

FINDINGS OF THE SOUNDING ROCKET WORKING GROUP  
MAY 17 - 18, 1994

Voucher Program

The Sounding Rocket Working Group remains highly concerned that the proposed voucher program will burden NASA and the sounding rocket user community with a tremendously costly and highly inefficient science program. Despite these strong reservations, we commend the Wallops Flight Facility for its efforts to ensure a successful demonstration of this initiative. In view of this planned demonstration program, we have the following concerns:

1. To ensure a meaningful demonstration program that will not simultaneously cripple the on-going sounding rocket activities at NASA, we urge that vouchers be considered only for launch vehicle services and not for those that might pertain to payload design, fabrication, and testing. Since the payloads are unique, complex, and costly, their inclusion in the voucher demonstration would require significant sounding rocket program resources. We are highly concerned that this would severely compromise the on-going research program and, hence, be counterproductive to the aims of the demonstration program.
2. The evaluation of the demonstration program must be carried out with input from the Principal Investigators and the appropriate NASA Science Programs Offices as to the degree of their satisfaction with both the process and the science results. To ensure a fair evaluation of this aspect of the program, we believe it is imperative that sounding rocket scientists be included on the voucher demonstration evaluation panel.

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