

THE VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
Office of the Press Secretary

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VICE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES SPACE EXPLORATION
INITIATIVE STRATEGY

The Vice President announced today that President Bush has approved a National Space Policy Directive reaffirming the U.S. commitment to space exploration. The new Space Exploration Initiative Strategy outlines the next steps to be taken by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of Energy (DoE), and other federal agencies regarding the planning for and conduct of the nation's Space Exploration Initiative (SEI).

The policy directive, which was developed by the National Space Council chaired by Vice President Quayle, establishes NASA as the principal implementing agency for the SEI. DoD and DoE, as participating agencies, will have major roles in support of SEI in the conduct of technology development and concept definition.

The directive establishes an exploration office headed by the NASA Associate Administrator for Exploration and staffed by NASA and representatives from other participating agencies. It also calls for a Steering Committee for Space Exploration to be established as the senior interagency forum for coordinating SEI-related activities and for identifying those issues requiring consideration by the National Space Council.

The policy directive affirms that the exploration of space is one of the fundamental goals of the U.S. civil space program. The SEI objectives include a return to the moon -- this time to stay -- and human expeditions to Mars.

This directive augments previous Presidential directives and recognizes the recommendations of both the Advisory Committee on the Future of the U.S. Space Program and the SEI Synthesis Group.

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Attachment

SPACE EXPLORATION INITIATIVE STRATEGY

I. Introduction

The Space Exploration Initiative Strategy approves the next in a series of steps to be taken by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Energy (DOE), and other federal agencies regarding the planning for, and conduct of, the nation's Space Exploration Initiative (SEI) which includes both Lunar and Mars elements, manned and robotic missions and supporting technology. This series of steps augments previous Presidential directives and recognizes the recommendations of both the Advisory Committee on the Future of the U.S. Space Program and the SEI Synthesis Group. The exploration of space is one of the fundamental goals of the U.S. civil space program. The SEI objectives, which build upon previous accomplishments, as well as upon existing programs, include a return to the moon - this time to stay - and human expeditions to Mars. In addition, the objectives will provide a strategic framework for the conduct of the U.S. civil space program and will help focus investments in many areas of goal-oriented research and development by government, industry and academia. Consistent with the Commercial Space Policy, this framework is also intended to encourage private sector activities which augment or support the SEI objectives.

NASA is the principal implementing agency for the SEI. DOD and DOE, as participating agencies, will have major roles in support of the SEI in the conduct of technology development and concept definition. Other U.S. government agencies are encouraged to participate by developing activities supportive of the SEI.

II. Exploration Responsibilities & Actions

To establish a firm foundation and clear direction for the SEI, the following actions shall be undertaken immediately:

(a) NASA shall establish an exploration office headed by the Associate Administrator for Exploration and staffed by NASA and representatives from other participating agencies. The Associate Administrator shall be responsible for architecture and mission studies, planning, and program execution, as well as the definition of resulting requirements for research, technology, infrastructure, mission elements and program implementation. As director of the exploration office, the Associate Administrator shall prepare an annual status report. The NASA Administrator shall present this report to the National Space Council.

(b) Working with participating agencies, NASA's Associate Administrator for Exploration shall develop a strategic plan for the SEI to establish the basis for integrating existing and future SEI-related activities. This plan shall address research, technology development and operations and identify the relationships between the SEI mission elements and the U.S. space infrastructure.

(c) A Steering Committee for Space Exploration shall be established, chaired by NASA's Associate Administrator for Exploration, and shall include representation from participating agencies. The Committee shall be the senior interagency forum for coordinating organizational interfaces, reports, plans and activities, and SEI-related programs and budgets; and for identifying those issues requiring consideration by the National Space Council. The Department of State shall participate in any meetings of the Committee related to international cooperations or other international activity.

III. Exploration Guidelines

To insure that necessary preparatory activities are accomplished, the following steps shall be taken:

(a) The participating agencies shall address critical, long-lead research and technology development activities which are supportive of the exploration strategic plan.

(b) The Department of Commerce and other appropriate agencies shall encourage the development of SEI-related proposals which foster private sector investments, ownership and operation of space-related projects and ventures, as well as promote U.S. economic competitiveness. These agencies shall seek increased cooperation with the private sector through mechanisms such as technology transfer agreements, cooperative research and development agreements, and consortia, as appropriate.

(c) Exploration requirements shall be incorporated into the evolutionary plans for the new national launch system.

(d) NASA, DOD, and DOE shall continue technology development for space nuclear power and propulsion while ensuring that these activities are performed in a safe and environmentally acceptable manner and consistent with existing laws and regulations, treaty obligations and agency mission requirements.

(e) NASA and appropriate participating agencies shall implement a definitive life science program in support of the human exploration of the Moon and Mars.

(f) All participating agencies should include space exploration in their respective educational programs. In addition, participating agencies shall take advantage of university research capabilities and cooperative education programs in SEI-related activities.

(g) International cooperation in this endeavor is feasible and could offer significant benefits to the United States, subject to the satisfaction of national security, foreign policy, scientific and economic interests.

(h) Expanding on individual agency efforts to improve and streamline acquisition procedures, the Associate Administrator for Exploration, and participating agencies, shall work with the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Federal Procurement Policy to develop improved U.S. government procurement practices available for SEI acquisition.

(i) The exploration office shall seek innovative ideas by encouraging input from all sectors of American society.

IV. Reporting Requirements

(a) By November 1992, the first annual status report shall be presented to the National Space Council. It shall address options for exploration architectures and initial capabilities.

(b) The initial version of the Strategic Plan for the Space Exploration Initiative shall be presented to the National Space Council by April 1992, and updated regularly, thereafter. The initial version shall focus on technology development and alternate mission architectures.