

NASA Advisory Council Subcommittee Recommendation

Subcommittee Name: Planetary Science

Chair: Sean Solomon

Date of Public Deliberation: 2-3 October 2008

Date of Transmission to Science Committee: 9 October 2008

Short title of the proposed Recommendation

Partnerships for sustaining lunar infrastructure.

Short description of proposed Recommendation

The PSS supports the recommendation, brought forward by LEAG in the Lunar Exploration Roadmap, that NASA formulate a transition strategy during the roadmapping process that will allow the agency to send humans to Mars and beyond without abandoning the infrastructure and capabilities built up on the Moon. The PSS further recommends that NASA expand its current level of interaction with the private sector to facilitate such involvement in the next era of lunar exploration.

Major reasons for proposing the Recommendation

Involving the private sector as a partner in the lunar exploration plan is seen as critical for allowing NASA to move on to Mars and beyond. The creation of commercial on-ramps during the build-up to the outpost and beyond will prevent NASA from becoming tied to the Moon to the point of precluding human exploration of Mars. Without such a transition strategy, NASA might have to abandon its lunar assets once the agency elects to go on to Mars. Involvement of international partners and particularly the private sector is critical in the formulation of this transition strategy.

Consequences of no action on the proposed Recommendation

In the absence of this recommendation, moving on to Mars and beyond may be hampered by a lack of planning for transitioning the lunar infrastructure to non-NASA management or ownership.