the Perimeter Acquisition Radar) may only be used for the “expeditious termination and deactivation of all operations of that facility.” The amendment was incorporated into the final act.
- 10 February 1976 - The Joint Chiefs of Staff directed that the deactivation of SAFEGUARD begin, as per the Congressional decision (Public Law 94-212, dated 9 February 1976). Radiation for the Missile Site Radar and the missile launch capability were terminated and the warhead withdrawal commenced. Termination involved the following sites: SAFEGUARD Training Facility, Fort Bliss, Texas; BMD Center, Colorado Springs, Colorado; SAFEGUARD Supply and Maintenance Center, Glasgow, Montana; and the Missile Fields, Missile Site Radar Site, and Support Facilities, all located in Nekoma, North Dakota.

The DoD had wanted to keep the site operational for at least one year to gain experience. Congress, however, “sensed the increased vulnerability of a single site to Soviet ICBMs with multiple, independently-targeted, reentry vehicles.”
- 31 August 1976 - The U.S. Army SAFEGUARD Command was inactivated. The personnel and equipment were transferred to the Ballistic Missile Defense Systems Command, with duty stations to remain in North Dakota.
- 12 October 1976 - The BMD Program Manager, responding to a memorandum from an Under Secretary of the Army, which requested a review of possible improvements to the BMD Organization, in view of the changed emphasis, proposed the following reorganization. The Program Manager’s position was transferred from Washington to Huntsville, the Washington element was streamlined and many of its functions assigned to the BMD Systems Command, the BMD structure was changed, in particular the redesignation of the SAFEGUARD Project Office and the realignment

of missions. Conducted in conjunction with a reduction-in-force, the reorganization at BMDSCOM was completed on 10 December 1976 and later at the Program Office. This reorganization was delayed due to litigation on the RIF. Emphasis was placed on the continued operation of the BMDSCOM and the Advanced Technology Center.

- 1976 - The test facility at Kwajalein Missile Range for the STP was activated.
- 1 October 1977 - The Perimeter Acquisition Radar complex transferred to the Air Force. The radar was to be operated by the Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado.
- 1979 - Low Altitude Defense (LoAD) program created to defend ICBM sites, a down-scaling site defense technology. In 1982 the program was renamed SENTRY and the Program Manager moved to Washington.
- 18 June 1979 - President Jimmy Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev signed the SALT II agreement in Vienna. It was agreed that within 6 months each side would have only 2,250 launchers (ICBMs, SLBMs, air-to-surface ballistic missiles and heavy bombers), of these 1,200 of them could be MIRVed (Multiple Independently targeted Reentry Vehicles). There was no limit on submarine launch vehicles. The agreement included a protocol signed by Brezhnev promising to limit the range and production of the Backfire bomber and statement of principles for SALT III.

In January 1980, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter removed the treaty from consideration by the Senate. However both countries agreed to observe the two SALT agreements pending clarification of the technical descriptions in SALT II.

- 1981 - Congressional guidance allows the resumption of prototyping. It is proposed that this action was taken in response to the military build-up by the USSR, throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s.
- 23 March 1983 - President Ronald Reagan announced his Strategic Defense Initiative - a shift from hardsite defense to defense of the United States. The address also added active defense to a primarily offensive deterrence strategy. On 25 March 1985, the President issued National Security Directive 85 which implemented his plans.
- 6 January 1984 - National Security Directive 119 was issued authorizing the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO) thus creating a centralized BMD R&D program. Air Force Lt. General James A. Abrahamson is named the first director on 15 April 1984. The organization was granted an interim charter in 1984.
- July 1984 - BMDO becomes a part of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization. The Program Manager moved back to Huntsville. The BMDATC and the BMDSCOM still exist (General Orders 26, 24 October 1985).
- 1984 - DoD guidance confirms the long-standing R&D trend in Army BMD technology away from nuclear weapons. In this same year, the Homing Overlay Experiment proved the viability of this action.