National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Office of the Administrator
Washington, DC 20546-0001

November 12, 2012

Dr. Steven W. Squyres
Chairman
NASA Advisory Council
Washington, DC 20546

Dear ~~Dr.~~ Steve Squyres:

Enclosed is NASA's response to a recommendation from the NASA Advisory Council meeting held July 25-27, 2012, at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. Please do not hesitate to contact me if the Council would like further background on the response. I appreciate the Council's thoughtful consideration leading to the recommendations and welcome its continued findings, recommendations, and advice concerning the U.S. civil space program.

I look forward to working closely with you and members of the Council in the future.

Sincerely,

Charles F. Bolden, Jr.
Administrator

Enclosure:
2012-02-04 (EPOC-02) Education and Public Outreach Centers of Excellence

NASA RESPONSE

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation

Education and Public Outreach Centers of Excellence
2012-02-04 (EPOC-02)

Recommendation:
NASA should identify "centers of excellence" for Education and Public Outreach (EPO) activities with which project teams can coordinate when developing their EPO programs. These should include (but not be limited to): social media, web site design, app development, data visualization, and video production.

Major Reasons for the Recommendation:
Lower costs, reduce duplication of effort, share best practices, move towards consistency in communication style and usability.

Consequences of No Action on the Recommendation:
NASA will overspend as it continues to "reinvent the wheel" as each project/mission develops its own online, mobile and social presence. The various implementations may "speak with different voices" and not be aligned with NASA's overall strategic goals.

NASA Response:
The NASA communications community is immersed in the early stages of implementing the recommendations approved by the NASA Executive Council February 8, 2012, regarding the Agency's communications governance and operational model. This includes changes to the approach for planning and implementation of Education and Public Outreach activities. The August 18, 2012, release of NASA Procedural Requirement 7120.5E includes a new requirement for flight programs and projects to submit Communications and Education Plans. Templates for these plans have been developed. Rollout of this new requirement to the Agency's Communications and Education community has begun with briefings planned for the next several weeks, where management will address content, process, roles and responsibilities for plan development, approval, and implementation. The expectation is that for development and implementation of the Communications Plans, programs/projects will rely on resident staff and expertise at the Centers and within the Mission Directorates, who will not only provide the support required, but will also be accountable for monitoring and reporting through the new Communications Coordinating Council (CCC). Using these plans as well as new annual Communications Plans for Mission Directorate and Center efforts, the CCC will develop and maintain a NASA Communications Portfolio, which will serve as a comprehensive inventory of all communications efforts and products. The Communications Portfolio will be a valuable tool for CCC strategic dialogue regarding the Agency's communications investments. Active management of the portfolio will provide the CCC with the venue to identify and address gaps, leverage resources, eliminate duplication of efforts, ensure all efforts incorporate

overarching messages, and align with the Agency's overall strategy and goals. In the context of moving to a more effective operational model, the Office of Communications will identify and evaluate additional operational changes over the course of the next year. These will include developing and establishing common metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of communications investments across the portfolio, infrastructural and other operational elements. In addition, completing the remaining two actions from the NASA Executive Council, to develop and establish a NASA Policy Document and Procedural Requirements for Communications, will put into place clarity regarding roles and responsibilities and the policies and procedures necessary to more effectively execute the communications function. NASA believes the new Agency communications operational model and improved governance will meet the intent of the NAC's recommendation. Over the next year, NASA proposes to consider the recommendation within the context of the comprehensive set of efforts described above and provide an appropriate response by April 30, 2013.