1 2	United States Attorney		
3	HOLLWA WANCE		
4	100		
5	5 Tel: (775) 784-5438		
6	6 Fax: (775) 784-5181		
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8	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT		
9	FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEVADA		
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11	1 JED MARGOLIN,	Case No. 3:09-CV-00421-LRH-VPC	
12	Plaintiff,		
13	3 v.		
14	NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND ) SPACE ADMINISTRATION, )	ANSWER TO SECOND AMENDED COMPLAINT	
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16	΄ ΄		
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18	8 COMES NOW Defendant NATIONAL AE	COMES NOW Defendant NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE	
19	ADMINISTRATION ("NASA"), by and through its undersigned counsel, and answers the		
20	Second Amended Complaint as follows:		
21	1. This paragraph contains Plaintiff's characterization of this lawsuit — not		
22	allegations of fact — and thus no response is required. To the extent a response is required,		
23	Defendant admits that this matter purports to be an action for injunctive and other relief brought		
24	pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA"). Defendant denies the remaining		
25	allegations of this paragraph.		
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### **Jurisdiction and Venue**

- 2. This paragraph contains Plaintiff's conclusions of law regarding the scope and extent of the Court's jurisdiction, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is required, Defendant admits that this Court has jurisdiction over this action.
- 3. This paragraph contains Plaintiff's conclusions of law regarding the appropriate venue for this action, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is required, Defendant admits that venue is proper in this Court.

#### **Parties**

- 4. Defendant admits that Plaintiff lives at 1981 Empire Rd., VC Highlands, Nevada. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
  - 5. Defendant admits the allegations contained in this paragraph.

## Statement of Facts - Background

- 6. Defendant admits the allegations contained in the first sentence of this paragraph. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in the second and third sentences of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. The allegations contained in the fourth and fifth sentences of this paragraph purport to characterize documents attached to Plaintiff's second amended complaint. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required.
- 7. Defendant admits that Plaintiff contacted NASA Langley Research Center in May 2003. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 8. Defendant admits that patent counsel at NASA Langley Research Center ordered the United States Patent and Trademark Office prosecution histories for U.S. Patent Nos. 5,566,073 and 5,904,724. Defendant admits that the prosecution histories were ordered May 16,

2003. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

- 9. Defendant admits that Plaintiff was referred to the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel in June 2003 and spoke to Alan Kennedy. Defendant admits that Mr. Kennedy is no longer employed with NASA. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 10. Defendant admits that Plaintiff submitted information supporting an administrative claim for patent infringement to the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel in a letter dated June 17, 2003. The remaining allegations contained in the first sentence of this paragraph purport to characterize the contents of that letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 11. Defendant admits that Plaintiff did not receive a determination on his administrative claim for patent infringement by December 2003. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations regarding Mr. Kennedy's purported comments to Plaintiff as set forth in sections a. through e. of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. Defendant admits that Plaintiff sent a letter dated January 8, 2004 addressed to Mr. Kennedy. The allegations contained in this paragraph purport to characterize the contents of that letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant admits that no response to Plaintiff's January, 8, 2004 letter was sent and thus Plaintiff received no response thereto.
- 12. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

  Defendant admits that it has no record that Plaintiff contacted Defendant regarding the status of

his administrative claim for patent infringement after January 8, 2004. Defendant admits that it has no record of any contact by Plaintiff between January 8, 2004 and June 28, 2008 — the date Plaintiff filed his FOIA request.

13. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. Defendant admits that due to deficiencies in the United States Patent Office records relating to the alleged assignment of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,566,073 and 5,904,724, Defendant has been unable to definitively determine the current ownership of these patents. Defendant admits that it received notification from Optima Technology Group ("OTG") dated July 14, 2008 alleging that the patents had been assigned to OTG. Defendant further admits that OTG claimed that the patents were assigned in July 2004 — four years before the date notice was received by NASA.

#### **Statement of Facts – Current Case**

June 28, 2008. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in the first sentence of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. Defendant admits that the FOIA matter was assigned FOIA HQ 08-270. Defendant admits that Jan McNutt, who worked in the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel, was assigned to conduct a search for records responsive to Plaintiff's FOIA request. Defendant admits that Mr. McNutt sent Plaintiff a letter dated August 5, 2008. The allegations in this paragraph purport to characterize the contents of that letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at lines 15-18 of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. Defendant admits that Mr. McNutt is no longer employed with NASA. Defendant admits the allegation contained in the last sentence of this paragraph.

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15. Defendant admits the allegations contained in the first sentence of this paragraph. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

16. Defendant admits that it withheld documents, citing FOIA Exemption (b)(5), in its initial response to Plaintiff's request for records under the FOIA. Defendant admits that its first response to Defendant's request for records under the FOIA did not include the referenced March 19, 2009 letter from Gary Borda of the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel. Defendant admits that the March 19, 2009 letter from Mr. Borda is the final agency action on the administrative claim for patent infringement of U.S. Patent No. 5,904,724 originally filed by Plaintiff. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in the sentence at page 6, line 10 of this paragraph regarding Plaintiff's allegation that he received the letter from OTG and, on that basis, denies the allegation. The allegations contained in the sentence at page 6, lines 10-12, and in the sentences at page 6, line 16, through page 7, line 2, purport to characterize the contents of the March 19, 2009 letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the allegations contained at page 6, lines 12-14 of this paragraph. Defendant admits that the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel belatedly conducted the initial search of its files on Plaintiff's administrative claim in January 2009 and provided responsive documents to the NASA HQ FOIA office on January 22, 2009. Defendant admits that Plaintiff was advised on January 23, 2009 during a telephone call with Kellie Robinson, of the NASA Headquarters FOIA Office, that the FOIA Office had received the responsive documents resulting from the initial search for processing on January 22, 2009. Defendant admits that Mr. Borda's March 19, 2009 letter was created after the initial search was conducted and was therefore not within the scope of Plaintiff's FOIA request. Defendant denies the allegations contained at page 7, lines 4-5 of this paragraph and denies that any document that could constitute a "Borda Patent Report" was ever prepared, much less withheld. The

- allegations contained at page 7, line 7, through page 8, line 7, constitute legal conclusions to which no response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 8, lines 9-10 of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. Defendant admits that it did not provide an estimate of volume of withheld documents in its initial response to Plaintiff's FOIA request, as alleged at page 8, lines 12-13 of this paragraph.
  - 17. Defendant admits the allegations contained in this paragraph.
- 18. Defendant admits that Plaintiff spoke to Randolph Harris of the NASA Headquarters Office of General Counsel on July 21, 2009 and on July 22, 2009. Defendant admits that Mr. Harris lacked personal knowledge regarding the manner and timing of NASA's response to Plaintiff's FOIA appeal. Defendant admits that Mr. Harris declined to accept service on behalf of Defendant by USPS Express Mail. Defendant admits that Plaintiff e-mailed Mr. Harris a letter on July 21, 2009. The allegations contained in this paragraph purport to characterize the contents of that letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant lacks sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- Defendant admits that Mr. Harris did not reply to Plaintiff's July 21, 2009 letter. Defendant admits that Mr. McNutt sent Plaintiff an e-mail asking for a 20-day extension of time in which to respond to Plaintiff's FOIA appeal. That e-mail speaks for itself and is the best evidence of its contents. Defendant admits that, in a July 24, 2009 e-mail to Mr. McNutt, Plaintiff declined to provide the requested extension of time. That e-mail speaks for itself and is the best evidence of its contents. Defendant denies that NASA acted in bad faith or took improper advantage of any courtesies Plaintiff may have extended. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

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- 20. Defendant admits the allegations contained in this paragraph.
- 21. Defendant admits that it denied Plaintiff's FOIA appeal in a letter dated August 5, 2009. The allegations contained in this paragraph purport to characterize the contents of the August 5, 2009 letter. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 22. Defendant admits that it sent documents comprising a supplemental response to Plaintiff's June 2008 FOIA request in two boxes in November 2009 with a cover letter from Stephen L. McConnell, NASA FOIA Officer. Defendant admits that, upon further review of Defendant's FOIA request as a result of the instant litigation, Defendant determined that it would not be unreasonable to expand its search to include documents and electronic records at NASA Field Centers even though Plaintiff submitted his June 2008 FOIA request only to NASA Headquarters. Defendant admits that Plaintiff did not submit a FOIA request to any NASA Field Office seeking documents relating to the review of his administrative claim for infringement. Defendant admits that the cover letter stated that the supplemental response included approximately 4,000 pages of documents. Defendant admits that 4,000 is a number greater than 100. Defendant admits that it did not provide an index of the documents included in the supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request and that it had no duty to do so. Defendant admits that there are duplicates of documents included in the supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Defendant admits that certain documents were withheld from the supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request under FOIA Exemptions (b)3, (b)(4), (b)(5) and (b)(6). Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

Defendant denies the allegations contained at page 11, lines 11-14 of this

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- paragraph. Defendant admits that it has not provided any patent infringement analysis prepared by Mr. Frank Delgado to Plaintiff. Defendant admits that such pre-decisional information prepared at the request of Agency counsel was appropriately withheld under FOIA Exemption (b)(5). Defendant denies the allegations contained at page 11, lines 16-26, through page 12, lines 1-13, of this paragraph. Defendant denies the allegations in the first sentence of subsection b. of this paragraph and admits that a final agency determination was made on the administrative claim for infringement originally filed by Plaintiff on March 19, 2009 — the date that Mr. Borda, as the deciding official, issued his letter. The allegations contained in the second sentence of subsection b. of this paragraph constitute conclusions of law to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed required, the allegations contained in the second sentence of subsection b. of this paragraph are denied. Defendant denies the allegations contained in subsection c. of this paragraph. Defendant admits that it appropriately engaged in communications with Michael Abernathy, as Defendant's contractor, regarding the allegations of infringement initiated by Plaintiff. Defendant admits that certain communications between Defendant and Mr. Abernathy contained in the supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request were redacted. Defendant admits that its employees conducted a telephone conference that included Mr. Abernathy. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained in subsection d. of this paragraph. The allegations contained in subsection e. of this paragraph constitute conclusions of law to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed required, Defendant denies that Mr. Abernathy is Defendant's agent.
- 24. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegation that certain individuals are "major players," and, on that basis, denies that allegation.
- 25. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 14, lines 12-18 of this paragraph and, on that basis,

denies those allegations. Defendant admits that it has appropriately redacted or withheld certain 1 2 documents included in the supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request under 3 Exemptions (b)3, (b)(4), (b)(5) and (b)(6) of the FOIA. The allegations contained at page 15, 4 line 3, through page 18, line 39, purport to characterize certain documents contained in 5 Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA. Those documents speak for 6 themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. 7 Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 15, line 3, through page 18, line 8 39. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the 9 allegations contained at page 19, line 1, through page 20, line 2, and, on that basis, denies those 10 allegations. Defendant denies the allegations contained at page 20, lines 4-6. Defendant lacks 11 sufficient knowledge and information to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained 12 at page 20, lines 8-26, and, on that basis, denies those allegations. The allegations contained at 13 page 21, line 1, through page 24, line 8, purport to characterize certain documents contained in 14 Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for 15 themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies that it made a determination with regard to Plaintiff's claim in July 2004. The 16 17 remaining allegations contained at page 24, lines 11-22, constitute legal conclusions to which no 18 response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as 19 to the truth of the allegations contained at page 24, line 24, through page 25, line 3, and, on that 20 basis, denies those allegations.

26. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

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27. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 25, lines 12-20, of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. The allegations contained at page 25, line 21, through page 39, line 4, purport to characterize certain documents contained in Defendant's supplemental response to

Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 25, line 21, through page 39, line 4, of this paragraph.

- 28. Defendant admits that it did not file a Request for Reexamination on U.S. Patent Nos. 5,566,073 and 5,904,724. Defendant denies the allegations contained in page 39, lines 9-21 of this paragraph. The allegations contained at page 39, line 23, through page 40, line 15, constitute conclusions of law to which no response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the allegations contained in the last sentence of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 29. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 40, line 20, through page 43, line 12, of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. The allegations contained at page 43, line 14, through page 67, line 17, purport to characterize certain documents contained in Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained in this paragraph.
- 30. Defendant admits the allegations contained at page 67, lines 21-29, except that Plaintiff filed his FOIA request on June 28, 2008 and Mr. McNutt requested a 90-day extension on August 5, 2008. The allegations contained at page 67, line 31, through page 70, line 8, purport to characterize certain documents contained in Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 67, line 31, through page 70, line 8.
- 31. The allegations contained at page 70, lines 10-25, purport to characterize certain documents contained in Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request.

  Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus

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- 32. The allegations contained at page 74, line 9, through page 76, line 3, purport to characterize certain documents in Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 74, line 9, through page 76, line 3, in this paragraph. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 76, lines 6-18 and, on that basis, denies the allegations. The allegations contained at page 76, lines 20-30, purport to characterize a technical report. That document speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 76, lines 20-30 of this paragraph. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained at page 77, lines 1-19 of this paragraph and, on that basis, denies those allegations. The allegations contained at page 77, line 20, through page 84, line 25, purport to characterize certain documents contained in Defendant's supplemental response to Plaintiff's 2008 FOIA request. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies the remaining allegations contained at page 77, line 20, through page 84, line 25, of this paragraph.
- 33. Defendant admits that Jeffrey L. Fox, a NASA civil servant employee at Johnson Space Center, contributed to an article entitled <u>Synthetic Vision Technology for Unmanned</u>

Systems: Looking Back and Looking Forward. Defendant denies that NASA has withheld documents that are not exempt from production. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 33 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

- 34. Defendant admits that Plaintiff sent an electronic copy of a document named "auvsi\_answer.pdf" to Mr. McNutt. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 34 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 35. The allegations contained in this paragraph consist of Plaintiff's characterization of certain documents that are attached to the second amended complaint. Those documents speak for themselves and contain the best evidence of their contents and thus no response is required. Defendant denies that it is engaging in a war against Plaintiff and admits that doing so would be especially difficult during the four and a half year period between January 2004 and July 2008 when neither Plaintiff nor OTC communicated at all with Defendant regarding the patent claim. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 35 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 36. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in Paragraph 36 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.
- 37. Defendant denies that it has acted illegally or inappropriately, as Plaintiff suggests at pages 94-95. The allegations at page 95, lines 1-11 purport to characterize the contents of a letter from Mr. McNutt to Plaintiff. That letter speaks for itself and contains the best evidence of its contents and thus no response is required. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 37 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

38. The Court is respectfully referred to Section 1207.103 of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations for a full and accurate description of its contents. Defendant denies that unethical and/or criminal acts were committed by, at the behest of, or with knowledge of NASA's Office of the General Counsel. Defendant lacks knowledge and information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 38 and, on that basis, denies those allegations.

## **Cause of Action**

## (Breach of Duty to Disclose Responsive Documents)

- 39. Defendant repeats and re-alleges the responses made in paragraphs 1-38.
- 40. The allegations contained in this paragraph constitute conclusions of law to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed required, Defendant denies the allegations.
- 41. Defendant admits that Plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies under the FOIA.

The remaining paragraphs of the complaint contain Plaintiff's requested relief, to which no response is required. To the extent a response is deemed necessary, Defendant denies the allegations. Defendant further denies all allegations of the complaint not previously expressly admitted.

#### **Affirmative Defenses**

AS A FIRST AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE, defendant avers that the FOIA request that is the subject of this lawsuit implicates information that is protected from disclosure by one or more statutory exemptions, including, but not limited to, Exemptions (b)3, (b)(4), (b)(5) and (b)(6) of the FOIA. Disclosure of such information is not required or permitted.

Defendant reserves the right to amend its answer with additional defenses of which it may become aware and to raise any other matter constituting an avoidance or affirmative defense.

# Case 3:09-cv-00421-LRH-VPC Document 30 Filed 04/12/10 Page 14 of 15

1	WHEREFORE, Defendant prays for judgment as follows:
2	1. That judgement be entered in favor of Defendant and against Plaintiff;
3	2. That Plaintiff take nothing by way of his complaint;
4	3. For costs of suit; and
5	4. For such other relief as may be proper.
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7	Respectfully submitted,
8	DANIEL G. BOGDEN United States Attorney
9	Officed States Attorney
10	_/s/ Holly A. Vance
11	HOLLY A. VANCE Assistant United States Attorney
12	Assistant Office States Attorney
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## Case 3:09-cv-00421-LRH-VPC Document 30 Filed 04/12/10 Page 15 of 15 **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE** JED MARGOLIN, Case No. 3:09-CV-00421-LRH-VPC Plaintiff, v. NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION, Defendant. The undersigned hereby certifies that service of the foregoing ANSWER TO SECOND **AMENDED COMPLAINT** has been made by electronic notification through the Court's electronic filing system or, as appropriate, by sending a copy by first-class mail to the following addressee(s) on April 12, 2010: JED MARGOLIN 1981 Empire Road VC Highlands, NV 89521-7430 /s/ Holly A. Vance