

NASA ADVISORY COUNCIL
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Washington, DC 20546
Hon. Harrison H. Schmitt, Chairman

August 22, 2006

The Honorable Michael D. Griffin
Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Washington, DC 20546

Mike
Dear Dr. Griffin:

The NASA Advisory Council held our fourth meeting of the fiscal year on July 20, 2006 at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. While at JSC, the Council received an excellent tour and heard from several NASA representatives in fact-finding sessions.

During the public meeting, the Council engaged in spirited discussion and eventually approved the following three recommendations for transmittal to NASA. A short description of each of these recommendations and findings is included below and further background for each is enclosed. These are being sent on behalf of the entire Council, but for ease of reference is arranged by the committee from which they originated. With regard to the Science recommendation, as we have discussed, I will ask the Science Committee to consider for this and earlier recommendations what programmatic sources of funding would they recommend for reductions in order to implement such recommendations.

Audit and Finance

- 1) The Administrator should examine the feasibility of adopting Johnson Space Center's (JSC) Error Tracking Tool as a means of reducing/eliminating transaction errors from posting to Systems Applications and Products' (SAP) General ledger. (AF-06-4)
- 2) Use a customer satisfaction survey tool to capture the results of the financial management communities' satisfaction of contractor/vendor provided services/ products. (AF-06-5)

Science

- 3) SMD should fund scientific exploitation of Lunar Precursor and Robotic Program (LPRP) missions, including:
 - Participating scientists and data analysis from LPRP missions as well as international missions
 - Critical exploration product generation from existing datasets
 - Long term archive planning for LPRP and Constellation measurement sets through the Planetary Data System (S-06-8)

Best Regards,



Harrison H. Schmitt
Chairman

Enclosures (3)

NASA Advisory Council
Committee Recommendations
Tracking Number: AF-06-4

Committee name: Audit and Finance Committee

Chair: Mr. Robert Hanisee

Date of public deliberation: July 20, 2006

Date of transmission: August 22, 2006

Short title of the Recommendation

JSC Error Tracking Tool

Short description of the Recommendation

The Administrator should examine the feasibility of adopting Johnson Space Center's (JSC) Error Tracking Tool as a means of reducing/eliminating transaction errors from posting to Systems Applications and Products' (SAP) General ledger.

Major reasons for proposing the Council make the Recommendation

Adoption of Error Tracking Tool would significantly reduce the number of transaction errors and the man-hours required to reverse the errant transaction and repost the correct transactions.

Consequences of no action on the Recommendation

The Offices of the Chief Financial Officer will continue to expend a significant amount of resources correcting and reposting errant transactions, when the resources could be utilized performing other duties.

NASA Advisory Council
Committee Recommendations
Tracking Number: AF-06-5

Committee name: Audit and Finance Committee

Chair: Mr. Robert Hanisee

Date of public deliberation: July 20, 2006

Date of transmission: August 22, 2006

Short title of the Recommendation

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Short description of the Recommendation

Use a customer satisfaction survey tool to capture the results of the financial management communities' satisfaction of contractor/vendor provided services/products.

Major reasons for proposing the Council make the Recommendation

The Committee's fact finding discussions revealed that contractors are more responsive to their customer needs if they are periodically being graded by the customer. A customer service satisfaction survey may help NASA financial management ensure that their needs are being met through the existing partner relationships with vendors and contractors.

Consequences of no action on the Recommendation

It could represent a missed opportunity to improve contractor responsiveness to the organization's needs.

NASA Advisory Council
Committee Recommendations
Tracking Number: S-06-8

Committee Name: Science

Chair: Charles F. Kennel

Date of Public Deliberation: July 20, 2006

Date of Transmission: August 22, 2006

Short title of the proposed Recommendation

Funding science activities for Lunar Precursor and Robotic Program (LPRP) missions

Short description of the proposed Recommendation

SMD should fund scientific exploitation of LPRP missions, including:

- Participating scientists and data analysis from LPRP missions as well as international missions
- Critical exploration product generation from existing datasets
- Long term archive planning for LPRP and Constellation measurement sets through the Planetary Data System

Outline of the major reasons for proposing the Recommendation

LPRP missions will yield substantial quantities of data of significant scientific value. As with other robotic missions, cadres of scientists must be involved at key phases of development, operations, and post-mission data management and analysis in order to realize the full benefit of the investment in the missions. Analysis and product generation from existing datasets will sharpen the ability of the science community to make better informed decisions in terms of advising LPRP and Constellation measurement strategies.

Outline the consequences of no action on the proposed Recommendation

Instrument calibration for the first LPRP mission is rapidly approaching. If participating scientists are not funded to engage in calibration activities, the science community will not have sufficient knowledgeable personnel to derive science value from the data that is returned. NASA must also secure long-term stewardship of these data in order to assure their continued availability to inform future exploration missions and science investigations. Ongoing planning for LPRP data acquisition strategies will suffer without analysis of existing datasets.