

Re: Establish demand

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.space.policy/2007-02/msg01044.html>

- *From:* "Totorkon" <aertrion@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 27 Feb 2007 19:56:26 -0800
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On Feb 27, 4:13 am, "Ian Parker" <ianpark...@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

On 27 Feb, 05:34, "Totorkon" <aertr...@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

The procurement system of the pentagon is essentially socialist and runs close to \$300G a year. For many systems there is only one reasonable vendor, like Boing for air tankers.

Interesting point. Boeing claims that Airbus is subsidized. True there are "headline" subsidies for Airbus, yet the Pentagon "subsidies" for Boeing are ignored.

The first aim of NASA should be to bring launch costs down. Henry suggests that a RLV could do this, at least if it is launched frequently enough. To justify this, suitable payloads must be part of the plan.

A mass range of 20 tons to orbit is large enough that per launch costs under \$2000/Kg might be achievable, yet small enough to require the frequent flights that can amortise the initial costs, for an overall cost of \$4000/Kg. It could provide the technology and experience to pave the way for further drops in price.

The present VSE is to use SRBs and disposable RS68 engines to put a manned base on the moon. For less cost we could have missions that really bring home the data for deep space astronomy and the solar system, and a launch system that doesn't ditch itself in the Atlantic after each countdown.– Hide quoted text –

You may be right. Your shirt please. I feel that if we got removed from bureaucracy and subsidy we might be in a better position. I tend to feel that Science should have a budget. It could then decide whether to spend the money on Earth based astronomy or space. If space it would be free to find the cheapest solution. One part of a cheap solution that should not be ignored is this. Do you send up a single entity where if something goes wrong the mission is useless, or do you send a swarm where the system is failure tolerant? A failure tolerant

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system might have a lower development cost with less checking and less expensive components, but a higher launch cost. Quite clearly that should be for scientists to decide NASA does not have a role.

One thing for sure. If people were doing this kind of tradeoff we would be better able to look at the economics of alternatives.

– Ian Parker

Scientists can only choose what their budgets can cover. The HST was nearly canceled, it cost ten times more than the two Keck telescopes and has only about a 1/33 the the total light gathering capability.

The dawn mission was almost canceled as well, but it is a case where there is no earth based alternative.

Heavy, robust engineering and aggressive exploration depend on economic access to space. Economic access depends on a steady dependable demand. The two must be nurtured together. The experience gained, the hardware that is developed, will be the foundation of possible commercial enterprise.

One year in Iraq would finance 21 years of NASA expenditures at the current rate of funding. It is imperative that we get the greatest value for what is still a considerable investment.

Postcards from the far reaches are just as valuable even if they don't have an astronaut in the foreground, and they cost a tenth as much.

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