

A special breed of aerial camera systems has been developed specifically with reconnaissance purposes in mind. These camera systems consist of two types; panoramic cameras and long range oblique photographic (LOROP) systems. Panoramic cameras were developed for military reconnaissance applications to provide very wide angle (horizon to horizon) coverage in order to reduce the number of passes over a particular target area. The advantage of modern panoramic cameras is their ability to collect stereoscopic images of a 180 degree swath below the aircraft. Within the context of the BTWC, panoramic cameras would be able to acquire considerable reconnaissance data over a wide swath of a particular area. However, because of the oblique viewing characteristics and the varying scales and spatial resolution of the imagery, precise mapping of the area would be precluded. The second type of reconnaissance cameras are the LOROP cameras. They are specialized, very expensive camera systems developed to acquire high resolution aerial photography of an area where long stand-off distances are required. Again, the disadvantage of the utilization of LOROP imagery is the oblique viewing angle of the data.

Development, Acquisition, Production and Stockpiling

If development of biological weapons were to occur within an enclosed facility, without any external distinctive features present, then the direct detection of a BTWC violation would be most unlikely using aerial photographic techniques. Regardless of how good the spatial resolution of the photography, only indirect clues of the presence of activity within an enclosed building or complex of buildings would be discernible. For example, if a specific facility were suspected in BW production, then the presence of activity within that facility could be confirmed by something as simple as the number of cars parked in the parking lot. Obviously, that in itself would not tell you much.