

NAC 2010-02-18 (TIC-05)
Encouraging Diversity of Thought

Recommendation:

The Council encourages NASA to engage in cross-fertilization of personnel between NASA Centers and between NASA and outside organizations through Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Agreements and rotational assignments as a way of encouraging innovation as the Agency Plans and implements its new technology programs and in general. Innovation results from exposure to new ideas, new people, new workplaces.

NASA Response:

NASA concurs with both the Council's contention that innovation results from exposure to new ideas, new people, and new workplaces and the Council's recognition that IPA and rotational assignments support such innovation. NASA will continue to encourage both mechanisms for cross-fertilization of personnel and ideas. Rotational assignments of varying lengths are key components of several of the Agency's formal development programs, including the new Mid-Level Leadership Program and the SES Candidate Development Program. In addition, Center-to-Center detail assignments are highly encouraged and frequently utilized by a large number of organizations. In some cases (including, but not limited to, the NASA Engineering and Safety Center and, currently, the Office of the Chief Technologist) detailees comprise significant percentages of the total organizational complement. Also, significant numbers of IPA scientists and other personnel travel between NASA and academia on a regular basis. Such employees fill key positions in the NASA hierarchy during their tenure with the Agency.