

Small Bodies Assessment Group (SBAG)

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Small Bodies Assessment Group (SBAG) is a community-based, NASA-supported group that is invited to provide science and technology input for planning and prioritizing activities in human and robotic exploration, fundamental research and analysis, resource utilization, and planetary defense that are related to the Solar System's Dwarf Planets, Small Bodies, and small satellites. "Small Bodies" in the name of this AG comprises all of: Main Belt Asteroids, Comets, Near-Earth Objects, Meteoroids, Interplanetary Dust and Meteors, Trojans (of all the planets), Centaurs, Trans-Neptunian Objects (TNOs), Dwarf Planets, and small planetary satellites (including Phobos, Deimos, and the irregular satellites of the Giant Planets). Meteorites and returned samples from any of these objects also fall within the purview of this AG. The SBAG serves as an interdisciplinary forum for analysis in support of Small Body exploration objectives. It provides findings to NASA both directly and through the NASA Planetary Science Advisory Committee (PAC). As a matter of practice, the PAC may regularly invite or request input from SBAG. The SBAG also supports NASA's Planetary Defense Coordination Office (PDCO).

Community

Membership of SBAG and participation in its meetings are open to all members of the planetary community, particularly scientists, engineers, project and program personnel, theoreticians and experimentalists, instrument scientists, and modelers who are interested in Small Body exploration. International participation is welcomed.

Activities

SBAG will:

- On the basis of the widest possible community outreach, assess current Small Body exploration goals, objectives, investigations, and required measurements, and use this assessment to publish and maintain a "Small Body Goals" document;
- Prepare findings, assessments, and other information that can be used to inform decisions on the science, technology, and operational content and priorities for activities related to Small Bodies;
- Upon request of NASA (or NASA advisory committees), provide reviews or other assessments related to the study and exploration of Small Bodies;
- Provide a forum for maintaining and building the Small Body science, planetary defense, resource utilization, and exploration community, i.e., provide a venue for broad discussion of Small Body exploration and planetary defense science, technology, and operational issues and serve as a conduit for community input into Small Body exploration, planetary defense activities and planning; and
- Communicate its goals, findings, and assessments to the planetary science community and to NASA. SBAG will present those findings for which a formal response from NASA is desired to the Planetary Science Advisory Committee (PAC). Findings in response to

requests from NASA or its advisory committees will also be reported to the originator(s) of the request. All goals and findings will be posted to the SBAG website.

Organization and Process

SBAG activities are performed under the direction of the SBAG Steering Committee. General membership on the Steering Committee is open to SBAG participants who have an appropriate record of technical expertise and community service. Membership on the Steering Committee rotates, with new members chosen in a manner determined by the Steering Committee. The nominal term for Steering Committee members is three years.

The Steering Committee is led by the SBAG Chair, who is chosen by the Steering Committee in consultation with the NASA PSD Director. The SBAG Chair serves a term of not more than 3 years, followed by one year in an emeritus capacity to ensure smooth successor transition. The Chair must not be a PAC member. Specific responsibilities of the Chair include:

- Organizing, overseeing, and chairing SBAG meetings;
- With the Steering Committee, drafting, editing, and publishing findings, and communicating them to the PAC, NASA, or other requestors;
- Providing final approval, prioritization, and scheduling of requested tasks after consultation with the SBAG NASA liaison and Steering Committee; and
- Speaking on behalf of the SBAG community to NASA, the PAC, or other audiences as needed.

A NASA headquarters liaison will be appointed by the PSD Director, in consultation with the Associate Administrators (AAs) for SMD and HEOMD. The NASA Liaison serves as a single point of contact with NASA and is an ex officio member of the Steering Committee. Other ex officio members may be appointed by the PSD Director in consultation with the SMD and HEOMD AAs.

The SBAG will meet at least once per year. The SBAG Chair and Steering Committee will set meeting agendas in consultation with the SBAG NASA Liaison. Tasking for SBAG activities may be initiated from SMD, HEOMD, the Planetary Science Advisory Committee, or the Committees of the NAC, in consultation with the SBAG Chair, and with final approval by the SBAG NASA Liaison.

The SBAG meeting and status reports are posted to the SBAG website and are provided to the PAC and NASA PSD.

Logistical and organizational support to the SBAG will be provided by SMD.

Updated 2020-04-24 by SBAG Chair B. Buratti and the SBAG Steering Committee, in consultation with NASA Headquarters Liaison T. Statler and Planetary Science Division Director L. Glaze.