

Responsible Commission: Commission VI

Study Number and Title: Space Expectation 6.8

Short Study Description:

Overall Goal: Enable a merging of the technological/scientific goals of space activities with society's expectations. This will lead to programs that are supported by the public, generate more interests and have fewer disconnects with society.

Intermediate Goals: Determine societal expectations of space!

Rationale: Space activities have historically been based upon technological successes with science and exploration leading space activities toward major projects throughout the solar system. Periodic disconnects have occurred as the public suddenly sees major successes and cheers or sees failures and asks tough questions like why? And how much? Following on from the IAA's recent study on the Impact of Space Activities upon Society, a study sponsored by the Academy would essentially turn the previous study around in order to determine the depth of understanding and backing that is out in the public, describe society's expectations from space programmes, and ascertain how society could become more involved in space exploration. The next step would be to merge these three thrusts so that projects could be positioned to fulfill public expectations, maintain their interest and excitement; and thus, be supported (both financially and intellectually) by the public.

Methodology: Public Survey – The approach for this study is to develop a survey that would be aimed at the public to determine their understanding and expectation of space activities. This survey would then be distributed through various national networks and organizations (including space agencies) to diverse groups including: high schools and universities; art, cultural and heritage bodies; as well as the public at large. To avoid a plethora of responses, replies would be sought as much as possible from groups of people, eg students would be asked to provide a reply from their class as a whole rather than individually. For the public response, students would be requested to ask their parents to respond to the survey. This would give the study team several sets of inputs from different age groups from around the world. The intention is to collect the inputs via a Web-based form to minimize the paperwork. However, a book could result if there are sufficient interesting Responses.

Progress in past 12 months: Initiated the study

Meeting in Japan. (see minutes) Study approved and initiated.

During the meeting in Paris in March, there was much discussion on schedule and how to proceed. The key was that the questionnaire had to be developed first. This is the key to the whole study. As such, a meeting was scheduled for two weeks after Paris at ESTEC where a small team hammered out a draft set of questions for the questionnaire. This was successfully done and then transmitted to the other members of the team for comments. Most have responded to the questionnaire and are providing comments as well as attending the follow-on meeting in Valencia.

During the meeting in Valencia there was much discussion and three meetings on different aspects of the study... The questionnaire is relatively stable; however, the approach to distribute the questionnaire is up for grabs. We are trying to understand how to do that.

Website Study Information up to date? (Study Group Membership, Study Plan and Schedule) yes

Issues requiring resolution?: Coordination with UNESCO should help our next step to have a distribution channel.

Product Deliveries on Schedule? : yes

Study Team Member Changes? Much better feel for the content of the study team after Paris. Membership solidified. Current membership is as follows:

David Raitt	co-lead
Cathy Swan	co-lead
Peter Swan	co-lead
Arthur Woods	co-lead
Doug Vakoch	
Jerry Grey	
Max Grimard	
Patrick Gyger	
Gerard Brachet	
Susmita Mohanty	
Ahmed Azzaoui	
Vince Boles	
Paul Nelson	

Commission VI leadership: Roger Malina, David Raitt, Geoffrey Languedoc

Name of person providing Study Group Status: Dr. Peter A. Swan, Study chair

Status Report Date: 12 March 2007