

Resources for the Commercial Habitation Module Memo Assignment

Habitation Module Commercialization Conference

There was a conference held in 1999 about commercializing the space station habitation module. Briefings from that conference are contained in this "Readings 03" section of the Command website. Below is a description of the conference.

"August 24-26, 1999

Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX"

"The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) sponsored this commercialization conference on August 24-26, 1999 in Houston, Texas. The purpose of this conference was to explore the commercial opportunities available to business investors through the development, deployment, and utilization of a multipurpose habitation module for the International Space Station (ISS). We want to thank all of the many interested parties who participated, and made the conference a great success!"

"The following presentation charts, which were given at the conference, are now available for download. All of the charts are in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and require the free Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view them."

For additional information, see the conference website:
<http://technology.jsc.nasa.gov/habconference/index.html>

[Note: This website may be removed in the near future, so don't be surprised if someday the link doesn't work. However, much of the content of the website has been stored on the Command site for your use.]

National Space Society Policy Statement on Commercial Habitation Module

10 June 1999

NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY ANNOUNCES POLICY ON TRANSHAB

Recently, one research program at NASA has generated debate in the halls of Congress and a firestorm of controversy within the space advocacy community.

Transhab, a research and development program intended to investigate the potential of habitable, inflatable space structures, has come under fire within the House of Representatives. Concerns were raised by legislators that the R & D effort would emerge from the ISS office as a construction project that would replace the current station habitation module. The fear was that with the replacement would come a dramatic increase in the cost of the International Space Station and delays in the contemplated construction schedule. Language was added to the House version of NASA's multiyear appropriations bill to halt work on habitable inflatable structures for one year.

In response to this threat to Transhab funding some advocacy organizations have mounted strenuous efforts to ensure that monies for inflatables research within the ISS program office is retained.

The complexity of this issue, however, defies a quick and easy solution. Inflatable habitation may offer a safe and cost effective method of providing living volume on Mars, the Moon and in space. At the same time, the promise of this technology should not become an excuse to further delay completion of ISS or raise its cost.

In light of these considerations, the Policy Committee of the National Space Society makes the following recommendations:

1. Research and development of inflatables technology should continue at NASA;
2. NASA should not develop under its own auspices an inflatable habitation module for the International Space Station;
3. The National Space Society endorses the concept of commercial development of supplemental habitation for the International Space Station.

The Policy Committee is confident that these recommendations balance the issues involved and most importantly help to promote the development of technologies which advance space settlement in a speedy and cost effective manner.

The National Space Society, founded in 1974, is an independent, nonprofit space advocacy organization headquartered in Washington, DC. Its 20,000 members and 75 chapters around the world actively promote a spacefaring civilization. Information on NSS and space exploration is available at <http://www.nss.org/>