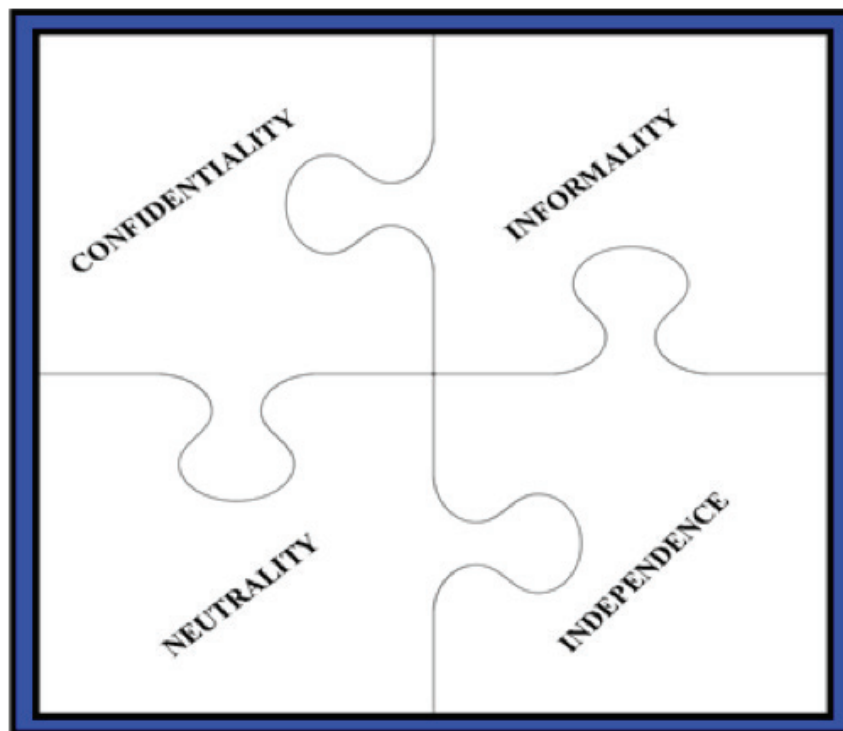




National Aeronautics and Space Administration
MBUDSMAN
PROGRAM



2012 Annual Report

Annual Report

Background and History of the NASA Ombudsman Program

Established in January 2004, the NASA Ombudsman Program has employed 46 Ombudsman in its ten space/research Centers and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California. In the 8 full years of operation, the Ombudsman Program has dealt with 2,213 cases brought forward from employees and onsite contract workers. In addition to this Ombudsman Program, NASA has separate Procurement and Whistleblower Ombudsman Programs.

The Ombudsman provides an additional channel of communication for employees and contractors to raise significant issues and concerns that they perceive could impact safety, organizational performance, or mission success. The program is based upon the principles of informality, independence, confidentiality, and neutrality. These principles are summarized as follows:

- **Informality** – The NASA Ombudsman Program functions outside all formal management, administrative, or criminal processes. The Ombudsman does not serve as an agent of notice to NASA. The Ombudsman assists visitors, also known as individuals seeking assistance, in accessing appropriate formal systems, offices, or processes as needed.
- **Independence** – The Ombudsman is not encumbered by line management functions. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the Ombudsman reports Ombudsman-related matters to the Center Director (Center Ombudsman) or Deputy Administrator (HQ Ombudsman), as needed.
- **Confidentiality** – The Ombudsman maintain complete confidentiality as to the identity of visitors, except when threat of serious harm is identified or in other circumstances defined in NASA Policy Directive (NPD) 2025.1, NASA Ombuds Program and at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman.
- **Neutrality** – The Ombudsman does not serve as a representative or advocate of any visitor's concerns within NASA. However, the Ombudsman does advocate for fair processes and administration.

A more detailed definition of these principles and how they apply to the Ombudsman Program can be found in NPD 2025.1, NASA Ombuds Program.

The majority of the cases over the years have been of an Organizational Performance nature (leadership, performance, relationships), while small percentages have related to Mission Success and Safety concerns. Of all cases that come to the Ombudsman, 17% have been referred to formal resources. Often, visitors receive coaching on how to address the concerns themselves.

Olga Dominquez, Assistant Administrator for Strategic Infrastructure, provides oversight of the Ombudsman Program.

2012 Highlights

Cases and Trends

- The total number of cases in 2012 was 247, which is 38% more than the previous year.
- Of the 247 cases, 87% focused on Organizational Performance, 5% were Safety Issues, 5% fell in the “Other” category and 3% were Mission Success Issues.
- The Ombudsmen heard from employees who feel more pressure and disappointment as scope of job responsibilities increased with no change in job status or compensation.
- Several comments centered on uncertainty of agency direction and job security.
- 2012 brought an increase in reports of abusive leadership behavior from contract supervisors. Ombudsmen brought these issues to the attention of appropriate people and this resulted in both replacement of personnel and revision of wording in contracts to reinforce accountability for appropriate leadership behavior.
- Reports of overworked maintenance workers and numerous other safety concerns resulted in stricter policy reinforcement. At least three of the issues brought to the Ombudsman involved high risk to personal safety and mission success and were escalated appropriately.
- One Ombudsman was able to escalate concerns regarding fumes and related illnesses to get appropriate action by Center Management.
- Issues regarding HR policies related to permanent disability status were escalated and highlighted a need for increased communication on protocols.
- Several visitors raised issues involving job dissatisfaction. Employees concerns stemmed from being placed in jobs at Centers where downsizing has taken place and the new job either doesn't utilize skills or provide enough stimulation.
- Ombudsmen had visitors who perceived that there are individuals in the organization who are considered “untouchable” because of knowledge and/or status they bring to the organization. Visitors expressed concern that some of these individuals behave badly but are not held accountable.

Awareness Activities

- Ombudsmen proactively met with staff groups where the work they do impacts safety in the organization. They also met with organizations experiencing higher levels of change.
- At most Centers, the Ombudsman message is now part of the New Employee Orientation briefings.
- Ombudsmen met with Administrator Charlie Bolden to discuss the program and ways in which he can offer support to it. He reinforced the program's importance in conversations with all Center Directors and Agency Senior Staff.
- The Ombudsmen often met with formal resources to ensure that each understands how the other works. These meetings also allowed the opportunity to share themes around the types of issues being brought forth.
- In 2012, the Ombudsman NPD was revised and is currently undergoing Agency-wide review.

- Ongoing activities include distribution of posters, articles, and brochures. Other vehicles are being used to continue to build awareness of the program.
- ‘Ombudsmen were briefed by the NASA senior Safety Officer to determine best methods for getting safety issues to those who can take action.
- Ombudsman brochures were strategically placed for increased visibility.

The table below shows the number of cases handled by the Ombudsman’s office over the last 3 years broken down by Center, including Headquarters and the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC) at Stennis.

CASE VOLUME

# of Cases by Center	2010	2011	2012
Ames	31	31	34
HQ	9	12	17
Dryden	23	64	107
Glenn	12	13	6
Goddard	9	11	16
Johnson	10	18	23
Kennedy	7	6	12
Langley	16	8	11
Marshall	20	14	12
NSSC			7
Stennis	2	2	2
Total	156	179	247

Nature of Cases

As shown in the two figures below, Ombududsmen report the most commonly raised issue in a variety of organizations is the behavior of leadership. The second most common issue reported is interpersonal conflict. The majority of cases are resolved in whole or in part. Some are ongoing.



Figure 1. Categories of Issues Reported Related to Organizational Performance

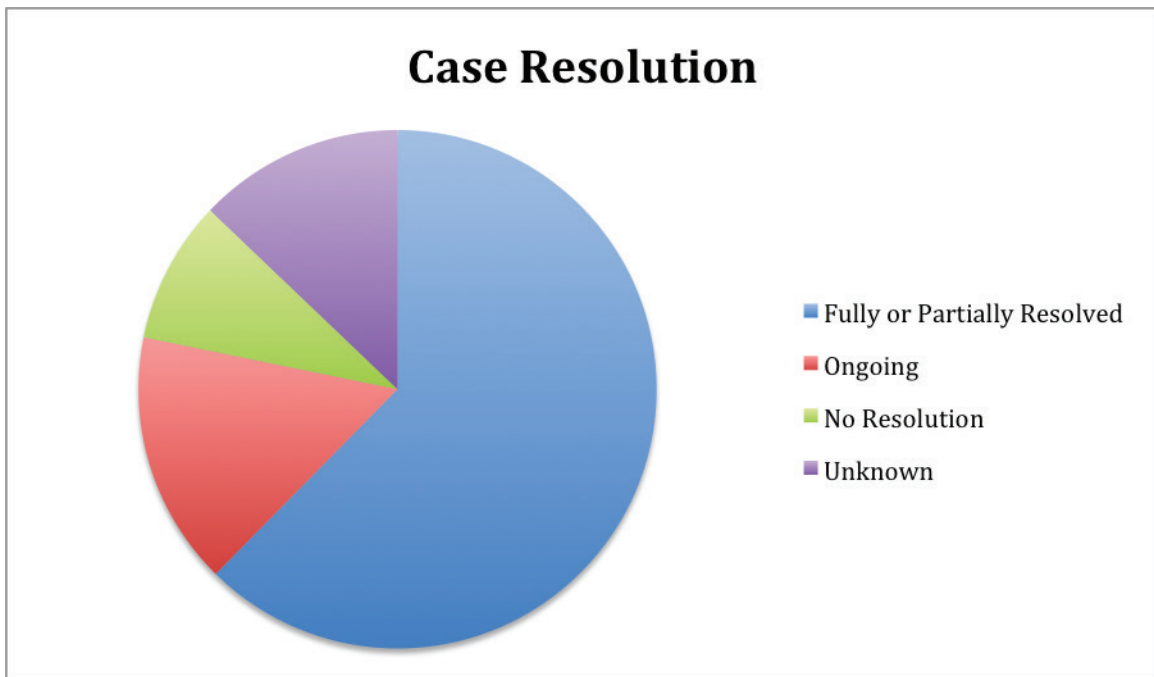


Figure 2. Percentage of resolutions of Cases

Resource List

NASA strives to provide multiple options for dispute resolution. It is best if issues are resolved as close to a situation as possible. If escalation is needed, formal “on the record” options that may be recommended to a visitor include:

- Immediate supervisor
- Office or Division Manager
- Employee Relations Office (formal investigation and consultation on work related issues)
- Employee Assistance Program (personal issues of wellness, stress, etc.)
- Ethics Office (business ethics and integrity issues)
- Equal Employment Office and Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Human Resources (HR policy issues, performance, job status and treatment issues)
- Office of Security and Program Protection
- Office of Safety and Mission Assurance
- Office of General Counsel
- Office of Inspector General
 - o The NASA Office of Inspector General (OIG) Whistleblower Ombudsman, <http://oig.nasa.gov/whistleblower.html>, is intended to protect from retaliation those NASA employees who try to expose fraud, waste, and abuse.
- The NASA Procurement Ombudsmen (for companies with or seeking a NASA contract), http://prod.nais.nasa.gov/pub/pub_library/Omb.html.
- Union Representatives
- Anti-Harassment Coordinator

The Ombudsman Program is the only “off the record” informal option.



National Aeronautics and Space Administration
MIBUDSMAN
PROGRAM
Center Ombudsmen



AMES RESEARCH CENTER-ARC

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Dr. Jim Arnold has been with NASA for 51 years and has served as an Ombudsman for 2 years. His contributions have included research, branch management, a tour of duty at NASA Headquarters (Aerothermodynamics Program Manager), and division management. Jim has worked in many technical areas including aerothermodynamics, computational chemistry, thermal protection systems (TPS) research and development, arcjet testing, advanced life support, and nanotechnology. His mentoring program has enhanced the career development for many who advanced to the highest ranks of leadership, management, and research in NASA.



AMES RESEARCH CENTER-ARC

Jack Boyd
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Jack Boyd serves as Senior Advisor to the Center Director, the Senior Advisor for History, and the Center Ombudsman. Jack started at Ames in 1947, when it was the Ames Aeronautical Laboratory and was still part of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). His own work as an aeronautical research engineer involved wind tunnel studies of supersonic and subsonic aircraft and included major contributions to theories of conical camber. He later did early research on the design of unpiloted planetary probes to explore Mars and Venus, and he helped develop early configurations for the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo capsules. Beginning in the mid-1960s, Jack increasingly served in managerial positions at NASA Ames. He served as Executive Assistant to the Ames Center Director, Deputy Director of Dryden Flight Research Center, Deputy and Associate Director of Ames Research Center, and Associate Administrator for Management at NASA Headquarters.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

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Assistant Associate Director of at Dryden, Louise Boyd has been employed by NASA for over 30 years. The first 21 years were spent at the Kennedy Space Center, where she participated in various assignments that ranged from software engineering to workforce planning and human resources management. She also represented the Agency on a detail in the Executive Office of the President/Office of Management and Budget, Science and Space Programs Branch. In 2004, she transferred to the Dryden Flight Research Center. Her assignments have included human resource management, strategic work-

force planning, and performance improvement. She has been an Ombudsman for almost 3 years. She is passionate about helping others succeed. She has served as an informal and formal mentor most of her NASA career.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

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Al Bowers is the Associate Director of Research in the Research and Engineering Directorate at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards, CA. In this position, Al is responsible for defining NASA Dryden's strategic direction for the Center, including advanced aeronautical designs, research, and space technologies. Prior to his present position, Al served as Director of Dryden's Aeronautics Mission Directorate and as a project manager. He also served as the Chief of the Aerodynamics Branch of Dryden's Research Engineering Directorate from 2002 to 2004, acted as Deputy Director of the Research and Engineering Directorate from 2004 to 2008, and acted as the Special Assistant to the Associate Administrator of Aeronautics in 2008. Al earned a Bachelor of Science in aeronautical engineering and a Master of Engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. He began his career with NASA in the Graduate Student Research Program in 1982.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

George Grimshaw
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George Grimshaw has been a NASA employee at Dryden Flight Research Center for over 28 years and an Ombudsman for 2 years. He is currently Dryden's Shuttle Transition and Retirement Manager, leading the turn-in of local Shuttle assets for disposition. Prior to that he was the Shuttle Operations and Project Manager and led Shuttle landing and postlanding processing support at Dryden. George was also the Avionics Branch Chief at Dryden for 8 years, leading the avionics technician workforce in the maintenance and modification of Dryden's aircraft fleet. He began his career at Dryden as an avionics technician in 1984.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

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Kevin Reilly has been employed with NASA for almost 12 years. Previously, he worked for The TYBRIN Corporation as an F-16 System Program Manager for Foreign Military Sales to Bahrain and Egypt after retiring from the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force, he flew over half of his 20-year career as an operational test pilot in Boeing B-52s and Northrop Grumman B-2s. Kevin also had experience in crisis action. At Dryden, he initially worked as a system safety engineer supporting numerous Center projects. Due to his operational flight experience, he became the Quality Assurance Branch Chief for 3 years, and when Dryden inherited the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), he was asked to become the Chief Safety Officer for the SOFIA Airborne Platform Project (APP). He recently joined the Management Systems Office as a Management and Program Analyst overseeing all Center processes. Kevin joined the Dryden Ombudsman team in June 2010.



DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER-DFRC

Keith Williams
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Keith Williams has been employed by NASA for 7 years. Prior to this, he was employed by Honeywell Technical Services and assigned to various military and NASA contracts in management roles. In 2001, Keith retired from Honeywell and came to work at Dryden Flight Research Center (DFRC) as a support contractor assigned to the Management Systems Office (MSO). In May 2006 he began his NASA career at Dryden as the supervisor of the MSO responsible for ensuring management system (MS) integration, evaluation of MS system performance, and management of the DFRC MS documentation system. Keith has been an Ombudsman for almost 3 years as the DFRC Ombudsman lead.



GLENN RESEARCH CENTER-GRC

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Kirk Seablom has 28 years with NASA and almost 6 with the Ombudsman Program. He is currently the Acting Deputy Program and Project Integration Office.



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

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Sheri Brown came to NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center in 1982 as a Presidential Management Fellow and has served as Goddard’s Ombudsman for 3 years. In her 30 plus years of service at GSFC, she has served in a variety of capacities in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), Flight Projects Directorate, and the Office of Human Capital Management Office of Human Capital Management). Additionally, Sheri has represented the Agency on details in the Executive Office of the President/Office of Science and Technology Policy and as a Loaned Executive for the Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area. Sheri currently works in several capacities within the Office of the Director aimed at developing strategies, implementing programs, and facilitating the resolution of concerns in support of the Goddard workforce. Specifically, she is the Senior Diversity and Inclusion Programs Specialist and is the Federal Women’s Program Manager.



GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-GSFC

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Dr. Ed Rogers is the Chief Knowledge Officer at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD. He received a Ph.D. from Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations focusing on the role of cooperation in high tech firms. In the early 1980s, he performed 5 years of international relief work in Southern Lebanon. Prior to returning to academic work at Cornell, Ed operated a private consulting practice focused on knowledge workers and intelligent enterprise. His research and publications apply game theory models to human behavior in organizations. He has consulted with a number of organizations on building conceptual transparency and leveraging collective knowledge. Before joining NASA, he taught strategic management and entrepreneurship at Cornell, Duke, and the University of Alabama in Huntsville.



HEADQUARTERS-HQ

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Rex Elliott began working for NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in 1983 through the Presidential Management Internship Program. For the next 25 years, Rex focused his career in the field of procurement, serving as a contracting officer for 19 years and working on a variety of contracts, including several for development of spaceflight hardware but also facilities construction, services, high-performance computing, and scientific research. Rex also served collateral duty as an Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor for 10 years. In 2008, Rex transferred permanently to NASA Headquarters to become the Contractor Industrial Relations Officer for the Agency, helping to ensure NASA complies with all labor laws affecting contractor employees. He also serves as the policy person for NASA Employee Exchanges and as a Contracting Officer Representative (COR) on a number of contracts for NASA’s Logistics Division. Rex has been an Ombudsman for NASA Headquarters for 4 years.



HEADQUARTERS-HQ

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Ruth McWilliams has been with NASA for almost 7years and with the Ombudsman Office for 1 year. She currently serves as the Executive Officer to the Associate Deputy Administrator for Strategy & Policy. Ruth leads the team rewriting NPD 1000.5, Policy for NASA Acquisition, and facilitates the annual HQ call for detailees. She has previously served as the Mission Support Council (MSC) Executive Secretary and a Program Analysis and Evaluation Office (PA&E) budget and program analyst.



JOHNSON SPACE CENTER-JSC

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Donna Blackshear-Reynolds is the Division Chief, Multiprograms Division under the JSC Office of the Chief Financial Officer. Donna began at Johnson Space Center in 1981 as a Presidential Management Intern and has served in progressively more responsible positions involved in budgeting, program planning, and analysis, as well as program evaluation. Donna’s educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Government, University of Texas at Austin; Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, MPA; and postgraduate study in public policy at the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Finance.



JOHNSON SPACE CENTER-JSC

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John Casper has been with NASA for 29 years and has served as one of JSC's Ombudsmen for 1 year. Prior to joining NASA, John served in the Air Force as a fighter pilot with 229 combat missions, a test pilot, commander of a flight test squadron, and project manager at Air Force headquarters. He was selected to be an astronaut and came to JSC in 1984. A veteran of four space flights, he was the pilot on STS-36 and commander on STS-54, STS-62, and STS-77. He has also served as Director of Safety, Reliability and Quality Assurance; senior advisor to the Columbia Mishap Investigation Team; Deputy of NASA's Return to Flight Planning Team; Manager of the Space Shuttle Program's Management Integration and Planning Office; and Associate Program Manager of the Space Shuttle Program. John is currently in the Associate Manager for Program Integration on the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle (MPCV) Program.



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER-KSC

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Hortense Burt is currently the Teacher and Student Programs Lead within the External Relations Directorate's Education Programs and University Research Division at NASA's John F. Kennedy Space Center (KSC) in Florida. In 2000, Burt joined NASA as a flight assurance manager in the Expendable Launch Vehicles Safety and Flight Assurance Office, where she was responsible for developing and implementing flight assurance activities. She was the Mission Assurance Manager on both Mars Exploration Rover Missions A and B and the Deep Impact missions. In 1992, she was promoted to the position of program safety manager and lead engineer for all Delta launches from Cape Canaveral AFS.



KENNEDY SPACE CENTER-KSC

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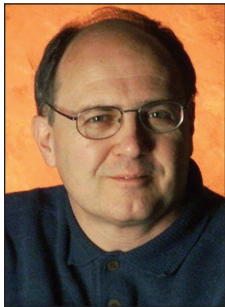
Tim Ferris has been with NASA for 6 years and has served as the Ombudsman for almost 5 of those years. Tim currently is on detail to Workforce Planning, providing leadership, technical direction, and transition to the newly developed Human Resources Integrated Product Teams (IPT) and has served as the deputy for the Human Resources Operations Office at the Kennedy Space Center. Tim also served as the NASA Chief of the Human Resources Development and Recognition Office at the Kennedy Space Center.



LANGLEY RESEARCH CENTER-LaRC

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Rolla Brown has been with NASA for 7 years and has served as one of LaRC's Ombudsmen for 4 years. Prior to NASA, Rolla worked with DoD and retired from the Air Force after 22 years of active duty service. Rolla is a Financial Management Specialist with the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) and has been involved in all phases of the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution processes. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Social Psychology from Park University, Parkville, MO and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Troy University in Troy, AL.



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Nick Kepics has worked for NASA for 40 years and has been a Center Ombudsman for the last 7 years. He currently supports the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) team at Langley Research Center as Facility Operations Specialist in the Resource Management Office. Over the span of his career, Nick has supported several different programs and projects like the Shuttle Thermal Shield Project, the High Speed Civil Transport Program (HSCT), Scram Jet Engine Design and Development, Advanced Fighter Designs, and Pegasus Missile Project.



MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-MSFC

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Pam Caruso has over 30 years experience in the Space and Missile Defense community and worked at DoD prior to joining NASA. She currently supports the Engineering Director as Lead for Engineering Partnerships. She has a Bachelor of Science from University of Alabama in chemical engineering, and a Master of Science from the University of Alabama in Huntsville in engineering. Pam has served as an Ombudsman for a year.



MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER-MSFC

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Susan Cloud has 31 years with NASA and 5 years with the Ombudsman Program. She currently is Special Assistant to the Director of Human Capital and Acting Director of Diversity and EEO. Susan has a B.A. from the University of Alabama and a J.D. from Cumberland School of Law, Samford University.



NASA SHARED SERVICES CENTER-NSSC

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Jim Barnett has been with the NSSC Business and Administration Office since 2006, where he served as Lead, Institutional Services and is currently appointed Industrial Property Officer for the NSSC Agency-wide contracts. His background has been in Center operations including construction, facility management, and safety. As a mechanical engineer he came to Stennis Space Center in 2001 from the Navy's Gulf Coast Construction Office. Earlier in his 30-year Government career he served as a Naval Officer and performed various Civil Service supervisory and management roles.



STENNIS SPACE CENTER-SSC

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Karen Vander has been with NASA for 21 years and is the Lead, Safety, Quality, and Management Systems Division in the Office of Safety and Mission at Stennis Space Center (SSC) where she also serves as the Mishap and Close Calls Program Manager for SSC. She has worked as a Test Operations Engineer on several rocket propulsion test projects such as the Space Shuttle Main Engine (SSME) and 250K Hybrid Rocket Motor. She has also worked as a Systems Engineer on several construction projects. Karen has been the SSC Ombudsman for over 6 years She has also recently retired from the United States Air Force Reserve with 23 years of service.

The NASA Ombudsman Program is overseen by Olga Dominguez, the Assistant Administrator for Strategic Infrastructure. The Agency program is administered by Fatima Johnson, Executive Officer for the Office of Strategic Infrastructure (OSI) and Robin Atcherson, OSI Executive Assistant. This team coordinates monthly Ombudsman Video Teleconferences and communications with the International Ombudsman Association (IOA), which provides the Agency's certification. It is through their efforts that the annual Agency report is compiled and distributed to the Agency Officials-In-Charge list.

Visit our Web site: <http://oim.hq.nasa.gov/oia/ombuds/index.html>