

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation

Planetary Science Subcommittee Analysis Groups 2011-03-03 (SC-03)

Recommendation:

NASA should revise the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Lunar Exploration Analysis Group (LEAG), Mars Exploration Analysis Group (MEPAG), and the Small Bodies Assessment Group (SBAG) to reflect the recommendations contained in the Task Group of the NASA Advisory Council (NAC) Science Committee (TagAG) final report. Specifically:

- 1) Add explicit tasking authority for the Exploration Systems Mission Directorate (ESMD) and relevant Committees of the NAC;
- 2) Add language concerning appointment of the Chair (and in the case of LEAG, Co-Chairs) that has appointment made by the Associate Administrator (AA) for Science after consultation with the AA for Exploration Systems;
- 3) Update language to capture revisions in the topic areas covered by the respective Analysis Groups;
- 4) Acknowledge the uniqueness of LEAG by:
 - a. Establishing a LEAG Co-Chair for Science (appointed by the AA for Science after consultation with AA for Exploration Systems), who would replace the current LEAG Chair as a member of the NAC Science Committee's Planetary Science Subcommittee.
 - b. Establishing a LEAG Co-Chair for Exploration (appointed by AA for Exploration Systems after consultation with AA for Science) who would be added to the membership of the NAC Exploration Committee; and,
 - c. Incorporating language that the LEAG Executive Secretary should be appointed by the AA for Science after consultation with AA for Exploration Systems;
- 5) Refine the wording concerning the role of the Designated Federal Official (DFO)/Executive Secretary to ensure consistency with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Final Rule and NASA Policy, while recognizing the value of a close working relationship between the Executive Secretary and the Chair.

Major Reasons for the Recommendation:

These recommended changes would update the three relevant Planetary Science Subcommittee Analysis Groups so that they can more directly provide analysis not only to the Science Mission Directorate (SMD), but also to the Exploration Systems Mission Directorate (ESMD) for integration of science into its exploration mission objectives.

Enclosure

Consequences of No Action on the Recommendation:

ESMD is left without a clear and direct mechanism for tasking the three relevant Planetary Science Subcommittee Analysis Groups that cover targets of interest to ESMD, namely, LEAG (Moon), MEPAG (Mars), and SBAG (asteroids).

NASA Response:

NASA does not concur with this recommendation. Its implementation would establish Planetary Analysis Groups (PAGs) as an advisory group related to the NASA Advisory Council and subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The NASA Administrator has directed that the PAGs remain separate from the NASA Advisory Council and its Committees. As such, PAGs will not provide advice to the Agency but may continue as analysis groups, and the provisions of FACA do not apply. In response to the recommendation of having the Exploration Systems Mission Directorate (now subsumed into the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate (HEOMD)) having a direct mechanism for tasking the PAGs, NASA will make no changes to the Terms of Reference, since HEOMD already has the ability to task the PAGs.