

The Committee believes that the Canadian Space Agency should explore these various possibilities with DRIE to devise acceptable regionalization initiatives that will be compatible with the goals of the Space Program.

Recommendation 19

The Committee recommends that the Canadian Space Agency, in cooperation with DRIE, should reassess the feasibility of the proposed regional distribution of space hardware contracts and determine if alternative approaches would be more appropriate in regions where no space hardware manufacturing capability exists at the present time.

If the Committee's recommendations are enacted, the Space Agency will have an important role in funding space research at various levels. Again, because Canada's resources for space activities are limited, it is essential that research funded by the Agency be strictly controlled as to quality and purpose. *Long-term research projects, which frequently are international in character, must adhere to world-class standards; short-term research must be driven by the specific requirements of the individual client.*

Recommendation 20

The Committee recommends that the Canadian Space Agency should establish formal procedures, including peer-review mechanisms where appropriate, to evaluate new proposals for research as well as the results of R&D supported by Agency funding.

E. Launch Services

Canada does not have, and has never had, the capability to launch satellites. In past years — and the four satellites in the Alouette-ISIS series are examples — Canada procured launches through collaboration with other countries, principally the United States, on space projects of various kinds. As was discussed earlier in this Report, Canada had a productive sounding rocket launch program at Fort Churchill, Manitoba.

Since the cancellation of the Fort Churchill program in 1984, the space science community has suffered from the lack of a domestic sounding rocket launch capability. The shuttle disaster has further complicated the situation because NASA itself now has a diminished launch capability for the U.S. civilian space program and has instituted restrictions on launches for foreign countries.

The Committee has addressed the issue of whether Canada should re-institute a domestic launch program. Several witnesses, including Professor Ralph Nicholls of York University, have recommended that consideration be given to re-establishing the launch program at Fort Churchill, as well as the balloon program at Gimli, Manitoba.³⁰

The Committee also received testimony from Bristol Aerospace Limited of Winnipeg on this issue. Bristol is the manufacturer of the Black Brant series of sounding rockets which were used extensively at the Fort Churchill facility. The Black Brant is also used extensively by NASA and is, in fact, widely used around the world for space science projects.

⁽³⁰⁾ Dr. Ralph Nicholls, Brief to the Standing Committee on Research, Science and Technology, April 13, 1987, p. 26.