As of January, 2015, CAPTEM membership changes included the addition of Conel Alexander (MWG), James Day (Lunar Subcommittee), Juliane Gross (Lunar subcommittee), Kieren Howard (MWG), Rhiannon Mayne (MWG), Kevin McKeegan (Asteroid subcommittee), Jeff Taylor (Lunar) and Allan Treiman (Lunar), along with Aaron Burton as the new Executive Secretary. Also added to the various subcommittees were Will Marchant (Informatics) Michael Pellin (Genesis) Richard Walker (Lunar) Nicolle Zellner (Lunar). Departing CAPTEM and/or subcommittee members were Amy Gaffney, Matthew Genge, Tim Grove, Randy Korotev, Sam Lawrence, Scott Messenger, Justin Simon and Paul Warren. Curation personnel changes included the hiring of Francis McCubbin as the new Astromaterials Curator to replace Carl Allen, starting in June 2015, with Cindy Evans having already been named the manager of the Curation Office.

CAPTEM made two findings at the meeting:

Finding 1: Regarding acquisition and preservation of extraterrestrial samples

The Discovery and New Frontiers missions AO language stating that the mission plan "shall demonstrate that at least 75% of the returned sample shall be preserved for future studies" should apply to all sample return missions, robotic and human. Deviations from this policy must be convincingly justified.

Each NASA institutional scientific collection should have a policy regarding long-term use and curation. The policy should consider the uniqueness of the samples, the expected timescale for loss of sample integrity, definition of whether the policy applies to the entire collection or to individual samples, how much sample should be conserved for future research versus preserved for posterity, and a time period for review of the policy.

Finding 2: Regarding R&A Reorganization

The SMD research program must be aligned to best achieve the NRC Decadal Survey goals. Astromaterials research constitutes a critical component of planetary exploration and answers fundamental questions that cannot be addressed by other means. After the first year of the reorganized R&A structure, it is apparent that solar system sample research has been negatively impacted. CAPTEM is concerned that diminishing astromaterials capabilities will cause long-term harm to SMD’s planetary exploration mission and erode U.S. leadership in extraterrestrial materials research.

There is a new top-level policy directive for all NASA science collections that was developed with the Interagency Working Group on Scientific Collections (IWGSC) and Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), which will be managed out of the NASA Office of the Chief Scientist. Detailed instructions for each collection will be written at the center levels.
ARES performed an engineering review and contamination assessment of the Building 31 gaseous nitrogen system in preparation for building of the Hayabusa2 and OSIRIS-REx labs. This included updating as-built engineering drawings for the entire system.

New collections are being implemented using basic framework (OSIRIS-REx, Hayabusa, Hayabusa2). Meteorite testing is near completion. The Lunar Sample and Photo database is being migrated to a javascript application to enable access by mobile devices. A searchable database for the Cosmic Dust collection is under development. The Genesis catalog is being updated. Funding was awarded through the PDART program for Lunar Data Rescue and MoonDB; this will allow researchers to link data to specific samples to make it available for the community.

Overall approved allocation numbers are consistent, with nearly 1,000 samples allocated in 2014. A high number of returned lunar and meteorite samples have now been repatriated. In addition, 2,460 meteorite samples were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution. A total of 409 new meteorites were announced in in the fall 2014 and spring 2015 newsletters. These meteorites were from the 2010 – 2012 ANSMET seasons. Lunar Sample Curator Ryan Zeigler and Astronaut Shannon Walker were part of the most recent ANSMET mission, where ~562 new meteorites were recovered from the Dominion Range.

The Lunar Cleanliness Task Force Report is now finalized. The findings of the report were reviewed and approved by CAPTEM.

Earlier in the meeting, CAPTEM was asked to clarify conflict of interest language in the various charters, using the R&A peer review process as a model. After discussion, the following language was adopted:

CAPTEM Conflict of interest policy

The subcommittee discussion should follow the accepted practices of a peer review panel, with the Curator’s role analogous to that of the review panel Program Manager. The Curator is responsible for ensuring that the findings are fair and impartial. Another Civil Servant can substitute for a conflicted Curator.

A subcommittee member has a conflict if he/she is involved with the proposed work or can be perceived as part of a directly competing project. If the member has some kind of relationship with the proposer or is at the same institution, that should be disclosed and can be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The Curator has the final decision.

Allegations of conflict of interest should be adjudicated by the Curator, or appealed to the CAPTEM Chair or NASA DS as needed.