



## Space Politics

Because sometimes the most important orbit is the Beltway...

### [Final WH decision: wait till February?](#)

October 22, 2009 at 8:42 pm · Filed under [Congress](#), [NASA](#), [White House](#)

Shortly after the Augustine committee released its final report, Alan Ladwig of NASA spoke at the luncheon of the International Symposium for Personal and Commercial Spaceflight in New Mexico. Ladwig, filling in for deputy administrator Lori Garver (who was scheduled to speak but stayed in Washington because of the report's release) did briefly address the "800-pound gorilla in the room"—the report—but without going into detail about what direction NASA would go. "It remains premature for anyone at NASA to draw conclusions or speculate about future spaceflight plans or policies based on the committee's final report," he said.

He said that policy leaders from a number of organizations would now meet to "transform the Augustine options into a recommendation or recommendations to be considered and acted on by the president." He hoped that decisions would be made in time to influence the FY2010 budget and to be incorporated into FY2011 budget request. He noted that the budget request normally isn't released until late January or early February. "So while it is likely that we'll hear something about our fate from the president before the end of the year," he suggested, "a complete view of the new-and-improved NASA may not be completely defined until the release of the 2011 budget."

The organizations that would be involved in that process, Ladwig said, likely includes OSTP, OMB, "probably" the National Security Council, and "maybe" the National Economic Council. "Hopefully they'll be smart enough not to make the mistake that was made back in 1989", when the first Bush administration didn't coordinate with Congress on the planning for the Space Exploration Initiative, he said. He added that he would not be surprised if President Obama himself got involved in the deliberations at some point before the plans were finalized. "He likes to get involved in these discussions sooner than later, so I don't envision that he'll be sitting by and won't see anything about this until the very last moment."

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## 91 Comments

[Donald F. Robertson](#) wrote @ October 22nd, 2009 at 9:12 pm

Of course, if we don't go forward with the current architecture, every month before that decision is made represents money spent on a system that may be canceled in whole or in part. That is truly wasted money. The sooner the decision is made, one way or the other, the better for all concerned. . . .

– Donald

[NASA Fan](#) wrote @ October 22nd, 2009 at 9:54 pm

What is clear to me from listening to Augustine today is that the quagmire NASA finds itself in is a clear indication of lack of leadership at the Presidential level...for over 40 years. There has been no ongoing sustained conversation for possibilities to utilize humans in space to address national concerns...a