

Tracking Number: 2010-02-15 (TIC-02)
NASA Life and Physical Sciences

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation:

The Council recognizes the importance of life and physical sciences research in future human exploration activities and urges the Agency to engage in deliberative and inclusive discussions about how to manage it coherently across the NASA organization.

Major Reasons for the Recommendation:

The Committee wants to ensure that this topic, which extends across almost all NASA's activities, is well-coordinated.

NASA Response:

NASA concurs with the Council's recommendation pertinent to the importance of Life and Physical Sciences Research in future human exploration activities.

The President's Budget Request for FY 2011 directs NASA to implement the Life and Physical Sciences portfolio in the SOMD in order to more closely coordinate it with other U.S. research objectives being pursued in the context of ISS operation as a national laboratory. This was directed in the 2005 NASA Authorization Act and supported by recommendations of the Review of U.S. Human Spaceflight Plans Committee (Augustine Committee) in 2009. This Life and Physical Sciences portfolio was previously managed under ESMD in FY 2010. In cooperation with ESMD, SOMD has developed an implementation strategy that continues to pursue the entire research portfolio as previously planned.

Further progress in defining the future scope of research on the ISS is subject to the NASA Authorization Act of 2010 and the FY 2011 Congressional appropriations processes currently underway. Once the FY 2011 NASA Budget has been appropriated by the Congress, statutory requirements contained therein, as well as recommendations from the 2009 Congressionally directed Decadal Survey on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space being conducted by the National Research Council (NRC), will be employed to further shape the future research agenda for the ISS. NASA is pleased to share the new Congressional requirements and NRC recommendations with the Council as soon as they become available and will continue to manage the research agenda in close adherence to Federal policy.

The NRC's Committee for Decadal Survey on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space also issued an interim report in July 2010 which is available at the following links:

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12944#toc

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