

NASA News Release

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Marshall Space Flight Center
Huntsville, Alabama 35812



FS-MSFC-95(08)-012

October 1994

Technology Transfer by NASA's Marshall Center Results in 5,300 Jobs Nationwide

An estimated 5,300 jobs have been created or saved across the United States in the last year and a half as a result of the Marshall Space Flight Center's Technology Transfer program. As a result of hundreds of interactions with private industry, the impact of Marshall's technology transfer on the U. S. economy has been measured at more than \$358 million.

Two-hundred and eighty-three firms that received general technology assistance from Marshall, and another 16 companies who have formal industry agreements with the Center, answered a customer questionnaire which asked detailed questions about Marshall's economic impact on their business. The responses totaled 35 percent of the total number of Marshall technology assistance efforts since January 1993.

The firms reported an increase in sales of more than \$47 million; a cost savings in production or operations of \$11.5 million; and a direct investment of more than \$10 million. Industrial partnerships and direct transfer of technology also resulted in 665 new and saved jobs. Government and industry-accepted multipliers from the Department of Commerce were applied to the raw numbers provided by the technology users to arrive at a

statistical total measuring Marshall's impact on the economy.

"We are very pleased with this first look at the results of our efforts during the last year or so," said Harry Craft Jr., manager of the Technology Transfer Office. "Our goal has been not just to make NASA technology available to the private sector, but to encourage American businesses to use our technology."

This goal is in line with the a statement released by the White House in 1993 that says "... We cannot rely on the serendipitous application of aerospace technology to the private sector. We must aim directly at new challenges and focus our efforts on the new opportunities before us, recognizing that government can play a key role in helping private firms develop and profit from innovations."

Underscoring the direct job and economic impacts of Marshall's technology transfer efforts were statistics from the survey citing the type of businesses affected. The vast majority are small enterprises most susceptible to swings in the economy. The Center's biggest technology transfer customer tended to do \$1 - 5 million of annual

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sales, employ 50 people or less and be in business 10 years or longer.

“We are especially attuned to the small-business person for whom the acquisition of technology can make the difference between staying in business and going out of business,” Craft said.

An indication of how well Marshall is doing at technology transfer is the fact that 88 percent of the survey respondents said the Center was helpful to them and 95 percent said they would call on

Marshall again for technology assistance.

Marshall's Technology Transfer Office is responsible for the direct transfer of NASA-inspired ideas and solutions to businesses throughout the southeast. The office also interacts with companies around the country providing assistance for a variety of technology challenges. Businesses desiring additional information on the technology transfer program should contact Tim Tyson at 205/544-0994.