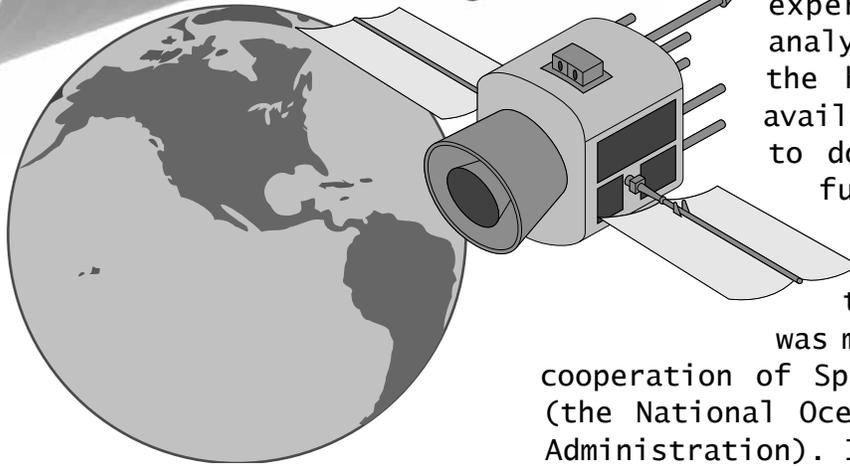


TIGHAR in Space



On Monday, April 16, 2001 at 21:59 Zulu the Lockheed/Martin IKONOS 2 satellite looked down from space and captured two images of Nikumaroro specifically for TIGHAR: a black and white panchromatic image with one meter resolution and a four-band multispectral color image with four meter resolution. We have not yet seen the imagery but the quality is reported to be excellent and basically cloud-free.

As reported in the February 2001 issue of *TIGHAR Tracks*, the acquisition of this imagery was contracted through Space Imaging, Inc. of Thornton, Colorado but the actual arrangements turned out to be far more unusual and fortuitous than we had originally anticipated.

Ordering custom satellite photos is a bit different from hiring a photographer to take pictures. The customer does not own the images outright but rather purchases the rights to use the images in specific ways via a licensing agreement. As reported earlier, we thought that the project would cost \$6,000 but, as it turned out, our intended use of the imagery - analysis for research purposes and reproduction for the TIGHAR membership - carried a far higher price tag. Further complicating

the issue was the fact that we do not have the expertise internally to analyze the data. Making the high resolution data available to another entity to do the analysis would further increase the cost.

A creative solution to the problem was made possible with the cooperation of Space Imaging and NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). It seems that NOAA is conducting a study of the world's coral reefs to assess their health and the environmental factors threatening them. The reef at Nikumaroro is one of the few pristine examples left but, because it's not U.S. territory, NOAA is not able to spend money to take pictures of it. The deal we worked out is that TIGHAR will pay for the acquisition of the imagery. We'll share it with NOAA who will both analyze it for our research purposes and use it in their own coral reef study, and we'll be able to make pretty pictures of Niku available to our members with proper credit to Space Imaging. The cost of all this to TIGHAR is \$3,000, half of what we originally anticipated.

It's still \$3,000 that was not in the budget but contributions in response to February's appeal have already covered two-thirds of that amount. Jim Thompson (TIGHAR #2185) of Select GIS Services, Inc. has been a major contributor to this project and has generously offered to match dollar-for-dollar all contributions toward covering that last thousand bucks. Send at least \$100 and we'll send you an 8x10 color copy of the satellite photo of Nikumaroro - and Jim will double your money for us.

Analysis of the imagery is scheduled for early May and we should be able to report the results in next month's *TIGHAR Tracks*.