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# AN INITIAL CONCEPT OF A MANNED MARS EXCURSION VEHICLE FOR A TENOUS MARS ATMOSPHERE <br> By G. R. Woodcock <br> Advanced Systems Office 



NASA
George C. Marshall
Space Flight Center,
Huntsville, Alabama

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# AN INITIAL CONCEPT OF A MANNED MARS EXCURSION VEHICLE FOR A TENOUS MARS ATMOSPHERE 

By<br>G. R. Woodcock<br>\section*{George C. Marshall Space Flight Center Huntsville, Alabama}

## ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a preliminary investigation of the requirements and characteristics of a manned Mars landing vehicle to:

1. Establish how much aerodynamic braking might be feasible with thin atmosphere;
2. Determine if parachutes appear feasible and, if not, how can aerodynamic braking be phased into rocket braking for a landing;
3. Establish a rough estimate of the total mass of a Mars landing vehicle.

# NASA-GEORGE C. MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER 

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## LIST OF SYMBOLS

Symbol
Definition
$C_{D} \quad$ drag coefficient
D Aerodynamic drag
f
Dependent parameters in Newton's divided difference formula
F
g

L
m
$r \quad$ radius from center of planet
S
t
time

V
x
$\mathrm{x}, \mathrm{y}$
$\gamma$
$?$
atmosphere density
$\theta \quad$ range angle

# AN INITIAL CONCEPT OF A MANNED MARS EXCURSION VEHILE FOR A TENOUS MARS ATMOSPHERE 

SUMMARY

The following conclusions and recommendations were developed:

1. An Apollo-shape entry and landing vehicle provides a reasonable solution to the problems of aerodynamic braking at Mars.
2. Entry and landing on Mars should be accomplished by aerodynamic braking with modest lift, followed by rocket braking. The mass penalty for rocket braking is not great and this represents a much more conservative approach than any attempts to use supersonic parachutes or similar devices.
3. Entry should be made from a Mars orbit. Whereas a satisfactory entry from parabolic or higher-energy conditions is theoretically feasible, the entry corridor is very small and this entry mode would lead to undue risks.
4. Fully loaded system mass for a 4-man lander with ascent vehicle will be on the order of 50 metric tons.
5. Size of such a lander would probably be larger than the diameter of the Saturn V launch vehicle; a hammer-head configuration would then be necessary to launch the lander to Earth orbit by means of the Saturn V.
6. Performance available from cryogenic propellants is extremely desirable for the ascent stage. Lox methane appears to be an attractive choice as a compromise between performance and cryogenics storage problems.
7. An alternate configuration of the landing vehicle, without the ascent stage, could provide a reasonably effective cargo lander or shelter system for extended Mars exploration.
8. It is recommended that a more detailed design study of this type of vehicle be carried out to confirm the design approach and the rough-order-of-magnitude weights.
9. It is recommended that a study be carried out to ascertain the degree to which Mars entry simulations with this vehicle type could be carried out in an Earth atmosphere environment. This would be desirable to avoid the necessity of an unmanned test at Mars.
10. A simulation study is recommended to ascertain the degree to which a Mars entry and landing of the type discussed herein could be controlled by a human pilot.

## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

A manned landing on Mars will require a special purpose space vehicle designed and developed for this purpose. In a typical mission profile [1], the Mars landing vehicle will be transported to Mars by an interplanetary space vehicle which will deliver the mission from Earth orbit to Mars orbit. The function of the Mars landing vehicle will be (a) to land an exploration crew on the planet and at a later time return them to Mars orbit for rendezvous with the interplanetary vehicle, or (b) to deliver exploratory cargo to the Mars surface, with no provision for reascent to Mars orbit. Its function therefore is quite analogous to the lunar excursion module being developed for the Apollo program. However, orbital velocities at Mars are substantially higher than at the moon, such that a Mars excursion module designed for entirely propulsive braking and landing would be very large and heavy. Mars, however, unlike the Moon, has enough atmosphere to provide some atmospheric braking.

Earlier studies of manned Mars landing vehicles were generally based on a nominal Mars atmosphere model assuming roughly 25 millibars of pressure at Mars surface and a scale height of 20 kilometers or more. With this atmosphere model, it appeared feasible to fly a lifting entry which would bring the landing vehicle to a subsonic flight velocity at a nominal distance from Mars surface. At this point parachutes were to be deployed for final letdown, with a very modest provision for terminal rocket braking to reduce the impact velocity.

In July of 1965, the Mariner 4 spacecraft executed a flyby of Mars during which an occultation experiment was performed. As viewed from the Earth, the spacecraft flew behind the planet and its radio signal was occulted by the atmosphere, and then by the planet itself. Measurements made during this occultation provided new and more accurate information on the structure of Mars' atmosphere. This experiment indicated the surface pressure to be only about 6 millibars and the scale height to be only 8 kilometers. This new information has made it desirable to take another look at the requirements and characteristics of a manned Mars landing vehicle, to establish, first, how much aerodynamic braking might be feasible with this thin atmosphere, secondly, do parachutes appear feasible (and if not, how can aerodynamic braking be phased into rocket braking for a landing), and thirdly, a rough estimate of the total mass of such a Mars landing vehicle. These results are needed for analyses of overall mission profiles for manned Mars exploratory missions.

The purpose of this report is to record results of a preliminary investigation into these matters.

## SECTION II. SELECTION OF ATMOSPHERE MODEL

The Mariner IV occultation experiment provided both the motivation for the investigation described in this report and the atmosphere model which was used. The Mariner IV experiment was performed by observing the fade-out of radio signals from the Mariner IV space probe as it passed behind the planet Mars [2]. This radio signal was phase-locked with a ground transmitter and receiver. Consequently it was possible to observe, as well as fade-out in intensity, the total relative phase shift of the signal passing through the atmosphere as it faded out. Based on plausible assumptions of the constituents of the Mars atmosphere, it was then possible from these data to determine the density scale height of the atmosphere as well as the atmosphere density at the surface at the instant of final fade-out, when the solid body of the planet became interposed between the transmitter and receiver. Atmosphere models could then be constructed, based on this density scale height and again assumptions regarding the constituency of the Mars atmosphere.

The measured scale height was small compared to what had been expected: i.e. about 8 kilometers. With the strength of Mars ${ }^{1}$ gravity field, this requires assumption of an atmosphere which is both very cold and of relatively high molecular weight. The atmosphere used in this study was based on a value of indicated surface density from the Mariner measurements, 0.019 kilograms per cubic meter, and on an assumed mean molecular weight of 40 for the atmosphere. Mean atmospheric temperature could then be calculated from the measured scale height, the assumed molecular weight and the known surface gravity strength. Whereas later work with the Mariner IV data may provide improved knowledge of the atmosphere structure, very little was available to the writer at the time of conduct of this study. Consequently some speculation was employed and it was assumed that above approximately 30 kilometers altitude, the atmosphere temperature increased due to heating by the solar wind. In fact, structure of the upper atmosphere has relatively little effect on the analysis since the bulk of the braking as well as the terminal velocity occur in the atmosphere below 50 km .

Surface pressure of the atmosphere model used was calculated to be 5.69 millibars. A tabulation of the atmosphere model is given in Table l. Values for the atmosphere above 100 kilometers are extremely speculative; they have essentially no effect on the entry simulation; but it was necessary to provide atmosphere data for the table-lookup computer routine over the range of flight altitudes to be investigated. Consequently, the atmosphere table was extended to 1000 kilometers altitude.

Since the analysis was conducted, there have come to the writer's attention several atmosphere models proposed by JPL based on the Mariner IV measurements [3]. Density versus geometric altitude for two of these models, as well as for the model used in this study, are shown in Figure 1.

TABLE 1. ATMOSPHERE MODEL

| Altitude, Meters | Density, M/Cu. Meter | Temperature, Deg. K | Speed of Sound, Meters/Second |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 0.0 | $1.9 \times 10^{-2}$ | 143 | Meters/Second 196 |
| $5.0 \times 10^{3}$ | $1.02 \times 10^{-2}$ | 143 | 196 |
| $1.0 \times 10^{4}$ | $2.92 \times 10^{-3}$ | 143 | 196 |
| $2.0 \times 10^{4}$ | $8.37 \times 10^{-4}$ | 143 | 196 |
| $3.0 \times 10^{4}$ | $2.4 \times 10^{-4}$ | 143 | 196 |
| $4.0 \times 10^{4}$ | $6.86 \times 10^{-5}$ | 143 | 196 |
| $5.0 \times 10^{4}$ | $2.26 \times 10^{-5}$ | 161 | 208 |
| $7.5 \times 10^{4}$ | $2.33 \times 10^{-6}$ | 197 | 230 |
| $1.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $4.4 \times 10^{-7}$ | 268 | 269 |
| $1.5 \times 10^{5}$ | $3.61 \times 10^{-8}$ | 358 | 310 |
| $2.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $2.96 \times 10^{-9}$ | 358 | 310 |
| $3.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $1.98 \times 10^{-11}$ | 358 | 310 |
| $4.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $1.32 \times 10^{-13}$ | 358 | 310 |
| $5.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $6.78 \times 10^{-16}$ | 358 | 310 |
| $6.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $3.14 \times 10^{-17}$ | 540 | 310 |
| $7.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $2.26 \times 10^{-18}$ | 715 | 310 |
| $8.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $3.53 \times 10^{-19}$ | 890 | 310 |
| $9.0 \times 10^{5}$ | $8.33 \times 10^{-20}$ | 1250 | 310 |
| $1.0 \times 10^{6}$ | $3.06 \times 10^{-20}$ | 1800 | 310 |
| $1.1 \times 10^{6}$ | $1.13 \times 10^{-20}$ | 1800 | 310 |
| $1.2 \times 10^{6}$ | $3.71 \times 10^{-21}$ | 1800 | 310 |
| 1. $3 \times 10^{6}$ | $1.35 \times 10^{-21}$ | 1800 | 310 |



FIGURE 1. MARS ATMOSPHERE MODELS

## SECTION III. CONFIGURATION CONSIDERATION

Early designs of Mars landing vehicles [4] were based on an assumed Mars atmosphere with a surface pressure of roughly 85 milibars and a scale height of roughly 15 kilometers. In the early $1950^{\prime}$ s very little work had been done on entry physics or on the various blunted ballistic and lifting shapes which are now common knowledge. Consequently these early designs were winged gliders which were assumed to land horizontally like aircraft. A later concept, [5] investigated in some detail under a NASA contract, employed a lifting body shape similar to the M-2 shape but was also based on an atmosphere model more dense than that derived from the Mariner IV experiment; a surface pressure of roughly 25 milibars was assumed as a lower limit. The terminal glide was subsonic and parachutes were deployed to accomplish the final letdown. These parachutes rotated the vehicle in pitch attitude so that it landed tail first, using retro rockets for final braking. The ascent stage was contained within the lander such that with the vehicle vertically positioned, the ascent stage was ready for launch.

Entry simulations (to be discussed in the following sections), based on a nominal Mariner IV atmosphere model with 6 millibars surface pressure and on reasonable weights and dimensions for a manned Mars excursion vehicle, indicate that the terminal glide is supersonic; consequently parachute braking appears questionable. A conservative design approach would therefore require that all terminal braking be accomplished by retro rockets. With rocket braking, if a lifting body shape of the type described were to be used, two alternatives present themselves:
a. Use the retro rocket system to perform deceleration to zero relative velocity and then perform a final vertical descent to landing in a horizontal attitude, or,
b. A pitch maneuver to turn the vehicle-tail first, combined with deceleration, in order to make a tail first landing.

The first alternative would require either an unusual ascent stage configuration, or erection of the ascent stage after landing, in order to be prepared for launch. The second alternative requires maneuvering as well as presuambly multiple rocket thrust chamber
arrangements, which in the writer's opinion are undesirable under the circumstances of a first manned landing on Mars.

For this reason it was deemed desirable to investigate alternate vehicle shapes to accomplish the landing. A semi-ballistic shape similar to the Apollo command module was chosen for investigation. If such a shape could provide suitable aerodynamic braking, it would appear to have several advantages:
a. General aerodynamic characteristics well understood for an Earth-type atmosphere, and, because of the simple geometry, readily obtainable for other atmospheric characteristics.
b. Relatively high volumetric efficiency.
c. Assuming a landing with the blunt end downward, a relatively low center of gravity and wide footprint.
d. Geometry amenable to a relatively simple arrangement of deceleration and letdown thrust chambers, also not requiring unusual maneuvering to attain a landing attitude.
e. Geometry amenable to packaging of an ascent stage with conventional configuration.

The choice of an Apollo shape then appeared appropriate, provided that a lift to drag ratio on the order of 0.4 would be sufficient for accomplishing aerodynamic entry and deceleration.

SECTION IV. MARS ENTRY SIMULATION: METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The key to definition of this initial concept was mathematical simulation of Mars entry trajectories to establish (a) how much aerodynamic braking could be obtained from the Mars atmosphere, and (b) how much aerodynamic lift is needed to make the most of aerodynamic braking. The latter question is, of course, pertinent to the choice of configuration for the lander.

The model chosen for the simulations was two-dimensional, with a non rotating planet but including variation of gravity force with altitude. The previously-described atmosphere model was employed. Gravity, lift, and drag were the only forces assumed acting on the vehicle, with the resulting force equations in polar co-ordinates:

$$
\begin{align*}
& \mathrm{F}_{\mathrm{r}}=\mathrm{L} \cos \gamma-\mathrm{D} \sin \gamma-\mathrm{m} \mathrm{~g}_{\sigma} \frac{\mathrm{r}_{\sigma}}{\mathrm{r}}  \tag{1}\\
& \mathrm{~F}_{\theta}=-\mathrm{L} \sin \gamma-\mathrm{D} \cos \gamma \tag{2}
\end{align*}
$$

$L / D$ and $C_{D}$ were fixed at initial values for each case, a reasonable assumption since subsonic speeds did not occur.

These were converted to rectangular co-ordinates for integration according to the standard convention sketched at the right: therefore,

$$
\begin{align*}
& \mathrm{x}=\mathrm{r} \cos \theta  \tag{3}\\
& \mathrm{y}=\mathrm{r} \sin \theta  \tag{4}\\
& \mathrm{~F}_{\mathrm{x}}=\mathrm{F}_{\mathrm{r}} \cos \theta-\mathrm{F}_{\theta} \sin \theta  \tag{5}\\
& \mathrm{F}_{\mathrm{y}}=\mathrm{F}_{\mathrm{r}} \sin \theta+\mathrm{F}_{\theta} \cos \theta \tag{6}
\end{align*}
$$



Integration was carried out by Newton's divided difference formula [6], third order.* This amounts to fitting a cubic polynomial to four successive points of the parameter to be integrated, and then integrating the polynomial approximation.

Newton's Divided Difference Equation for interpolation to third order is given by:

$$
\begin{align*}
f(x) & =f\left(x_{0}\right)+\left(x-x_{0}\right) f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}\right)+\left(x-x_{0}\right)\left(x-x_{1}\right) f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}, x_{2}\right) \\
& +\left(x-x_{0}\right)\left(x-x_{1}\right)\left(x-x_{2}\right) f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}, x_{2}, x_{3}\right) \tag{7}
\end{align*}
$$

where: $f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}, x_{2}, x_{3}\right)=\left[f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}, x_{2}\right)-f\left(x_{1}, x_{2}, x_{3}\right)\right] /\left(x_{0}-x_{3}\right)$

* One should not assume that a higher order is automatically better. In the simulations conducted here, parameters to be integrated varied slowly and smoothly with time, and third order was quite satisfactory. Third order fits can be, however, intractable (worse than first order), for example, for parameters which tend to vary stepwise.

$$
\begin{align*}
& f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}, x_{2}\right)=\left[f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}\right)-f\left(x_{1}, x_{2}\right)\right] /\left(x_{0}-x_{2}\right)  \tag{9}\\
& f\left(x_{0}, x_{1}\right)=\left[f\left(x_{0}\right)-f\left(x_{1}\right)\right] /\left(x_{0}-x_{1}\right) \tag{10}
\end{align*}
$$

Where parameters are as sketched below.


Integration were, in essence:

$$
\begin{align*}
& V_{x}=V_{x a}+\int_{a}^{b} F_{x / m} d t  \tag{11}\\
& V_{y}=V_{y a}+\int_{a}^{b} F_{y / m} d t  \tag{12}\\
& x=x_{a}+\int_{a}^{b} v_{x} d t  \tag{13}\\
& y=y_{a}+\int_{a}^{b} V_{y} d t \tag{14}
\end{align*}
$$

Conversion back to polar co-ordinates was then made:

$$
\begin{equation*}
\theta=\tan ^{-1} \mathrm{y} / \mathrm{x} \tag{15}
\end{equation*}
$$

$$
\begin{align*}
& \mathrm{V}_{\theta}=\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{y}} \cos \theta-\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{x}} \sin \theta  \tag{16}\\
& \mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{r}}=\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{x}} \cos \theta+\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{y}} \sin \theta  \tag{17}\\
& \mathrm{r}=\left(\mathrm{x}^{2}+\mathrm{y}^{2}\right)^{\frac{\pi}{2}}  \tag{18}\\
& \mathrm{~V}=\left(\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{x}}^{2}+\mathrm{V}_{\mathrm{y}}^{2}\right)^{\frac{1}{2}}  \tag{19}\\
& \gamma=\tan ^{-1} \mathrm{~V}_{\mathrm{r}} / \mathrm{V}_{\theta} \tag{20}
\end{align*}
$$

Interpolation of the atmospheretable also employed the third-order Newton's divided difference method. Density was put in logarithmic form prior to interpolation; i.e. $q_{i}=\ln \rho_{i}$. The interpolated result was then converted back to density, and drag found from $D=C_{D} S \rho V^{2} / 2$.

Computations were performed by a simple Fortran IV digital program for the IBM 7094. Initial conditions of altitude, velocity, path angle, mass, drag coefficient, L/D etc. were entered and the program performed the integrations either (a) 10,000 times, or (b) until zero altitude was reached. The usual time interval of integration was 1 second; this was'switched by the program to a smaller value, usually 0.2 seconds, when drag exceeded 1 percent of the weight of the vehicle. Accuracy of the integration routine was checked by simulating an elliptical descent from a circular orbit at $1000-\mathrm{km}$ altitude. About $1 / 3$ of an orbit was covered before drag became appreciable. Such a path, of course, has a readily obtained closed form solution, which was used as a check. After $1 / 3$ of an orbit, altitude error was less than 3 km , and velocity error less than $1 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{sec}$; this was deemed adequate for the purposes at hand.

## SECTION V. RESULTS OF SIMULATIONS

The principal simulation effort was devoted to simulation of very shallow entries from Mars orbit at a 1000 -kilometer orbit altitude. A Mars mission based on high-thrust interplanetary propulsion would presumably enter into such an orbit prior to descent of the Mars surface excursion vehicle. Some effort also was expended on simulation
of entries from parabolic conditions. The entry-from-orbit simulations had two principal objectives; first, to determine what lift-to-drag ratio range would be required to realize effective use of the atmosphere for aerodynamic braking, and second, to obtain an estimate of the speed at which it would be necessary to switch to retro rocket braking. Initial efforts carried the simulation from 1000 -kilometer altitude, immediately following the entry retro impulse, to Mars surface, with no lift; i.e. ballistic entry. Examination of this simulation allowed choice of a starting point for subsequent runs which was just prior to first noticeable effects of the atmosphere; this served to reduce computer run time. Simulations were run for a constant drag coefficient of 0.9 and lift-todrag ratios ranging from 0 to 0.4 . Other vehicle characteristics were as tabulated on Figure 3. Following this, simulations were run for varying entry angles, to determine the sensitivity of terminal conditions to the entry angle.

Initial Altitude: 343.4 km Initial Velocity: $3461 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{sec}$. Initial Path Angle: -0.12 radians

Entry Path Shown to Scale ( 1 inch $=1000 \mathrm{~km}$ )

FIGURE 2. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATION NON-LIFTING ENTRY


FIGURE 3. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATION NON-LIFTING ENTRY


FIGURE 4. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATION LIFTING ENTRY


FIGURE 5. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATIONS

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text { Initial Altitude } & 343.4 \mathrm{~km} \\
\text { Initial Velocity } & 4830 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{sec} . \\
\text { Initial Path Angle } & -0.30 \text { radians }
\end{array}
$$



FIGURE 6. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATION: PARABOLIC LIFT-MODULATED ENTRY


FIGURE 7. RESULTS OF MARS ENTRY SIMULATION: PARABOLIC ENTRY WITH LIFT MODULATION

Principal results of the simulations are shown on Figures 2 through 7. Figures 2 and 3 show real space and phase space plots of the ballistic entry from orbit. Figure 4 shows a phase space plot of a $0.4 \mathrm{~L} / \mathrm{D}$ entry. Figure 5 illustrates the effect of entry angle on terminal conditions for three representative lift-to-drag ratios. Figures 6 and 7 show real space and phase space plots of the simulated parabolic entry. This entry takes place at zero lift-to-drag ratio until velocity is slowed down to 2.7 kilometers per second, at which point lift is modulated to 0.4 lift-to-drag ratio until terminal conditions. Other simulation attempts from parabolic conditions indicated that the entry corridor for these conditions is very narrow; probably only a few kilometers in height. The nature of the rudimentry simulation technique utilized was such that an accurate estimate of the corridor height could not be obtained. An example of an entry simulation is given in the appendix.

The following principal conclusions were drawn from this analysis:

1. A lift-to-drag ratio on the order of 0.4 , such as available with Apollo shapes, is adequate to provide effective braking for Mars entry from an orbit.
2. Terminal conditions for the vehicle analyzed were such that 500 meters per second could be considered a reasonable velocity at which to initiate retro rocket braking.
3. Terminal conditions were supersonic, about Mach 2, thus making very questionable the feasibility of utilizing parachutes or similar devices for aerodynamic braking.
4. Modest lift-to-drag ratios are very effective in reducing the sensitivity of terminal conditions to entry angle.
5. The entry corridor for entry from parabolic conditions is very narrow and would require sophisticated guidance techniques. This conclusion would be even more true for the case of utilization of Mars' atmosphere for arrival braking from hyperbolic conditions.

Based on these simulations and the resulting conclusions, an Apollo-shape entry vehicle was selected for this initial concept investigation.

## SECTION VI. ASCENT VEHICLE

The ascent stage of the Mars lander was required to fly from Mars' surface to a $1000-\mathrm{km}$ altitude orbit, carrying a crew of four astronauts. A velocity budget for this maneuver was assigned as given in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2. MARS ASCENT VELOCITY BUDGET
Element
V, km/sec.
Impulsive requirement ..... 3.9
Drag loss ..... 0.1
Rotational gain ..... -0.1
Gravity loss ..... 0.6
Rendezvous ..... 0.1
Launch window ..... 0.1
Plane change ..... 0.15
Flight performance reserve ..... 0.15
Total ..... 5.0
Payload was assumed to consist of the following elements:

1. Crew of four ..... 400 kg .
2. Ascent cabin pressure vessel and forward skirt structure ..... 1000 kg .
3. Airlock and access hatch ..... 100 kg .
4. Environmental control and life support system ..... 600 kg .
5. Communications ..... 100 kg .
6. Guidance and equipment navigation ..... 100 kg .
7. Scientific payload ..... 400 kg .(TOTAL)2700 kg .

The propulsion system was assumed to employ liquid oxygen and methane as propellants. This choice was viewed as an acceptable compromise between the desire for high performance and the desire to avoid severe problems with cryogenic storage. Since liquid oxygen and
methane have overlapping liquid ranges, a single thermal insulation envelope could be employed with an uninsulated common bulkhead between the propellants.

Engines were assumed to be RL-10's with a 60:1 area ratio, modified for lox-methane operation. Three engines were employed to provide engine-out capability. Predicted Isp was $356 \mathrm{sec}(3500 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{sec}$ effective exhaust velocity). Each engine was assumed to deliver 67, 000 newtons of thrust, providing 134, 000 newtons with two engines operating.

Table 3 gives a rough-order-of-magnitude weight breakdown for the vehicle.

TABLE 3. WEIGHT BREAKDOWN

| Engines (3) | 600 kg. |
| :--- | ---: |
| Tankage | 900 kg. |
| Insulation | 400 kg. |
| Pressurization system | 400 kg. |
| Feed system | 100 kg. |
| Thrust structure | 300 kg. |
| Aft skirt | 200 kg. |
| Astrionics | 100 kg. |
| Residuals | 400 kg. |
| (payload) | $\underline{2700} \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Cutoff mass | 6100 kg. |
| Impulse Propellant | $\underline{19300} \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Liftoff mass | 25400 kg. |
| Allowance for propellant boiloff | $\underline{1900} \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Landed mass | 27300 kg. |

Ullage volume of 10 percent was assumed, based on landed propellant mass. Propellant mixture ratio ( $\mathrm{O} / \mathrm{F}$ ) was assumed to be 4.16 ; resulting tank volumes were: 15.7 cubic meters for liquid oxygen and 12.73 cubic meters for methane. A tank internal diameter of 3 meters was selected, resulting in an ascent stage configuration as shown in Figure 8. Detailed design sketches were not developed.


FIGURE 8. MARS EXCURSION VEHICLE ASCENT STAGE

## SECTION VII. DESCENT VEHICLE

As previously discussed, an Apollo shape was selected for the descent vehicle. This vehicle is required to protect the ascent vehicle during landing, to provide for its launch when required, and to provide shelter for the four astronauts during a short duration surface stay. In addition, there is the obvious requirement of executing the landing.

Figure 9 shows the general arrangement of the descent vehicle with the ascent stage as its payload, positioned so that it will be ready for launch after the descent stage has landed. Storable propellants were assumed for the landing stage, because the relatively small $\Delta v$ required did not strongly favor cryogenics, and the tank geometry chosen was not as amenable to super-insulation as were the tanks for the ascent-stage.


FIGURE 9. MARS EXCURSION MODULE CONCEPT

Configurations for the landing propellant tanks and the surface operations shelter pressure vessel were chosen such that without significant changes in configuration design concept, these elements could be located as required to trim the lander for the desired L/D (presumably - 0.4). The surface operations shelter and the propellant tanks were toroidal segments, the tanks being of circular cross section, and the shelter nearly rectangular.

Four landing engines, each of 100,000 newtons thrust, were assumed. Specific impulse was estimated as 320 sec . These estimates lead to a weight statement as given in Table 4.

## TABLE 4. WEIGHT BREAKDOWN FOR LANDING VEHICLE

| Landed payload (ascent vehicle) | 27,300 kg. |
| :---: | :---: |
| Outer conical shell | $3,000 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Internal Structure | $4,800 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Crew cabin, including airlock | $1,000 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Life Support and environmental control | 840 kg . |
| Heat shield skin and insulation | $1,600 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Ablator | $4,000 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Reaction control system | 500 kg . |
| Landing engines | 800 kg . |
| Tankage and Feed system | $1,200 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Astrionics | 100 kg . |
| Propellant Residuals | 300 kg . |
| TOTAL INERTS | $45,440 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Less ablator and forward shell (dropped at landing engine ignition) | $4,500 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| LANDED WEIGHT | $40,940 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Impulse propellant | $10,700 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| TOTAL MASS AT AbLATOR JETTISON | $51,640 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Ablator and forward shell | $4,500 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| TOTAL ENTRY MASS | $56,140 \mathrm{~kg}$ |

The landing sequence begins in Mars orbit, where a propulsive impulse is required to initiate entry. The crew are housed in the ascent stage during entry and landing. (Retro rockets were not sized and their weight is not included in any of the weight statements). Figure 10 shows an artists' concept of an early phase of entry. Aerodynamic deceleration continues until the vehicle has slowed to about 500 meters $/ \mathrm{sec}$. (Figure 11). Landing engines are ignited; at this time the ablation heat shield and the upper fairing are jettisoned (Figure 12). Final letdown and landing occur under rocket power; 100 seconds of hover time are provided (Figures 13 and 14). During the final descent, with the upper fairing jettisoned, the pilot can see the ground through a window in the ascent stage cabin. Also, in the event an abort is necessary, the ascent stages can be ignited and flown back to Mars orbit. Upon landing, the crew leaves the ascent vehicle to live in the surface operations shelter. When surface operations are complete, the crew return to the ascent stage and depart for Mars orbit (Figure 15).


FIGURE 10. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LANDING SEQUENCE: ARTIST'S CONCEPT


FIGURE 11. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LANDING SEQUENCE: ARTIST'S CONCEPT


FIGURE 12. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LANDING SEQUENCE:
ARTIST'S CONCEPT


FIGURE 13. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LANDING SEQUENCE: ARTIST'S CONCEPT


FIGURE 14. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LANDING SEQUENCE: ARTIST'S CONCEPT


FIGURE 15. MARS EXCURSION MODULE LAUNCH FROM MARS

The Mars landing vehicle as discussed so far in this report would be applicable to an early manned Mars landing mission (e.g. an initial landing). Later manned landings would require a more extensive mission support capability in order to make possible significant scientific exploration of the planet. It appears feasible to use, for an extended Mars surface exploration mission, essentially the same interplanetary transfer flight systems as would be used for an initial landing, but with an altered mission mode to provide for a larger crew and extended stay time. This has been discussed elsewhere[1,7]. Since the landed payload delivered by the Mars lander (the 27 -ton ascent vehicle) is quite substantial, it is appropriate to consider modifications of the landing vehicle wherein the ascent vehicle would be replaced by a mission logistics payload; or by an internal modification of the landing vehicle to convert it to a long-duration crew shelter, complete with environmental control and life support systems and necessary expendables. This section of this report will describe some concepts for such utilization of the landing vehicle.


FIGURE 16. MARS EXCURSION MODULE: LOGISTICS LANDER

Structural modifications to the landing vehicle to outfit it as a logistics lander will depend on the nature of the payload to be delivered. In general, it is likely that fairly extensive internal structural modifications will be required, since it is unlikely that a logistics payload will fit conveniently into the space normally allocated to the ascent vehicle. Figure 16 is a conceptual sketch of a logistics carrier version in the landed configuration. This particular concept delivers a long-range surface mobility vehicle, plus expendables and spares for the vehicle. It may be expected that structural modifications to the landing vehicle, as implied by Figure 16, will reduce the landed payload to roughly 22 to 24 metric tons.


FIGURE 17. MARS EXCRUSION MODULE: NUCLEAR POWER MODULE

It is very likely that an extended-stay manned exploration mission at Mars will require a reactor power system to supply the electric power required for base operations. The landing vehicle would in this regard also be required to serve as a landable nuclear power module. Figure 17 shows a rough conceptual sketch of this application. Internal structural modifications to the lander are similar to those required for conversion to a shelter. It is assumed that the shelter pressure vessel would be used to provide a shirt-sleeve atmosphere around the reactor and equipment. It would also serve to limit radioactive contamination in the event of an accident.


FIGURE 18. MARS EXCURSION MODULE: EXTENDED-STAY

As previously noted, the lander must also serve as a shelter system for the exploration crew. Figure 18 is a preliminary concept of such a shelter version, indicating the feasibility of converting most of the upper section of the lander to a pressure vessel housing a threedeck shelter and laboratory module, adequate for extended-duration housing of a crew of 5 to 6 men. Table 6 is a rough-order-of-magnitude weight statement for such a shelter version, designed to house a crew of 5 for a 500 -day stay on the Mars surface. Environmental control and life support system weights are based on a study of such systems for lunar surface applications (which are directly comparable) [8]. The weight statement indicates the feasibility of such a self-contained shelter, including all life support and environmental control expendables, for a 500 day period. Electrical power required is assumed to be provided by an external power module such as previously noted.

It has been implicitly assumed in the foregoing discussions that the standard version of this Mars excursion vehicle concept (incorporating the ascent stage) would be landed on Mars in a piloted mode, whereas the logistics and shelter versions would be landed in an unmanned mode. Differences in astrionics systems are thereby implied.

## TABLE 6. PAYLOAD BREAKDOWN FOR SHELTER VERSION OF MARS LANDER

| Added Internal Structure (Includes "Furniture", etc.) | 5000 kg . |
| :---: | :---: |
| Life Support \& Environmental Control Subsystems | 4000 kg . |
| Communications \& Control Subsystems | 1000 kg . |
| for 5-man crew: $\mathrm{kg} /$ day |  |
| Water 6 |  |
| Food 7 |  |
| Metabolic $\mathrm{O}_{2}$ |  |
| Repressurization Allowance 0.5 |  |
| Lockages ( 5 per day, $80 \%$ air recovery) |  |
| Leakage $\frac{1.0}{21.2 \mathrm{~kg} / \mathrm{day}}$ |  |
| Total Expendables for 500 days | $10,600 \mathrm{~kg}$. |
| Reserve | 4000 kg . |
| Lab equipment \& scientific payload | 2700 kg . |
| TOTAL LANDED PAYLOAD | $27,300 \mathrm{~kg}$. |

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## APPENDIX

## EXAMPLE OF COMPUTER ENTRY SIMULATION RESULTS

The following pages are computer output for one of the entry simulations performed for this study. SI units were used as follows:

## Masses - Kilograms

Forces - newtons

Lengths - meters

Angles - radians

Atmosphere density - kg per cubic meter

Load factor - Earth $\mathrm{g}^{\mathbf{\prime}} \mathrm{s}$

The data shown represent every 20 th step in the numerical integration.

```
    BEGIIN CASE 5
.-. INPUT DATA
    INITIAL ALIITUDE = 343380.0000
    INITIAL VELGCITY = 3461.0370
_ INITIAL PATH ANGLE = -0.1600
L OVER D = C.4000
AERODYNAMIC REFERENCE AREA = 142.8700
DRAG CGEFFICIENT = 0.9000
    SURFACE ATM. DENSITY = 0.0190
    SURFACE ATM. TEMPERATURE = 143.0000
    INITIAL MASS = 52000.0000
    MARS SURFACE GRAVIIY = 3.7377
```

THE DATA TE fellgh are arranged in blocks as nated

| ELAPSED TIME | VELECITY | LIFT | ALTITUDE | DRAG |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| delta time | Patm angle | L/0 | RANGE ANGLE | MACH NS. |
| TETAL LOAD FACTER | AERODYNAMIC 0 | ATMOSPHERE DENSITY |  |  |







| 704.7972 | 2814.7545 | 296882.1602 | 14554.7500 | 742205.4063 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 4.0000 | -0.0038 | 0.4000 | 0.7063 | 14.3755 |
| 1.5678 | 5772.1893 | 0.0015 |  |  |
| 708.7971 | 2758.7997 | 285482.3828 | 14547.8438 | 713705.9609 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0022 | 0.4000 | 0.7095 | 14.0895 |
| 1.5076 | 5550.5468 | 0.0015 |  |  |
| $\cdots$-. |  | . |  |  |
| 712.7971 | 2705.1051 | 272636.2617 | 14604.5938 | 681590.6641 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0079 | 0.4000 | 0.7128 | 13.8150 |
| 1.4398 | 5300.7837 | 0.0014 |  |  |
| 716.7970 | 2653.9016 | 258863.2793 | 14718.7813 | 647158.2C31 |
| 4.0000 | 0.C131 | 0.4000 | 0.7159 | 13.5531 |
| 1.3671 | 5032.9998 | 0.0014 |  |  |
| 720.7970 | 2605.3232 | 244650.5352 | 14883.9063 | 611626.3438 |
| 4.00015 | 0.0180 | 0.4000 | 0.7190 | 13.3045 |
| 1.2920 | 4756.6657 | 0.0014 |  |  |
| 724.7969 | 2559.4181 | 230410.6816 | 15093.3750 | 576026.7109 |
| - 4.0000 | 0.0223 | 0.4000 | 0.7221 | 13.0696 |
| 1.2168 | 4479.8046 | 0.0014 |  |  |
| 728.7968 | 2516.1647 | 216460.9980 | 15341.2500 | 541152.5000 |
| 4.0000 | 0. C 262 | C. 4000 | 0.7250 | 12.8483 |
| -. 1.1431 | 4208.5851 | 0.0013 |  |  |
| 732.7968 | 2475.4893 | 203034.0000 | 15621.8750 | 507585.0039 |
| 4.0006 | 0.0297 | 0.4000 | 0.7280 | 12.6401 |
| 1.0722 | 3947.5281 | 0.0013 |  |  |
|  |  | - - |  |  |
| 736.7967 | 2437.2812 | 190286.8359 | 15929.8438 | 475717.0938 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0327 | 0.4000 | 0.7309 | 12.4446 |
| 1.0049 | 3699.6889 | 0.0012 |  |  |
| $740.7966^{\circ}$ | 2401.4057 | 178313.2793 | 16260.1250 | 445783.2031 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0353 | 0.4000 | 0.7337 | 12.2610 |
| 0.9417 | 3466.8907 | C. 0012 |  |  |
| 744.7966 | 2367.7156 | 167154.5664 | 16608.2813 | 417886.4180 |
| 4.0000 | 0.3375 | 0.4000 | 0.7365 | 12.0885 |
| 0.8827 | 3249.9352 | 0.0012 |  |  |
| 748.7965 | 2336.0594 | 156815.2012 | 16970.1563 | 392038.0078 |
| - 4.0000 | 0.6392 | 0.4000 | 0.7393 | 11.9265 |
| 0.8281 | 3048.9101 | 0.0011 |  |  |
| 752.7965 | 2306.2870 | 147275.1621 | 17341.8750 | 368187.9102 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0406 | 0.4000 | 0.7420 | 11.7741 |
| 0.7778 | 2863.4261 | 0.0011 |  |  |
| 756.7964 | 2278.2537 | 138496.1328 | 17720.0313 | 346240.3359 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0417 | 0.4000 | 0.7447 | 11.6307 |
| 0.7314 | 2692.7381 | 0.6010 |  |  |
| 760.7963 | 2251.8232 | 130429.6035 | $18101.5313^{\circ}$ | 326074.0117 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0424 | 0.4000 | 0.7474 | 11.4955 |
| 0.6888 | 2535.9030 | 0.0010 |  |  |
| 764.7963 | 2228.8682 | 123025.1631 | 18483.5625 | 307562.9102 |
| 4.0000 | 0.0427 | 0.4000 | 0.7500 | 11.3678 |
| 0.6497 | 2391.9407 | 0.0010 |  |  |








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# AN INITIAL CONCEPT OF A MANNED MARS EXCURSION VEHICLE FOR A TENUOUS MARS ATMOSPHERE 

By<br>G. R. Woodcock

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This document has also been reviewed and approved for technical accuracy.

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