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### **Options for Transforming NASA Centers**

Many within the NASA family are interested in the Agency's response to the recommendation of the President's Commission on Implementation of United States Space Exploration Policy that NASA consider reconfiguring its Centers as Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs).

The Commission observed that while certain functions should remain under Federal management, such reconfiguration should be considered to enable innovation, to allow the Centers to work effectively with the private sector, and to stimulate economic development. Creating alternative management structures from existing NASA Centers could result in new opportunities to better support the Nation's Vision for Space Exploration. Reconfiguration could take the form of FFRDCs, University Affiliated Research Centers, Institutes, or other models.

NASA is considering how best to proceed with the Commission's recommendation. We have established a Steering Committee of NASA senior leaders to evaluate information on various options for reconfiguring the Centers. As part of the process, NASA is soliciting ideas broadly from industry, academia, government agencies, and other sources. NASA has issued a Request for Information, or RFI, to explore possible options. We want to hear from anyone with ideas on how to better structure NASA's Centers and their operations.

Based on the information the Steering Committee obtains through its own work and through the RFI process, NASA will conduct a more in-depth analysis. That analysis will include examination of Center-specific issues including work functions, facility-related issues, and review and disposition of existing contracts. We estimate this analysis should conclude by the end of fiscal year 2005.

If the Agency's leadership determines that a reconfiguration of a Center or Centers has merit, NASA will work closely with the Administration and Congress to obtain approval for transitioning to the proposed alternative management structures. This approval process would include consideration of any changes required, including legislation, necessary to implement a new management structure at a Center or Centers.