

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
Response to Request for Review of Information under
NASA's Information Quality Guidelines**

Summary of Request

This memorandum pertains to a request for correction of information under NASA's Information Quality Guidelines dated October 31, 2002. The request was sent according to the mechanisms outlined in NASA's Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information, and included the information required by Section D of the Guidelines (the Administrative Mechanisms section).

The request questions the validity of a website article, "Mars Rover Beginning To Hate Mars", (October 24, 2006) as found on the following website:
<<http://www.theonion.com/content/node/54360>> .

NASA considered the request for review and conducted a review of the information in question under the NASA Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information. For the reasons set forth below, NASA has determined that the information presented in the web article is untrue. NASA has provided a response directly to the requestor.

Background

The Mars Exploration Rover program is managed for NASA by Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), a division of the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California. NASA's, JPL designed and built the two new rovers plus the lander and the cruise stage for each.

Launch Information:

Both rovers were launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on central Florida's Space Coast. Spirit ascended in daylight on June 10, 2003. Opportunity followed with a nighttime launch on July 7, 2003.

Fast Facts:

Spirit's arrival on Mars: Jan. 3, 2004

Opportunity's arrival on Mars: January 24, 2004

Science instruments: Panoramic camera, miniature thermal emission spectrometer, Mössbauer spectrometer, alpha proton X-ray spectrometer, microscopic imager

Overview:

Each rover may trek as much as 40 meters (44 yards) across the surface in a day. Each rover carries a sophisticated set of instruments to search for evidence of liquid water that may have been present in the planet's past. The rovers are identical to each other, but landed at different regions of Mars.

The landing for each rover resembled that of the Pathfinder mission but features a design dramatically different from Mars Pathfinder. Pathfinder had scientific instruments on both the lander and the small Sojourner rover, however Spirit and Opportunity carry all their instruments with them. Each rover began reconnaissance of the landing site immediately after landing. Using images and spectra taken daily from the rovers, scientists command the vehicle to go to rock and soil targets of interest and evaluate their composition and their texture at microscopic scales.

The Mars Exploration Rovers have traversed more than 10 kilometers over the Martian surface, using a combination of vision-enhanced autonomous drives and simple directed moves in which operators tell them where to go and motions are executed without taking pictures. Rocks and soils have been analyzed with a set of five instruments on each rover, and a special device called the rock abrasion tool will be used to expose fresh rock surfaces for study.

Review and Analysis

The information presented on the Mars Exploration Rovers as documented in the web article located on the website, "The Orion" is fictitious. Additionally, the information found in relation to this subject on this website is fictitious. A review and analysis of the origin of this web article revealed that neither NASA, the Mars Exploration Project, nor any of the individuals quoted in the write-up had any contact with "The Orion" in producing this web article, nor did any individuals at NASA have knowledge of the write-up before it appeared on the Internet.

All of the alleged quotes that are cited in the write-up are fabrications. Dr. John Callas has personally verified that he never stated any of the attributed quotes in the web article. Furthermore, none of the alleged Rover behaviors described in this web article are true.

NASA's Position on this Web Article

NASA's review of this web article and the information describing the alleged behaviors of the rover are untrue. The information quoted in the article is unfounded and there is no accuracy in what has been reported and quoted in the article. NASA disputes the article.

Opportunity for Appeal

If the requestor does not agree with NASA's response regarding this request, an appeal may be initiated within 60 calendar days of the decision.