



Committee to Assess Solar System Exploration

Chairs:

**Wes Huntress
Norine Noonan**

**Study Director:
Dwayne A. Day**

**National Research Council
February 2007**

Congressionally-mandated study (NASA Authorization Act of 2005)

- **The NRC is to conduct four “performance assessments” of NASA’s response to the decadal surveys.**
- **NASA Astronomy and Astrophysics Performance Assessment (NAPA) submitted to NASA in February.**
- **Assessment of Solar System Exploration now underway. Due: December 2007.**
- **To be followed by Heliophysics and then Earth Sciences at approximately one-year intervals.**

Committee Roster

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Committee Charge

The Space Studies Board shall convene a committee to review the alignment of NASA's Planetary Exploration Division program with previous NRC advice – primarily the reports “New Frontiers in the Solar System: An Integrated Exploration Strategy” and several recent studies concerning Mars, such as “Assessment of Mars Science and Mission Priorities.” More specifically, the committee shall address the following:

- 1) The degree to which NASA's current solar system exploration program addresses the strategies, goals, and priorities outlined in Academy reports;**
- 2) NASA progress toward realizing these strategies, goals and priorities; and**
- 3) Identify any actions that could be taken to optimize the science value of the program in the context of current and forecasted resources available to it.**

Committee Charge

“The review should not revisit or alter the scientific priorities or mission recommendations provided in the cited reports, but may provide guidance about implementing the recommended mission portfolio in preparation for the next decadal survey.”

Three Meetings - Feb, Mar, May

- **Heard from NASA and Congressional officials.**
- **Heard from principal investigators in Discovery & New Frontiers mission lines.**
- **Heard from JPL Europa mission study manager.**
- **Heard from COMPLEX and COEL.**
- **Heard from Mike Belton and Chairs of Decadal panels.**
- **Heard from an expert on NASA cost estimates.**
- **Heard from DSN, Technology, Launch Vehicle experts.**

Site visits by a co-chair and 1-2 committee members to JPL, Ames, GSFC and APL.

Assessment complete, now in writing phase

- Assessed each recommendation from Decadal Report and Mars Architecture - assign grade A-F and trend arrow, elaborate on rationale, make suggestions.
- Not judgmental on deficiencies - identify cause, make suggestions for improvement.
- Short and to-the-point, strive for early completion.