

U-2 Timeline of Events, 1950s

- **Mar 1953**
William Lamar(Chief of New Development) drew up proposal calling for High Altitude Reconnaissance Aircraft
- **Dec 1953**
Skunk Works starts-up to modify F-104 for maximum possible altitude for reconnaissance
- **Feb 1954**
USAF interested in characteristics of F-104A study(CL-282, fore- runner of U-2)
- **18 May 1954**
Lockheed sends a proposal for high altitude recon aircraft to **Maj. John Seaberg**(Asst. Chief of New Developments Branch) for review
- **Sep 1954**
Bell X-16 construction started(Bells version of U-2)
- **Nov 1954**
Foster Dulles, Charles Wilson, & Allen Dulles meet with **President Eisenhower** to get approval for \$35 million to purchase 20 high altitude aircraft(Project Aquatone/U-2)
- **19 Nov 1954**
Kelly Johnson meets w/Govt. advisory Board on feasibility of CL-282 (predecessor of U-2)
- **29 Nov 1954**
Kelly Johnson forms team that would design U-2
- **2 Dec 1954**
First 12 Engineers begin design of U-2 hardware. Final configuration design requirements determined and General Arrangements drawing started (EB)
- **3 Dec 1954**
First design drawing completed and released to shop (EB)
- **5 Dec 1954**
Shop completed first set of parts (EB)
- **6 Dec 1954**
General arrangement drawings completed (EB)
- **Dec 1954**
Land Group meets to decide which high altitude aircraft(Bell, Martin, Fairchild, or Lockheed) to recommend to **President Eisenhower**
- **9 Dec 1954**
Contract for funding U-2 from CIA signed
- **10 Dec 1954**
Design on U-2 frozen
- **10 Jan 1955**
Fabrication of parts for first U-2 started
- **15 Mar 1955**
Wind tunnel testing completed on U-2
- **21 May 1955**
U-2A static test model delivered
- **8 Jun 1955**
4025 SRS(Light) activated at Lockbourne AFB, OH(flew RB-57's)
- **8 Jul 1955**
Static testing of U-2 airframe begins
- **15 Jul 1955**
First U-2 is completed
- **24 Jul 1955**
U-2 #001 transported to Flight Test Location(Groom Lake,NV)
- **27 Jul 1955**
Static engine runs for U-2 at Test Location
- **29 Jul 1955**
Preliminary taxi tests & accidental first flight, Lockheed Test Pilot: **Tony LeVier**
- **4 Aug 1955**
First Official Flight of U-2, Lockheed Test Pilot: **Tony LeVier**
- **8 Aug 1955**
Lt. Col. Daniel Maloney becomes Commander of 4025 SRS(Light)
- **11 Sep 1955**
U-2 #6675 delivered (later, first U-2 to be converted to "C" model)
- **Oct 1955**
Bell X-16 program cancelled, 2 months after first U-2 flight
- **16 Oct 1955**
U-2A #6676 delivered to Groom Lake, NV
- **18 Oct 1955**
U-2 reaches design altitude in flight test
- **17 Nov 1955**
USAF C-54 crashes into Mt. Charleston while flying to Groom Lake, killing 10 Lockheed & CIA personnel and crew
- **20 Nov 1955**
U-2 #6677 delivered
- **16 Dec 1955**
U-2A #6678 delivered

- **Jan 1956**
U-2 Assembly Plant "Unit 80" at Oildale, Ca open and building U-2
- **Jan 1956**
Project Rainbow(Dirty Bird) is started, trying to lower the radar signature of the U-2
- **13 Jan 1956**
U-2A #6679 delivered
- **8 Jan 1956**
U-2A #6680 delivered(now on display at Smithsonian Air & Space Museum)
- **16 Feb 1956**
U-2 crashed in Arizona, Pilot: **Robert Everett**
- **1 Apr 1956**
4080th SRW(Light) activated at Turner AFB, GA
- **24 Apr 1956**
U-2A #6683 delivered
- **30 Apr 1956**
2 U-2As airlifted to RAF Lakenheath to form CIA Detachment A
- **May 1956**
U-2 art. #345 crashed at "The Ranch", CIA Pilot:**Rose** was killed (JD)
- **May 1956**
2nd class of CIA U-2 pilots starts(**Gary Powers** was in this class)
- **1 May 1956**
4028th SRS activated at Turner AFB, GA
- **1 May 1956**
Col. Gerald W. Johnson became Commander of 4080th SRW at Turner AFB, GA till 1 Apr 1957
- **1 May 1956**
Col. Jack Nole became Commander of 4028th SRS(Light)
- **7 May 1956**
Dr. Hugh Dryden NACA Director announces U-2 to be used as a research tool for study of meteorological conditions(actually a cover for CIA operations)
- **18 May 1956**
U-2A #6684delivered(became "C" model developmental aircraft)
- **21 May 1956**
First U-2 flight from RAF Lakenheath (not operational)
- **13 Jun 1956**
U-2A #6685 delivered
- **15 Jun 1956**
Detachment A moved to Weisbaden, W. Germany. from RAF Lakenheath
- **20 Jun 1956**
Carl Overstreet flew first operational U-2 flight from Weisbaden, W. Germany, over Poland and East Germany (LMSW & EL)
- **6 Jun 1956**
U-2A #6686 delivered
- **2 Jul 1956**
2nd & 3rd U-2 missions, both flown over Eastern Europe (LMSW & EL)
- **4 Jul 1956**
Carmen Vito flies 4th operational mission in U-2, first mission over USSR in **Art. #347(#6680)** (EL)
- **10 Jul 1956**
Harvey Stockman flies operational U-2 mission in **Art #347 (#6680)**
- **Aug 1956**
Second class of CIA U-2 pilots graduates, ordered to Incirlik AB, Turkey(Det 10-10; Det B; WRS(P)-2)
- **16 Aug 1956**
U-2A #6688 delivered
- **Sep 1956**
U-2 art. #354 crashed at "The Ranch" , CIA Pilot:**Grace** was killed (AC)
- **Sep 1956**
U-2A #6693 delivered
- **5 Sep 1956**
U-2A #6689 delivered
- **17 Sep 1956**
Howard Carey(CIA pilot) is killed in crash of U-2 near Kaiserlauten, W. Germany caused by jet wash from Canadian F-86 (PH)
- **21 Sep 1956**
U-2A #6690 delivered
- **8 Sep 1956**
U-2A #6691 delivered(was flown by Taiwan AF (ROCAF), shot down near Peking, China by SA-2)
- **22 Sep 1956**
U-2 #6692 delivered (converted to **U-2CT** in 1972; now on display at Duxford Royal Aviation Museum, England)
- **Nov 1956**
Frank Powers makes first overflight of USSR from Adana (Det. B) (AC)
- **5 Nov 1956**
U-2A #6693 delivered(shot down over Sverdlovsk, USSR on 1 May 1960, CIA Pilot:**Francis Gary Powers**)
- **Nov 1956**
U-2A #6695 delivered
- **Dec 1956**
U-2A #6696 delivered

- **Jan 1957**
"Unit 80" closed
- **Jan 1957**
U-2A #6697 & #6698 delivered
- **Feb 1957**
WRS(P)-1(Weather Recon Sq. Provisional) moved from Weisbaden, W. Ger. to Giebelstadt AB near Wurzburg, W. Germany
- **Feb 1957**
U-2A #6999 & #6700 delivered
- **Mar 1957**
U-2A #6701 delivered(now on display at SAC Museum, Offutt AFB, NE)
- **Mar 1957**
U-2A #6702 delivered
- **15 Mar 1957**
First 2 U-2s deployed to Atsugi, Japan (Det. C) (AC)
- **20 Mar 1957**
U-2 #6696 crashes at Groom Lake, NV, USAF Pilot: **Anthony Bevacqua** survived, wiping out landing gear(AB)
- **Apr 1957**
U-2A #6703 delivered
- **Apr 1957**
4080th SRW(L) completes move to Laughlin AFB, TX from Turner AFB, GA
- **1 Apr 1957**
Col **Hubert Zemke** becomes Commander of 4080 SRW, through 12 Nov 1957
- **4 Apr 1957**
U-2 #6674 crashes during first "Dirty Bird" flight test, Lockheed Test Pilot **Robert Seiker** is killed
- **May 1957**
U-2A #6706 delivered
- **May 1957**
U-2A #6707 delivered(now on display at Laughlin AFB, TX as U-2C)
- **Jun 1957**
U-2 #6708, #6709, & #6710 delivered
- **11 Jun 1957**
US Air Force receives first 6 U-2s at Laughlin AFB, TX, 4028 SRS (AB)
- **13 Jun 1957**
4028 SRS redesignated 4028 Strategic Recon Weather Sq
- **28 Jun 1957**
2 U-2s crashed in separate incidents; #6699 near Del Rio, TX, USAF Pilot **Ford E. Lowcock** killed while buzzing his house; USAF Pilot **Leo E. Smith** was killed in a crash near Abilene, TX(Lack of oxygen)
- **Jul 1957**
"Dirty Bird" U-2 arrives in Turkey by cargo plane
- **7 Jul 1957**
First operational test "Dirty Bird" U-2, flown along Black Sea coast of Russia, USAF Pilot **James Cherbonneaux**
- **Jul 1957**
U-2A #6711, #6712, & #6713 delivered
- **27 Jul 1957**
U-2A #6687 delivered
- **Aug 1957**
U-2A #6714 delivered(now on display at Beale AFB, CA as U-2C)
- **22 Aug 1957**
4080 SRW begins HASP(High altitude Air Sampling program) flight training at Laughlin AFB, TX
- **Sep 1957**
U-2A #6716 delivered(now on display at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ as U-2C)
- **Sep 1957**
U-2A #6717 & #6718 delivered
- **Sep 1957**
4080th SRW receives 5 U-2s for dedicated gas and particle sampling program(HASP)
- **26 Sep 1957**
U-2 #6694 crashed near Laughlin AFB, TX, USAF Pilot: **Jack Nole** survived, he bailed out at over 50,000 ft
- **Oct 1957**
U-2A #6719 & #6720 delivered
- **Oct 1957**
HASP flights begin, first Dets were Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico(Det 3), Ramey Pilots: **Halloran, Bevacqua, Smith**; and Plattsburgh AFB, NY (Det 4) (PH)
- **Oct 1957**
U-2D #6721 delivered(now on display at March AFB, CA)
- **28 Nov 1957**
U-2A #6704 crashed near Laughlin AFB, TX, killing USAF Pilot: **Benedict A. Lacombe**, he caught on speed brake during attempted bailout (AB)
- **Nov 1957**
U-2A #6722 delivered(used as HICAT(High Altitude Clear Air Turbulence) aircraft)(now on display at USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH as U-2A)
- **Feb 1958**
First HASP deployment to Eielson AFB, AK
- **May 1958**
4 British Pilots sent to U-2 Flight training at Laughlin AFB, TX; **John McArthur, Michael Bradley, Christopher**

Walker, David Dowling (PH)

- **8 Jul 1958**
U-2 #6713 crashed near Wayside, TX; killing RAF Pilot: **Christopher H. Walker**
- **9 Jul 1958**
U-2 #6698 crashed SW of Tucumcari, NM; killing USAF Pilot: **Alfred Chapin, Jr.**
- **6 Aug 1958**
U-2 #6697 crashed on final approach at Laughlin AFB, TX; killing USAF Pilot **Paul L. Haughland**
- **11 Sep 1958**
Det 4, Plattsburgh AFB, NY relocated to Ezeiza Airport, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **11 Sep 1958**
U-2A #6710 crashed at Edwards AFB, CA; killing USAF Pilot **Patrick Hunderwadel**
- **Mar 1959**
U-2 on display at Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **Mar 1959**
Lockheed test flies U-2 which dropped payload from Q bay
- **May 1959**
1st group of Republic of China Air Force Pilots begin U-2 Flight Training at Del Rio, TX, Of 14 pilots trained, 9 have been killed in U-2 (PH)
- **2 Sep 1959**
USAF Outstanding Unit Award(First Oak Leaf Cluster)awarded to 4080 SRW

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