

## Re: O'Keefe to leave NASA soon

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.history/2004-12/1761.html>

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**From:** Bill the Cat ([bill\\_at\\_the.cat](mailto:bill_at_the.cat))

**Date:** 12/15/04

Date: Tue, 14 Dec 2004 18:16:43 -0600

"Scott Hedrick" <[dinehm@yahoo.com](mailto:dinehm@yahoo.com)> wrote in  
news:cTEvd.7945\$Ap1.2458@bignews6.bellsouth.net:

> *"Bill the Cat" <bill@the.cat> wrote in message*  
> *news:Xns95BEEEC3EF74Bbillthecat@216.196.97.131...*  
>> *What would you consider "adequately funded?"*  
>  
> *Enough to do the job, in a manner that precludes easily altering the*  
> *amount.*

You do realize that the latter is impossible, of course? In a democracy,  
the government can *\*always\** alter the amount.

> *And are you aware of the*  
>> *proposed levels of funding for the new program?*  
>  
> *Yes, as well as being aware that almost none of the funding is \*new\**  
> *money.*  
>  
> *NASA would need something on the order of \$5-8G in \*additional\**  
> *funding for three or four years, then increasing upwards of \$15G for a*  
> *decade (adjusted for inflation), to have a serious chance at*  
> *accomplishing anything.*

You do realize how insane that is, right? That's \$165-182 billion over 14  
years! This is *\*not\** a crash program - there is no need for a massive spike  
in NASA spending.

Now, for the *\*real\** numbers. The Congressional Budget Office projects that  
the new program will cost \$63.8 billion through the first manned lunar  
return in 2020. Contrast that to Project Apollo, which cost \$77.9 billion  
through the first manned lunar landing (actually, through the end of FY69  
on June 30, 1969, but close enough). Both of those figures are inflation-  
adjusted to constant-year 2005 dollars.

That is an adequate amount of funding for the new program, in my opinion.  
In fact, I think NASA damn well better be able to return to the moon for

less than it cost to do it the first time, especially considering that we are no longer in a Cold War and the "waste anything but time" philosophy of Apollo is no longer required.

- > *The plan as proposed just takes money from*
- > *science and aviation programs.*

Incorrect. The majority of the funding for the new program through 2009 comes from cancelling SLI and OSP, and drastically reducing SLEP. After 2010, more funding is freed by retiring the space shuttle. After 2016, more funding is freed by withdrawing from the ISS program. None of those programs are under science or aeronautics. Science and aeronautics do take a hit in the first few years, but are held constant (with respect to inflation) starting in 2009.

- > *Frankly, at the moment, I don't see*
- > *increasing space spending as being a priority, particularly with the*
- > *current spending deficits.*

Fortunately, the new program does not require large increases in spending.