

NASA closes Electronics Center

NASA announced last Monday, December 29, the closing of its Electronics Research Center at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The decision to suspend operations at the center was made during the space agency's fiscal 1971 budgetary review and in planning the future course of the nation's space program over the next decade.

Administrator Thomas O. Paine told employees at the center, "We have thoroughly studied within NASA and in working with the President's Space Task Group the new U.S. space program for the seventies. We find that we must effect reductions and consolidations across the

board if we are to reshape our programs to meet the nation's future needs in aeronautics and space.

"As you know, we have already taken steps to reduce our manned space flight program since the successful Apollo lunar landing. As we reduce the total program and alter its direction, we must reduce the institutional base of support. We are simply faced with the hard fact that NASA cannot afford to continue to invest broadly in electronics research as we have in the past."

The phasing down of work in the Electronics Research Center will begin at once. Dr. Paine pointed out that final plans are in preparation for placement of the

personnel and disposition of real property in Cambridge.

The Electronics Research Center opened on September 1, 1964 and has 850 employees engaged in advanced research in aeronautics and space. The center is headed by James C. Elms.

Cambridge Research Center to Close

New York Times (1923-); Dec 30, 1969; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times with Index pg. 27

Cambridge Research Center to Close

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Dec. 29 (AP)—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration ordered today the closing of its \$36-million electronics research center here, a move that would put 850 employes out of work.

Dr. Thomas O. Paine, administrator of the space agency, flew to Boston to inform employes of the decision, which he said was reached last weekend for economic reasons.

"We have \$36-million invested in this very fine facility," he said of six newly constructed buildings—some of them as yet unoccupied—on 29 acres of industrial land near the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and across the Charles River from Boston.

He gave no date for the closing but said it would be accomplished "at an early date."

Dr. Paine said he reluctantly concurred with the decision by space and budget experts, in line with cutbacks and revisions in the space agency that include a reduction of its in-

volvement in broad-based electronics research.

Gov. Francis W. Sargent of Massachusetts, a Republican, said he called the White House as soon as he learned of the closing and "personally protested in the strongest possible terms." The Governor added that he asked that President Nixon "personally review this decision."

In Washington, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Representative Thomas P. O'Neill, Democrat of Massachusetts, said in a joint statement that the decision was made by the President. The center is in Mr. O'Neill's district.

Senator Kennedy and Representative O'Neill called the move "disastrous" and demanded an "adequate explanation."

Dr. Howard W. Johnson, president of M.I.T., said that the closing was a "damaging turn of events for Cambridge, for Boston and for Massachusetts."

The center was established in 1964 after being awarded to Cambridge during the Kennedy Administration.

In addition to the loss of 850 jobs, the move will curtail portions of \$25-million in annual electronic contracts awarded by the space agency in eastern Massachusetts.

There are no plans now for disposing of the six buildings at the center.

Furor in Cambridge

New York Times (1923-); Jan 5, 1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times with Index
pg. 36

Furor in Cambridge

The nation, moving toward new priorities in this new decade, must prepare for inevitable dislocations and hardship as existing facilities are closed to permit shifting of resources to other uses. In the absence of such preparation, these shifts are bound to arouse resistance from local interests that are immediately and adversely affected.

A case in point is the bipartisan chorus of complaints that has been evoked in the area by the decision of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to abandon its electronics research center in Cambridge, Mass. The closing is eminently justified in these days of very tight space budgets, especially since there was grave doubt from the project's inauguration almost a decade ago that there was any real need for the center. Rather, the evidence suggests, pork barrel politics was the chief justification; the project's real function apparently was to vindicate Senator Edward M. Kennedy's 1962 election campaign slogan, "I can do more for Massachusetts."

Inevitably, some of the \$36 million spent to construct and equip the almost completed complex of six buildings for the laboratory will be wasted as a result

of this decision. But certainly there are other and more urgent uses available for the buildings and the personnel—about 850 in all—now released by the closing decision.

The chorus of complaints from Cambridge and Massachusetts is out of proportion to the project's monetary importance in the state's economy. That chorus will be useful, however, if it reminds officials and private interests at all levels that now is not too soon to begin planning for conversion of other facilities whose present uses must end if the nation is to make better use of its resources, especially after the Vietnam war.

NASA Closing Decried

New York Times (1923-); Jan 2, 1970; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times with Index

pg. 33

NASA Closing Decried

BOSTON, Jan. 1 (AP)—Elden

L. Auker, president of Associated Industries of Massachusetts, said today that the planned closing of the \$36-million Electronics Research Center of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Cambridge was

“a devastating blow to the future development of our whole state.” In a letter to officials in each of the 2,500 member companies of the state manufacturing organization, Mr. Auker said, “The questionable logic of this so-called economy move must be challenged.”

NIXON ASKS NEW USE FOR A NASA CENTER

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 (AP) —President Nixon has asked his chief science adviser to explore possibilities for making "other governmental use" of a space agency electronics research center at Cambridge, Mass., which is to be closed because of budgetary restraints.

The White House Office of Science and Technology announced the request today and said it was "vigorously pursuing" the matter.

It said Mr. Nixon had requested the study by Dr. Lee A. DuBridge "following a White House meeting Jan. 13 with Gov. Francis W. Sargent of Massachusetts."

The Cambridge Electronics Research Center is a 29-acre complex of six buildings now nearing completion at a cost of \$36-million.

Some 100 specialists in advanced electronics research have been installed in the new facilities, and 750 more are housed in temporary rented quarters.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration had planned to invest about \$60-million to make this the heart of Government study programs in the electronics field, an installation employing several thousand persons.

NASA-Lewis Research Center
Cleveland, Ohio

July 16, 1970

MEMORANDUM TO: Lewis Employees and Resident Personnel
FROM : Deputy Director
SUBJECT : Reduction in Force

The following information was received from Mr. Grove Webster, Director of Personnel, NASA Headquarters:

"The National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced today that it will reduce Civil Service employment by about 900 personnel by October 1, 1970. This reduction includes a decrease of 200 planned in NASA's FY 1971 budget and 700 required to meet the limitation on personnel costs in NASA's FY 1971 Authorization Act signed by the President on July 2, 1970.

The reasons for the Reduction in Force announced today are to effect a planned manpower reduction, to meet additional Congressional limitation on personnel costs, and to align and balance the work force for accomplishing NASA missions at lower employment levels. The Agency has determined that employees will be granted salary retention benefits under the provisions of FPM Supplement 990-2, Subchapter 351. In view of the stated reasons and the fact that it would not be possible in any given personnel action to determine that the reduction in grade resulted solely from a "lack of funds," the issue has been resolved in favor of the employee as directed in FPM Supplement 990-2, Subchapter 351-31.

The principal reductions will be at NASA Headquarters in Washington, D. C., and Manned Space Flight Installations. The reductions at each NASA location affected will be approximately:

Headquarters	200
Manned Spacecraft Center	150
Marshall Space Flight Center	190
Kennedy Space Center	85
Ames Research Center	54
Langley Research Center	82
Lewis Research Center	114
NASA Pasadena Office	25
Total	900

The final Reductions in Force at each location will be determined by the requirements for retaining a balanced work force for accomplishing NASA missions at the lower employment levels. NASA is acting to have the Reduction-in-Force completed by October 1, 1970, in order to minimize the number of employees who must be discharged.

Together with the reduction of approximately 600 earlier this month in connection with the Electronics Research Center at Cambridge, Mass., the reductions announced today will bring total Civil Service reductions in the last three years to above 5,200 and give NASA a staff of 29,850, the lowest since 1963."


E. J. Manganiello

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