

HUMAN SPACE ENDEAVOURS SYMPOSIUM (B3)

Human Space Endeavour: Overview (1)

Author: Prof. Scott Hubbard

Stanford University, United States, scotthub@stanford.edu

EXAMINING THE VISION FOR SPACE EXPLORATION: WORKSHOP FINDINGS AND ROADMAP ANALYSIS

Abstract

NASA's Vision for Space Exploration (VSE) was announced by President Bush on January 14, 2004. The original description of the VSE, called a "Renewed Spirit of Discovery", was rich in both human and robotic exploration goals. Understanding the potential for life on Mars or Europa was emphasized along with replacing the Shuttle and carrying out the necessary preparations in order to send humans to explore the Red Planet. In the four years hence, the implementation of the VSE has been focused on a much narrower set of goals: finishing the International Space Station for NASA's partners, developing a new US human spaceflight capability called Constellation to replace the Shuttle (to be retired in 2010) and making plans for a permanent human presence on the Moon beginning in 2020. Within NASA's nearly flat budget the last 4 years, the cost of these few objectives has resulted in major realignments of priorities: among them the loss of basic life science research, steep reduction in technology investment, a 3B cut to planned science programs, and a drastic reduction in plans for Mars exploration. Given the history of cost growth in the 13, 2008. Almost 50 space experts drawn from industry, the science community, astronaut corps and space policy debated and discussed the VSE. It is time to go beyond LEO with people as explorers. The purpose of sustained human exploration is to go to Mars and beyond. The