

Office of Inspector General
Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20546-0001

Reply to Attn of: W

November 24, 1999

TO: Chairman, Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel
Q/Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance

FROM: W/Assistant Inspector General for Inspections, Administrative
Investigations, and Assessments

SUBJECT: Follow-up Assessment on 1997 Inspection of the NASA Aerospace Safety
Advisory Panel (ASAP), G-99-020

This assessment is a follow-up of our inspection report (G-96-005) issued on March 11, 1997, on the same subject (See Appendix A). Our initial inspection made the following two recommendations:

- (1) The Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance [should] ensure an effective balance of the Panel's membership to meet program needs.
- (2) Further, the ASAP chair, with the assistance of the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, [should] expand the list of potentially available consultants so that additional, complementary expertise is available to enhance the relevance and value of technical recommendations.¹

As part of our follow-up assessment, we interviewed senior officials and staff members at NASA Headquarters. We also reviewed ASAP reports and other relevant documents. Our review revealed that actions by NASA management and the ASAP have resulted in improvements in the balance and diversity of ASAP membership. We include an additional recommendation for further improvements.

I. BACKGROUND

Congress established the ASAP in 1968 under Public Law 90-67. The ASAP is an independent safety review committee charged with advising the NASA Administrator (Administrator) and Congress on safety systems and operational safety. The ASAP is comprised of 15 individuals serving as either an appointed member or as a consultant. The Administrator appoints nine ASAP members. Each member serves a 6-year term; however,

¹ *Inspection of the NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel, Activity No. G-96-005, March 11, 1997.*

the Administrator also approves a member's reappointment to the ASAP. The ASAP members select six consultants who are then approved by the Administrator. Consultant appointments must be renewed annually. The Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance (Code Q) provides support services to the ASAP that include an Executive Director and other full time NASA Code Q employees.

II. FOLLOW-UP RESULTS

Since our initial inspection, of the 15 positions available on the ASAP, 7 positions opened for either membership or consultant status. Of the seven positions filled, four appointees are new to the ASAP, while three existing ASAP members were reappointed. For two of those individuals, it was their second reappointment. The potential tenure of the two panel members is 18 years. Table 1 reflects the distribution of the appointments to ASAP positions as of August 1999 and the employment background of those appointed to positions.

Table 1. Appointments to ASAP Positions as of August 1999 Reflecting Employment Background

	Panel Members Employment Background*			Consultants Employment Background*		
	Government	Industry	Academia	Government	Industry	Academia
New	1	-	-	2	1	-
Reappointment	1	1	1	-	-	-
Existing	2	3	-	1	1	1
TOTAL 15	4	4	1	3	2	1

*Note: Several ASAP members had crosscutting employment backgrounds. We categorized those members according to the sector in which they spent the preponderance of their employment

Our review of individual resumé files maintained by the ASAP Executive Director of potentially available consultants included numerous and current recommendations from unsolicited government and industry sources. Although this information is not currently available as a list, the Executive Director is in the process of preparing one sorted primarily by area of expertise.

Since our March 1997 report, in addition to the existing female panel member, the ASAP appointed a woman consultant and NASA assigned a woman as Executive Director of the ASAP. We also note that in the 30-year history of the ASAP there is no record of minorities serving either as panel members or as consultants. However, the appointment of a minority ASAP consultant is awaiting formal approval as of the date of this report. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (Code E) indicated that it would assist NASA management and the ASAP in their search for additional minority and women candidates. Table 2 compares the March 1997 demographics of the ASAP with those we noted in August 1999.

Table 2. Demographic Comparison of ASAP Members

	As of March 1997	As of August 1999
ASAP Positions Held by Minorities	0	0 ¹
ASAP Positions Held by Women ²	1	2
Reappointments of Existing Panel Members	5	3
Served as Both a Panel Member and a Consultant	9	7
-Average Total Service in Years ³	13.4	15.1
Median Age of Those Holding ASAP Positions	70	68

¹An appointment of a minority ASAP consultant is pending as of the date of this report.

²As of August 1999, the representation of women on the ASAP was one panel member, one consultant, and an Executive Director.

³Estimated to expiration of current appointments.

Recommendation: We recommend that the Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance and the ASAP Chairman develop and implement a recruitment plan. It should include provisions for advertising and widely circulating a request for nominees inside NASA and in external publications and organizations.

III. SUMMARY OF NASA MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

NASA management's response was received on November 4, 1999, and is shown in its entirety in Appendix B. NASA management concurred with the recommendation and went on to state that:

The substance of this recommendation is consistent with plans that have already been placed into effect by the ASAP. Each Panel member and consultant has been tasked with identifying technical skills that the Panel might need to meet its mission in the future. Potential candidates with these diverse skills will be solicited from within NASA, through networking by current Panel participants and from contacts external to NASA. Our objective is to prepare a resource list of potential members and consultants that can provide us with rapid access to augmented or replacement talent when needed.

IV. EVALUATION OF MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

NASA management's comments are responsive to our recommendation.

V. CONCLUSION

NASA and the ASAP completed a number of steps to improve balance in the panel membership and supporting consultants. In general, actions to date by NASA and the ASAP have resulted in improvements in the balance and diversity of ASAP membership. We believe further management actions will improve the performance and representation of the ASAP.

[original signed by]

David M. Cushing

3 Enclosures

Appendix A: Inspection of the NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel Activity
No. G-96-005

Appendix B: NASA Management Response

Appendix C: Report Distribution

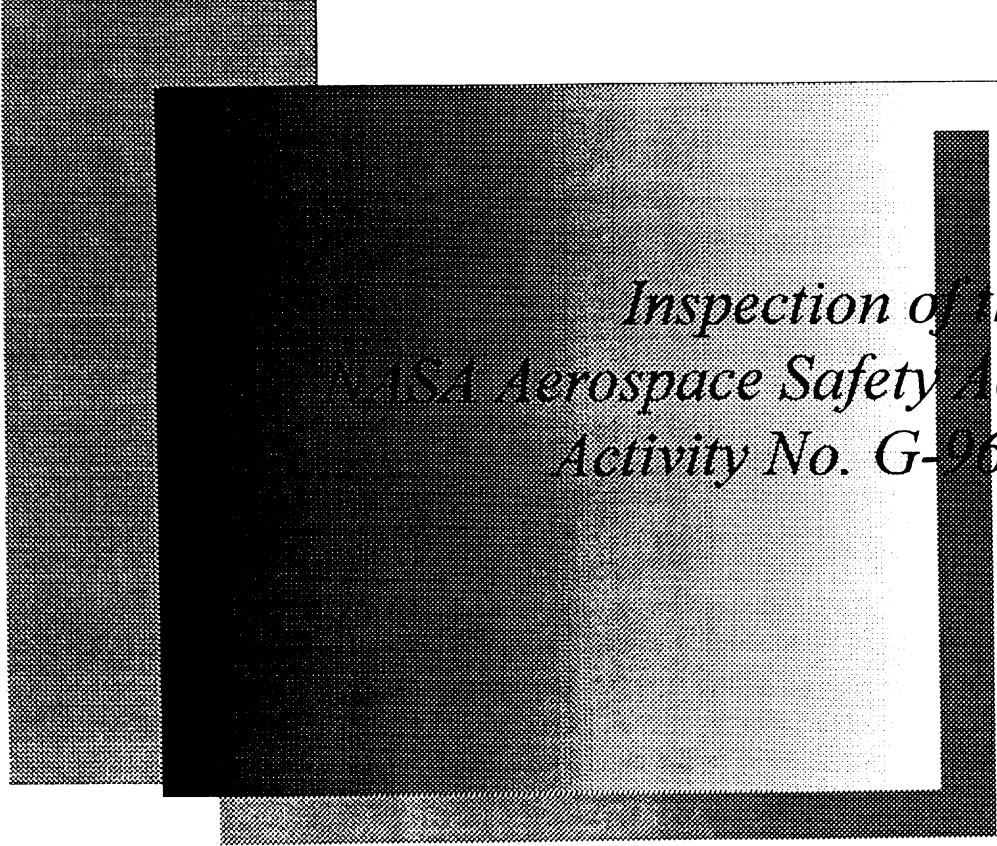
APPENDIX A

**Inspection of the NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel
Activity No. G-96-005**

NASA
Office of Inspector General
Inspections & Assessments



Inspection of the
NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel
Activity No. G-96-005



March 11, 1997

NASA Office of Inspector General

Inspections & Assessments

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To obtain additional copies of this inspection and assessment report, contact the Assistant Inspector General for Inspections and Assessments at 202-358-1229.

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Washington, DC 20546

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**NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
INSPECTIONS & ASSESSMENTS**

Inspection Report

SUBJECT: NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory
Panel

DATE OF REPORT: 03/11/97

LOCATION: NASA Headquarters

CASE NUMBER: G-96-005

SYNOPSIS: The purpose of this inspection was to assess the continued need for the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel (ASAP/the Panel) (See Exhibit 1 for scope and methodology). Uniformly, interviewees favored the concept of an independent and respected ASAP as a necessary and potentially vital component of NASA's program management and Congressional interface. However, we found sufficient criticism by those interviewed to recommend that:

(1) the Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance, ensure an effective balance of the Panel's membership to meet program needs; and

(2) further, the ASAP chair, with the assistance of the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, expand the list of potentially available consultants so that additional, complementary expertise is available to enhance the relevance and value of technical recommendations.

Analyst/Investigator:


Elaine T. Schwartz

Assistant Inspector General for Inspections & Assessments:


David M. Cushing

Background

The ASAP, established by Congress as part of the NASA Authorization Act of 1968, Public Law 90-67 (Exhibit 2), is an independent safety review body charged with advising the NASA Administrator and Congress on safety systems and operational safety. Its establishment was precipitated by the Apollo 204 spacecraft fire in January 1967.

The February 1995 "NASA Federal Laboratory Review," directed by the National Science and Technology Council, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), included a finding that NASA programs were burdened by excessive reviews and audits. The report recommended that internal program reviews be reduced and that "duplications such as the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel should be stopped." The task force made this statement specifically in reference to the International Space Station (ISS) program, describing the ASAP as duplicative of the ISS Independent Assessment Panel (Exhibit 3).

NASA's August 23, 1996, response to OSTP addressed general recommendations about both internal and independent reviews, but did not specifically address the ASAP.

The ASAP Concept

The ASAP is a senior advisory committee that reports to NASA and Congress. The Panel's statutory duties, as prescribed in Section 6 of the NASA Authorization Act of 1968, are to review safety studies and operations plans and to advise the Administrator on safety issues. The Panel also keeps the House Committee on Science and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation fully informed of its activities and recommendations. NASA managers and working level engineers believe that it is important to have a group that provides independent oversight of NASA's safety structure and operations. Such oversight from a well-respected group can furnish technical expertise and validation, surface important questions, and provide an unfiltered avenue for employee and contractor concerns. Recommendations from a prestigious external body carry great weight and often serve to focus high level attention on important issues that might otherwise be ignored or dismissed.

The ASAP

The ASAP remains a necessary and potentially vital component of NASA's program management and Congressional interface. The degree to which current and recent ASAP Panels fulfill their important role is the subject of varying perceptions. While some people voiced their respect for the Panel, a number of Center and Headquarters officials believe that the Panel's technical recommendations comprise superficial findings on issues about which managers are already aware. This observation was especially voiced with respect to ASAP recommendations regarding the ISS.

Some interviewees were critical that the Panel does not have adequate time or breadth of expertise to thoroughly study the agenda it undertakes. Others believe that the Panel focuses on areas of personal interest instead of on critical issues. Some believe the Panel's value would be enhanced through refining its focus from detailed engineering questions to safety management and process issues. Finally, many were critical of the members' excessively long association with NASA for two main reasons: (1) stable long-term membership may mean that the Panel's competencies do not change to mirror program developments; and (2) the members' long incumbencies may interfere with their independence, objectivity, and willingness to delve into areas of substance and controversy. On the other hand, some interviewees were impressed with the Panel's knowledge and experience and believed that long-term membership is essential to gaining critical program knowledge and institutional memory.

Finally, NASA managers agreed with two former Congressional staffers that the ASAP plays an important role validating safety practices and putting their imprimatur on important debates. The Panel, with its statutory mandate and high level of reporting (e.g., Congress) helps to focus attention and effect action considered necessary by NASA and/or Congressional committee members.

Most of the people interviewed, therefore, believe that the ASAP should be strengthened - not eliminated. They believe that strengthening membership is the first step to providing fresh perspectives and increased vitality. Recent additions to the Panel are a good beginning in this direction.

Panel Composition and Tenure

The statute establishing the ASAP is silent on reappointments. Between December 1967 and 1994, the governing NASA policy documents, NASA Management Instruction (NMI) 1156.14, likewise, did not address reappointments.

More often than not, however, Panel members were appointed to a second 6-year term. In 1994, the NMI was revised to require agreement of the Administrator before a member's appointment to a second term (NMI 1156.14M). While now documented, reappointments continue to be largely routine, with 5 of the 9 members currently serving second 6-year terms. There are a total of 15 individuals serving as Panel members or as consultants. (In operation, there is little distinction between members and consultants.) Of the 15, only 6 have not served multiple appointments as both consultant and member. The 9 appointed prior to 1992 will average a total of more than 13.4 years of service when present appointments expire. This average will likely be higher as consultants' appointments must be made annually, but have traditionally been renewed for several years.

The median age for members and consultants is 70 with 7 members between the ages of 71 and 80. Eight of the 15 members are listed as retired. According to NASA records and verified by staff, the ASAP has never had a minority member in its entire 28-year history. The first and only woman was appointed 2 years ago.

Management Response

A copy of management's response to the draft report is included in this report as Appendix II.

Comment on Response #1

The OIG agrees that the panel should be comprised of the most highly qualified individuals from private industry, academia, and the government. Such a group, in the opinion of a majority of those we interviewed, should be distinguished by its diversity of experience, education, viewpoint, and longevity. A cadre of panel members with long term experience and in-depth NASA knowledge is important, but to be most effective, this group must be routinely infused with the fresh perspectives of new, diverse members.

Comment on Response #2

The OIG understands that the panel has the ultimate responsibility for staffing. This is entirely appropriate for an independent review body. We are recommending that the Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, in its administrative support role, assist the panel in locating qualified consultants.

Exhibit 1

Scope and Methodology

I&A interviewed NASA Headquarters and field center personnel from safety, program, and staff organizations, ASAP Panel members, and former Congressional committee staff. We focused our interviews on personnel from Safety and Mission Assurance offices, Space Station, and Shuttle organizations at the Johnson Space Center, Marshall Space Flight Center, and Kennedy Space Center. We also reviewed Panel reports, budgets, and other relevant documents.

Exhibit 2



**UNITED STATES
CODE SERVICE**



Lawyers Edition

All federal laws of a general and permanent nature arranged in accordance with the section numbering of the United States Code and the supplements thereto.

42 USCS

**The Public Health and
Welfare**

§§ 2000e-6 – 2570

1996



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Aqueduct Building, Rochester, New York 14694

mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation" for "Committee on Aeronautical and Space Sciences".

§ 2476b. Donations for space shuttle orbiter

(a) The Administrator may accept gifts and donations of services, money, and real, personal, tangible, and intangible property, and use such gifts and donations for the construction of a space shuttle orbiter.

(b)(1) The authority of the Administrator to accept gifts or donations pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall terminate five years after the date of the enactment of this section [enacted Oct. 30, 1987].

(2) All gifts and donations accepted by the Administrator pursuant to subsection (a) of this section which are not needed for construction of a space shuttle orbiter shall be used by the Administrator for an appropriate purpose—

(A) in tribute to the dedicated crew of the space shuttle Challenger; and

(B) in furtherance of the exploration of space.

(c) The name of a space shuttle orbiter constructed in whole or in part with gifts or donations whose acceptance and use are authorized by subsection (a) of this section shall be selected by the Administrator from among suggestions submitted by students in elementary and secondary schools.

(July 29, 1958, P. L. 85-568, Title II, § 208, as added Oct. 30, 1987, P. L. 100-147, Title I, § 115, 101 Stat. 866.)

CROSS REFERENCES

This section is referred to in 42 USCS § 2467a.

§ 2477. Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel; membership; appointment; term; powers and duties of Panel; Chairman; compensation, travel and other necessary expenses; NASA membership restriction

There is hereby established an Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel consisting of a maximum of nine members who shall be appointed by the Administrator for terms of six years each. The Panel shall review safety studies and operations plans referred to it and shall make reports thereon, shall advise the Administrator with respect to the hazards of proposed or existing facilities and proposed operations and with respect to the adequacy of proposed or existing safety standards and shall perform such other duties as the Administrator may request. One member shall be designated by the Panel as its Chairman. Members of the Panel who are officers or employees of the Federal Government shall receive no compensation for their services as such, but shall be allowed necessary travel expenses (or in the alternative, mileage for use of privately owned vehicles and a per diem in lieu of subsistence not to exceed the rates and amounts prescribed in 5 USC 5702, 5704 [5 USCS §§ 5702, 5704]), and other necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of duties vested in the Panel, without regard to the provisions of

subchapter I, chapter 57 of title 5 of the United States Code [5 USCS §§ 5701 et seq.], the Standardized Government Travel Regulations, or 5 USC 5731 [5 USCS § 5731]. Members of the Panel appointed from outside the Federal Government shall each receive compensation at a rate not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the rate for GS-18 for each day such member is engaged in the actual performance of duties vested in the Panel in addition to reimbursement for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing sentence. Not more than four such members shall be chosen from among the officers and employees of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(Aug. 21, 1967, P. L. 90-67, § 6, 81 Stat. 170; June 4, 1976, P. L. 94-307, § 8, 90 Stat. 681; Jan. 2, 1986, P. L. 99-234, Title I, § 107(f), 99 Stat. 1759.)

HISTORY; ANCILLARY LAWS AND DIRECTIVES

Amendments:

1976. Act June 4, 1976, substituted "a rate not to exceed the per diem rate equivalent to the rate for GS-18" for "the rate of \$100".

1986. Act Jan. 2, 1986, substituted "rates and amounts" for "rates".

Other provisions:

Promulgation of regulations and effective date of amendments made by Act Jan. 2, 1986. For provisions relating to promulgation of regulations and for the effective date of the amendments made to this section see Act Jan. 2, 1986, P. L. 99-334, Title III, § 301, 99 Stat. 1760, which appears as 5 USCS § 5701 note.

RESEARCH GUIDE

Am Jur:

70A Am Jur 2d, Space Law § 4.

UPPER ATMOSPHERE RESEARCH

§ 2481. Purpose and policy

(a) The purpose of this title [42 USCS §§ 2481 et seq.] is to authorize and direct the Administration to develop and carry out a comprehensive program of research, technology, and monitoring of the phenomena of the upper atmosphere so as to provide for an understanding of and to maintain the chemical and physical integrity of the Earth's upper atmosphere.

(b) The Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States to undertake an immediate and appropriate research, technology, and monitoring program that will provide for understanding the physics and chemistry of the Earth's upper atmosphere.

(July 29, 1958, P. L. 85-568, Title IV, § 401, as added June 19, 1975, P. L. 94-39, § 8, 89 Stat. 222.)

RESEARCH GUIDE

Am Jur:

70A Am Jur 2d, Space Law § 3.

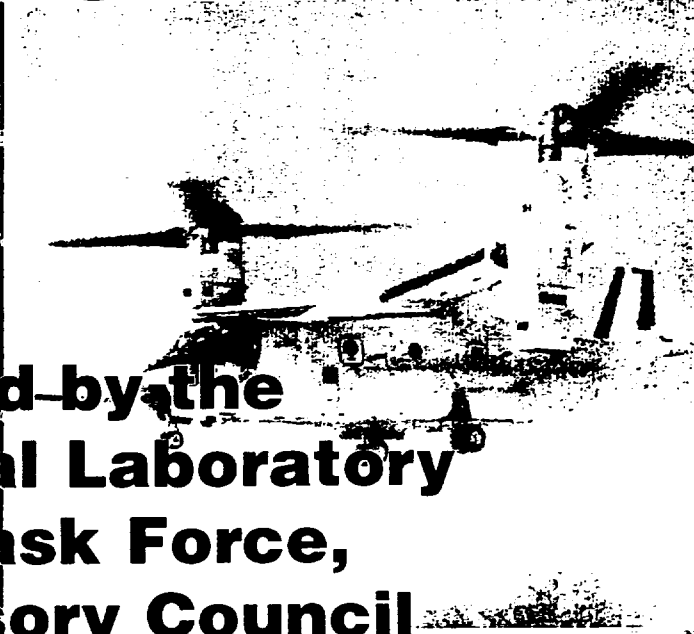

Immigration Law Service:

2 Immigration Law Service, Employment § 24:30.

Exhibit 3



NASA Federal Laboratory Review



**Prepared by the
NASA Federal Laboratory
Review Task Force,
NASA Advisory Council**



February 1995

NASA Federal Laboratory Review

Executive Orders or for its own knowledge of programs.

Some planned program reviews are based on NASA Management Instruction (NMI) 7120.4, which establishes management policies and responsibilities for major system programs and projects as well as minimum numbers of program reviews.

There are several recurring reviews, such as the Functional Review, Accounting Review, Procurement Review, Self Assessment Review, and budget review. These reviews occur once every 2 or 3 years, with the exception of the annual budget review. A budget review takes about 6 months and involves all Centers and Headquarters.

In FY94, 98 internal audits were conducted at JPL. Some were requested by JPL; others were requested by NASA.

In FY94, there were several major unplanned internal reviews that involved all the field Centers, and many of them are still in process (for example, Administrator's visit, Chief Scientist visit, Chief Engineer visit, Zero Base Review, Streamlining (National Performance Review), Project Reliance, Institutional Restructuring Review, and National Facilities Study). Similar reviews are likely to be scheduled in 1995.

External planned reviews are those that outside organizations, such as General Accounting Office (GAO), conduct on NASA activities. GAO concluded 37 reports on NASA activities in FY94. The subjects of these audits vary from "Model to Predict Global Warming" to "Position Classification." GAO is known to be working on 20 reviews in FY95, although the results of a recent GAO conference on NASA may alter this information.

In FY94, the Office of Inspector General (IG) of NASA performed 116 audits in the Centers (including JPL) and Headquarters. The subjects of the audits varied from "Methods of Determining U.S. Aeronautical Research Needs" to "NASA Accounting and Financial Information

System." The IG plans to conduct 134 audits in FY95.

The Space Station alone has 22 external and internal committees identified to provide independent review, although several of these are not active. Some of these are overlapping. The congressionally mandated Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel is a time-consuming duplication of the ISSA Program Independent Assessment Panel, which provides the same service but in more depth.

A rough and incomplete summary of the reviews is:

Special Visits & Reviews (All Centers)	80
Program Reviews (All Centers)	125
GAO	40
OIG (NASA)	120
Congress	<u>150</u>
TOTAL	515

The bottom line is that audits and reviews are out of control.

Recommendation: NASA's program review should follow and not exceed NMI 7120.4, unless approved by the NASA Administrator. When additional reviews are anticipated, there first must be an evaluation of past reviews on that subject and the actions which resulted. The value of the proposed review must be strongly justified prior to approval.

It is more difficult for NASA to object to external assessments, but particularly in today's budget climate, duplications such as the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel should be stopped. It is recommended that this topic be included in the April 15 NSTC Final Report of the Federal Laboratory System.

Improve the Ability to Attract and Retain the Best Personnel

NASA will need high-quality technical managers to lead its future R&D efforts as the current management retires and moves on. It is important that Government agen-

Attract and Retain Best People

Appendix 1

Report Distribution

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

AD/Deputy Administrator (Acting)
AE/Chief Engineer
AT/Associate Deputy Administrator (Technical)
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G/General Counsel
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L/Associate Administrator for Legislative Affairs
M/Associate Administrator for Space Flight
P/Associate Administrator for Public Affairs
Q/Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance
R/Associate Administrator for Aeronautics
Z/Associate Administrator for Policy and Plans

Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of each of the following Congressional Committees and Subcommittees:

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Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space
Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
House Committee on Appropriations
House Subcommittee on VA-HUD-Independent Agencies
House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
House Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs,
and Criminal Justice
House Committee on Science
House Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics

Appendix 2

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of

Q

FEB 20 1997

TO: J/Associate Administrator for
Management Systems and Facilities

FROM: Q/Associate Administrator for
Safety and Mission Assurance

SUBJECT: Response to Draft Report G-96-005, Inspection of
the NASA Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel (ASAP)

We agree that an independent and respected ASAP is a necessary and vital component of NASA's program management and Congressional interface. We offer the following comments on the recommendations listed in the report.

Recommendation: The Associate Administrator, Office of Safety and Mission Assurance, ensure an effective balance of the Panel's membership to meet program needs.

Response: The Panel's intent has been, and will continue to be, to enlist the services of the most highly qualified individuals from private industry, academia, and the government, active or retired, regardless of gender, race, or age. Expertise in the required technical disciplines and availability to meet the time demands imposed as a Panel member or consultant are the relevant issues considered in the selection process. The Office of Safety and Mission Assurance has never experienced a situation, as inferred in the draft report, where the age of the Panel members or their longevity on the Panel has negatively impacted the Panel's effectiveness. The ASAP's wealth of aerospace experience is a valuable asset to the Agency. We believe that the substance and value of the ASAP annual reports have been exemplary, and we have never known the ASAP to shy away from controversy, especially when it comes to aerospace safety. The caliber of their annual reports is a testament to their thoroughness and objectivity.

Recommendation: Further, the Associate Administrator should expand the list of potentially available consultants so that

additional, complementary expertise is available as needed to enhance the relevance and value of technical recommendations.

Response: The panel itself has the responsibility for staffing, with the Administrator approving all appointments. The workload of the Panel has increased due to many recent Administrator assignments. For example, as a follow-on to the November 1996 "Review of Issues Associated with Safe Operation and Management of the Space Shuttle Program," the Administrator asked that the Panel's future Annual Reports address NASA's progress in meeting the 22 recommendations outlined therein. He has also asked for a review of the "third-tier" vendors for both the International Space Station and Space Shuttle programs, and for the Panel to closely monitor the Space Shuttle program's transition to the Space Flight Operations Contract. Currently, the Panel is attempting to augment its complement with qualified consultants.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this draft report.



Frederick D. Gregory

APPENDIX B

NASA Management Response

Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001



Reply to Attn of:

Q-1

November 4, 1999

TO: W/Assistant Inspector General for Inspections, Administrative
Investigations, and Assessments

FROM: Q-1/Chair, Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel

SUBJECT: Response to Follow-up Assessment on 1997 Inspection of the NASA
Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel (ASAP), G-99-020, Draft Report

The Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel appreciates the opportunity to comment on the subject draft report. We are pleased by the acknowledgement of our efforts since the 1997 review by your office. This memo presents our response to the recommendation in your report as well as some clarifying comments.


Recommendation: We recommend that the Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance and the ASAP Chairman develop and implement a recruitment plan. It should include provisions for advertising and widely circulating a request for nominees inside NASA and in external publications and organizations.

Response: We concur with the recommendation. The substance of this recommendation is consistent with plans that have already been placed into effect by the ASAP. Each Panel member and consultant has been tasked with identifying technical skills that the Panel might need to meet its mission in the future. Potential candidates with these diverse skills will be solicited from within NASA, through networking by current Panel participants and from contacts external to NASA. Our objective is to prepare a resource list of potential members and consultants that can provide us with rapid access to augmented or replacement talent when needed.

We also offer two clarifications relative to your findings and recommendation. First, the Panel currently consists of a full slate of nine members plus six consultants with one consultant nomination pending. Although our charter allows us an unlimited number of consultants, we do not see an immediate need for additional support. We must therefore be careful that our efforts to compile a membership resource list are properly viewed as contingency planning and not misconstrued as an immediate recruitment effort.

Second, we believe it is important to reiterate our existence as an independent advisory body. We receive excellent administrative support from Code Q, and we welcome inputs and suggestions from the Associate Administrator for Safety and Mission Assurance

concerning a recruitment plan. Ultimately, however, the responsibility for that plan and the selection of candidates to forward to the Administrator for concurrence must remain the responsibility of the Panel alone.


Richard D. Blomberg

cc:

Q/Mr. Gregory

Q-1/ASAP Members and Consultants

APPENDIX C

Report Distribution

Distribution

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Officials-In-Charge:

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B/Chief Financial Officer
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Budget Examiner, Energy Science Division, Office of Management and Budget
Associate Director, National Security and International Affairs Division,
General Accounting Office
Professional Assistant, Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology, and Space

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Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Subcommittee on VA-HUD-Independent Agencies
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Senate Subcommittee on Science, Technology and Space
Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
House Committee on Appropriations
House Subcommittee on VA-HUD-Independent Agencies
House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
House Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice
House Committee on Science
House Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics

Congressional Member:

Honorable Pete Sessions, U.S. House of Representatives

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