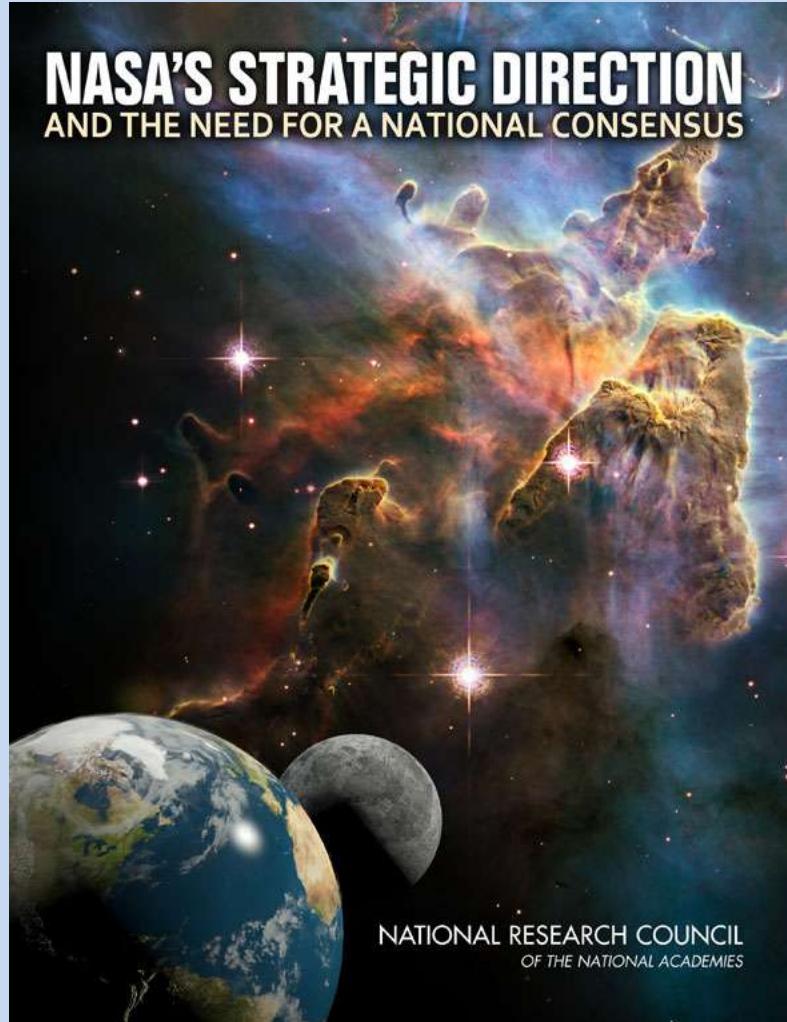


NASA's Strategic Direction and the Need for a National Consensus



TASKED BY CONGRESS (THRU NASA INSPECTOR GENERAL)

- NASA's strategic direction (thru "2011 NASA Strategic Plan")
- Relevance to national priorities
- Viability in context of constrained budgets
- Appropriateness of resource allocations among programs
- Organizational structure and infrastructure
- How to establish and communicate a unifying vision
- NOT asked what should be NASA's strategic goals and objectives

Committee Membership

- **ALBERT CARNESALE**, University of California, Los Angeles, Chair
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- **MARCIAS. SMITH**, Space and Technology Policy Group, LLC
- **MICHAEL S. TURNER**, Kavli Institute for Cosmological Physics, The University of Chicago
- **WARREN M. WASHINGTON**, National Center for Atmospheric Research

Schedule

• Contract Start Date	January 15, 2012
• Committee Appointed	April 16, 2012
• Meeting 1, Washington, D.C.	May 1-2, 2012
• Site Visits to all NASA Centers	June-August, 2012
• Meeting 2, Washington, D.C.	June 25-27, 2012
• Meeting 3, Washington, D.C.	July 26-27, 2012
• Meeting 4, Irvine, CA	August 6-7, 2012
• Meeting 5, Los Angeles, CA	September 20-21, 2012
• Final Report Released (prepub)	December 5, 2012
• Final Report To Be Published	January 3, 2012 - VERY FAST!

FINDINGS

- NASA makes important contributions to national priorities
- The 2011 Strategic Plan and associated documents do not constitute a strategy
 - No priorities
 - No guidance for resource allocation
 - No broad agreement on asteroid vs. moon vs. Mars
- Severe mismatches among programs, structure, staffing, and funding
 - Overall
 - Budget allocation among programs; e.g. human spaceflight vs. all others, especially aeronautics

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Form national consensus on strategic goals and objectives
- NASA, in consultation with Administration and Congress, develop strategy and plans
 - To provide basis for resource allocations
 - Must be consistent with realistic funding projections
 - Must markedly reduce mismatch between program, portfolio and funding; e.g. thru
 - Efficiency, especially staffing and infrastructure
 - Partnerships with other U.S. agencies, industry, and other nations
 - Increased funding (unlikely)
 - Reduce and/or eliminate some programs
- Manage NASA as an integrated system
 - Requires flexibility in workforce and infrastructure
 - Include managing partnerships
- Explore opportunities for leadership through international partnerships

How has the report been received?

3 comments

Congress tells NASA and White House, again, that it wants Space Launch System (updated)

By Lee Roop | lroop@al.com
on January 03, 2013 at 11:27 AM, updated January 03, 2013 at 5:30 PM

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In one of its last acts before adjourning, the 112th Congress gave final approval Wednesday to a law telling policymakers in both the White House and NASA -- again -- that Congress is serious about wanting the new heavy-lift rocket being developed in Huntsville, Al. The measure, which includes other sections critical to future space exploration, now goes to President Obama for his signature.

A large blue circle containing the NASA logo, which is the word "NASA" in white with a red diagonal slash through it.

Congress expects NASA and the White House to follow through on what Hutchison called "a hard-fought congressional and administration consensus" reached in 2010.

Congress had been asked to extend third-party liability insurance for space launch companies and to remove a potential legal hurdle to continued use of Russian rockets as space taxis for American astronauts. The law doing both of those things is called the "Space Exploration Sustainability Act," and it was passed Monday by the Senate and accepted without objection Wednesday by the House.

But senators led by outgoing Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, and Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Florida, attached an amendment to the Senate version stating again that Congress expects NASA and the White House to follow through on what Hutchison called "a hard-fought congressional and administration consensus" reached in 2010. That deal **passed into law in late 2010** requires NASA to pursue both commercial space development and government development of a new heavy-lift rocket and crew capsule

How has the report been received?

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NASA Administrator Charles Bolden delivered the keynote speech at the Goddard Memorial Symposium on March 20, 2013. Jeff Foust, purveyor of the Space Politics blog, asked if he agreed with the conclusions of the National Research Council that there was no support for the asteroid mission mandated by President Obama and that there was no consensus about what America's space goals are.

According to a March 21, 2013 post in Space Politics, Bolden's one word answer to the question was, "No."

Bolden did acknowledge that the meager budgets that NASA is being given have proved to be a challenge. He stated that the situation would never change, so that the space agency would have to deal with doing much with few resources by "being smarter." The National Research Council report also

asked if he agreed with the conclusions of the National Research Council that there was no support for the asteroid mission mandated by President Obama and that there was no consensus about what America's space goals are.

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