What Do We Do?

- The MOWG acts as a “sounding board” for program managers and others at NASA HQ.

- Our primary focus is on R&A issues as well as the needs and uses of various ground-based facilities.

- “Advice” is a legalistic term. Those on advisory panels (e.g., NAC) must follow particular US government rules, which allows their comments carry more weight.

- Because we are not an advisory panel, our recommendations are more “informal suggestions”.
  - This allows our input to quickly reach the program managers.
  - The approval process of the entire NAC advice is more arduous and slow.
  - Program managers find our input useful (or they would get rid of us).
Why Are We Useful?

- We are the only group that concentrates on the R&A component of NASA science.
  - The NASA AG’s are somewhat unwieldy tool for this task.

- We provide community memory on a 3-5 year timescale, which is about the turnover time of program managers.

- We provide feedback to NASA R&A managers on needed and proposed changes to context and emphasis in programs.

- We act as a “safety valve” on the overall process by candidly expressing concerns based on our own experience and the community input sent to us.
2008 PSS/MOWG

- NASA Program Mangers:
  - Lindley Johnson (Planetary Astronomy, NEO Observations)
  - Phil Crane (Planetary Atmospheres)

- Current Members:
  - Bill Bottke, Chair (SwRI)
  - Amanda Gulbis (MIT)
  - Anne Verbiscer (U. Virginia)
  - Julianne Moses (LPI)
  - Michael Combi (U. Michigan)
  - Ed Beshore (U. Arizona)
  - Don Yeomans (JPL)
  - Tom Slanger (SRI)
  - Scot Rafkin (SwRI)
  - Andy Rivkin (APL)
Some of the MOWG Duties

- Reports from program managers on funding and grant status within programs (PAST, PATM, NEOO).
  - Discussion of program balance within the PSS cluster.

- Discussion of ground-based facilities
  - Funding status, maintenance/upkeep, and possible fate of ground-based telescopes like the IRTF and Arecibo.
  - Reports on observations in the planetary community as well as their ability to access to large aperture ground-based facilities (e.g., Keck).

- Near-Earth Object (NEO) issues
  - Reports from the NEO Program Office (Don Yeomans)
  - Future status of the Minor Planet Center.
  - Reports on discovery status and infrastructure needed to find potentially hazardous NEOs.
Some of the MOWG Duties

- **Production of “white papers” on topics of interest:**
  - Solicit funds or make recommendations on facilities (e.g., recent report advocating increased funding for IRTF).
  - Justification of increased funding to PSS “cluster” (program initiated under NASA AA Ed Weiler).
  - Report on the ability of WISE (Wide-field IR Survey Explorer) space-based telescope to find NEOs.

- **Reports on a variety of NASA issues (e.g., NSPIRES, Outer Planets Research, SARA, SBAG, etc.)**
Upcoming and On-Going Issues

- Status and funding for Arecibo and IRTF.
- Can NASA’s Planetary Astronomy program afford to pay for community access to telescopes like Gemini or Keck? If so, how much funding should be allocated?
- The renewed “suborbital initiative” and whether the proposed inclusion in Planetary Astronomy (with no apparent budget!) is appropriate.
- On-going changes to R&A and review process.
Next Meeting

- Next meeting: Houston, TX on March 9, 2008.

- We are looking for a few new members. Let me know if you know of any good candidates in:
  - Planetary Astronomy
  - Planetary Atmospheres
  - NEO Observations
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- We may even have $100 in prizes in our “Battle of the Eggheads”!