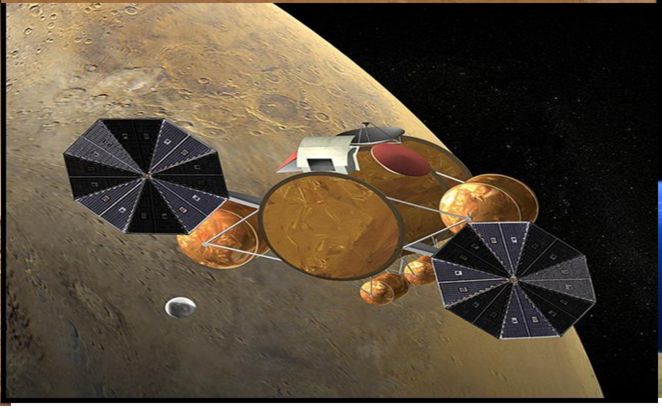
NASA In-Space Propulsion Technologies and Their Infusion Potential



Eric Pencil and David Anderson

Outer Planets Assessment Group Meeting; Atlanta, GA

January 10, 2013

NASA's In-Space Propulsion Technology (ISPT) Program

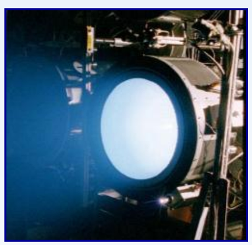
NASA's ISPT Program develops critical propulsion, entry vehicle, and other spacecraft and platform subsystem technologies to enable or significantly enhance future planetary science missions. The current ISPT focus is TRL 3-6+ product development.

- *Develop technologies that enable access to more challenging and interesting science destinations or benefit the agency's future robotic science missions by significantly reducing travel times to distant bodies, increasing scientific payload capability, or reducing mission cost and risk.*

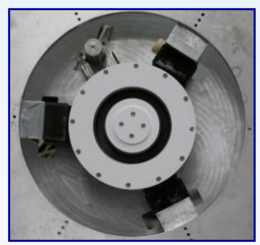
Propulsion System Technologies

AMBR High-Temp Rocket Engine

7 kW NEXT Ion Propulsion System

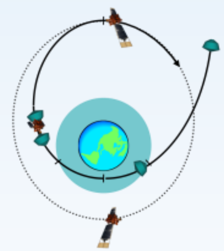


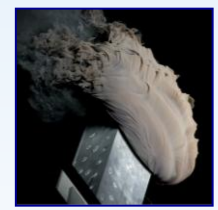
4 kW HIVHAC Thruster & Hall Propulsion System



Entry Vehicle Technologies

Aerocapture



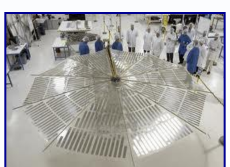


Multi-Mission Earth Entry Vehicle

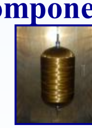
Spacecraft Bus & Sample Return Technologies

Mars Ascent Vehicle

PV Array Systems for planetary missions



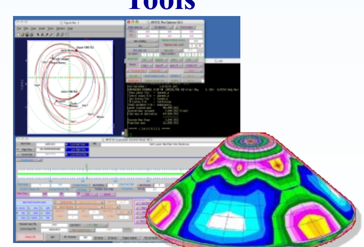
Spacecraft Bus Components



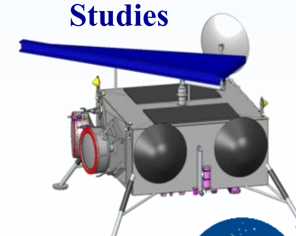
Extreme Environments

Systems & Mission Studies

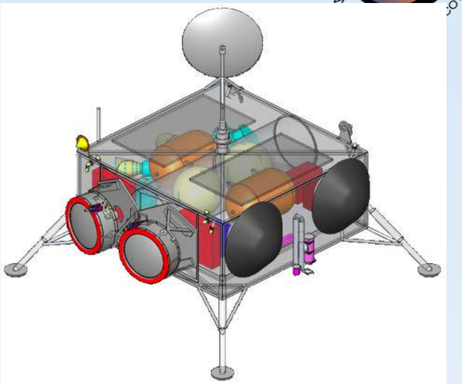
Mission Analysis Tools



Mission and System Studies



ISPT Systems Analysis

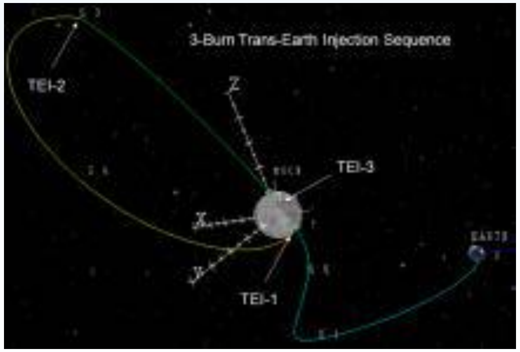


<u>Systems Analysis Objective #1:</u>

1) Conduct systems and mission studies to prioritize and guide investments and quantify mission benefit of ISPT products.
   - NEXT throttle table, HIVHAC power and life requirements, etc.

Mission / system design studies define technology requirements

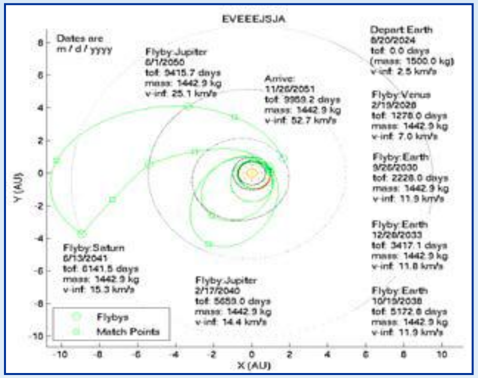
- Critical to quantify mission benefits before hardware investment
- Mission design for NEXT requirements
- Refocus Study led to NEXT throttle table extension
- Refocus Study led to HIVHAC power range, life requirement
- Decadal study support quantified science benefit for SEP, REP, and AMBR engine technology



Recent Studies:

- Barbara SR, Ceres SR, Mars Moons' SR, NEARER, Discovery Cost Viability
- Supported 1/2 of all decadal studies: Uranus, Neptune, Chiron, Trojans, Vesta and Hebe, and Mercury
  - ISPT products used as baseline for every mission!

ISPT Mission Design Tools



Systems Analysis Objective #2:

2) Develop tools for the user community to assist in ISPT product infusion.

- Low Thrust Trajectory Tool (LTTT) suite
- Aerocapture Quicklook Tool (a.k.a. SAPE)
- Advanced Chemical Propulsion System (ACPS) tool

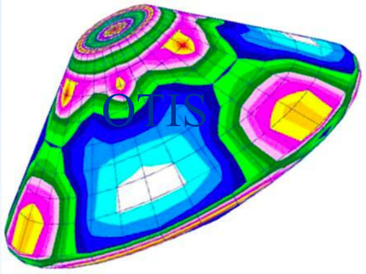
In order to infuse new technologies, users must be able to assess the payoff.

•Sponsored development of Mystic, MALTO, Copernicus, and OTIS

•Initiated because results could not be independently validated

•Held tools training courses: MALTO in 2008, Copernicus in 2009, training as needed (most recent 2011)

•Aerocapture Quicklook Tool Released in 2010



Tool Success:

•Agency point-of-contact for trajectory analyses (e.g. HILTOP Validation)

•Provided tool training for MALTO, OTIS, and Copernicus

•- 100s from all NASA centers, academia and industry

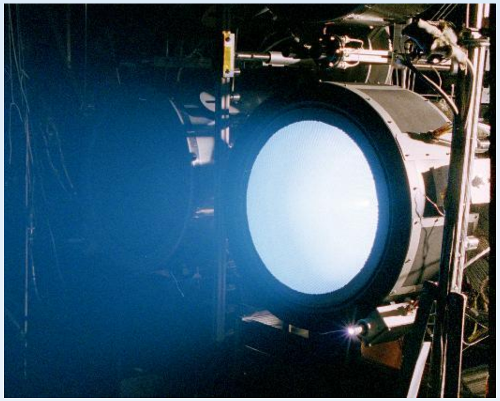
•- Copernicus baseline tool for exploration (Constellation)

•- OTIS (GRC Led) NASA Software of the year

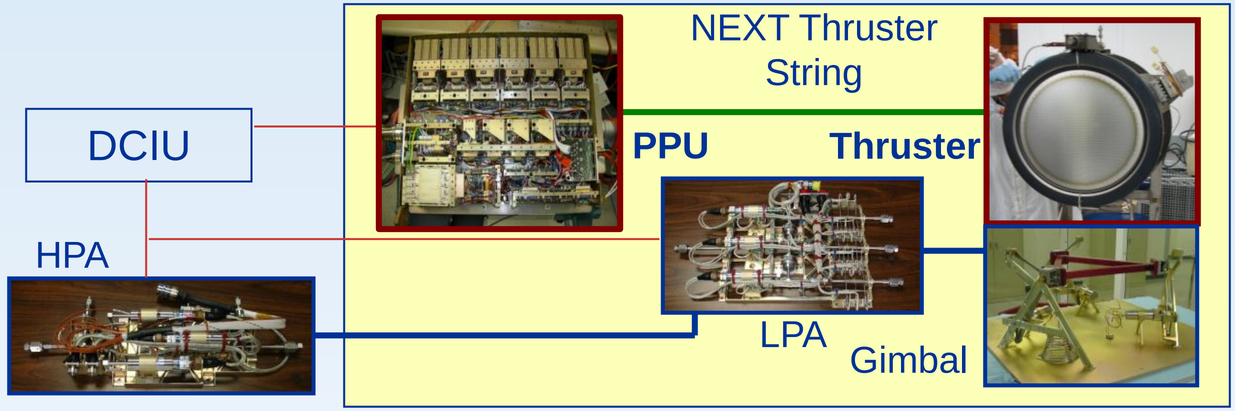
•Mystic used for Dawn mission operations, and tools used in Discovery proposals

NEXT: Expanding SEP Applications For SMD Missions

Objective: Improve the performance and life of gridded ion engines to reduce user costs and enhance/enable a broad range of NASA SMD missions



NEXT PM ion thruster operation at NASA GRC

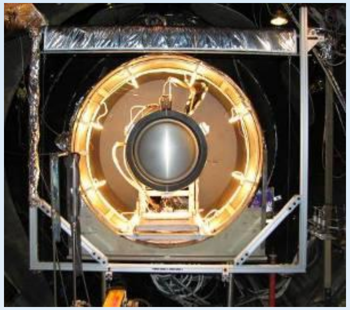


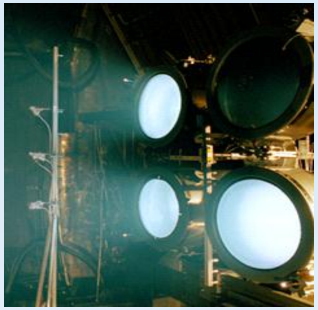
* Rated Capability Goal 300Kg → Design/Qualification Goal (1.5x Rated) 450Kg
Projected Life Limit >800Kg → Potential Rated Capability >530Kg

NEXT Thruster has exceeded all goals!

- Single-String System Integration Test: **Complete**
- Multi-String System Integration Test: **Complete**
- Thruster Life Test: 450Kg throughput goal **Complete**
- *As of January 3, 2013, the LDT has achieved:*
  >800 kg xenon throughput, >45,100 hours of operation and >30.7 Mn-sec of total impulse
- Life Test will conclude in FY13 and transition to post-test inspections of thruster
- Unprecedented diagnostics used for NEXT thruster performance characterization and spacecraft interaction effects testing ongoing at TAC

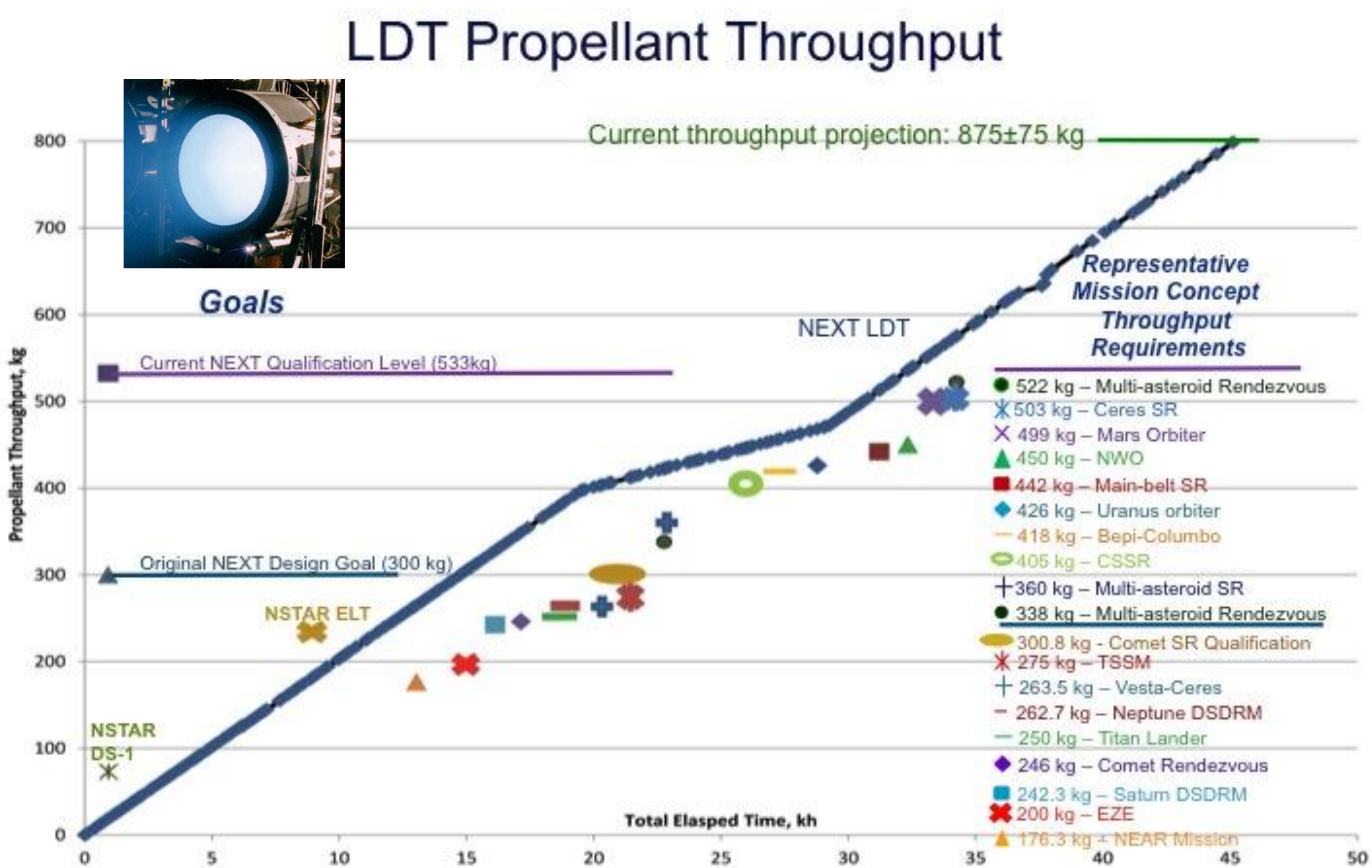
NEXT Mission Benefits & Applicability





CHARACTERISTIC	NSTAR (SOA)	NEXT	Improve-ment	NEXT BENEFIT
Max. Thruster Power (kW)	2.3	6.9	3x	Enables high power missions with fewer thruster strings
Max. Thrust (mN)	91	236	2.6x	
Throttling Range (Max./Min. Thrust)	4.9	13.8	3x	Allows use over broader range of distances from Sun
Max. Specific Impulse (sec)	3120	4190	32%	Reduces propellant mass, enabling more payload and/or lighter spacecraft
Total Impulse (10^6 N-sec)	4.6	>30	>6x	Enables low power, high ΔV Discovery-class missions with a single thruster
Propellant Throughput (kg)	150	>530	>3x	

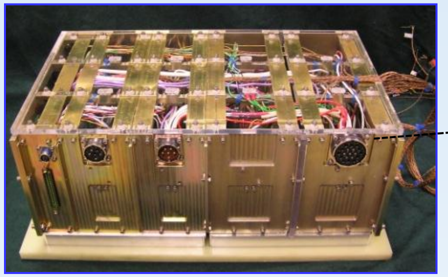
NEXT Mission Benefits & Applicability



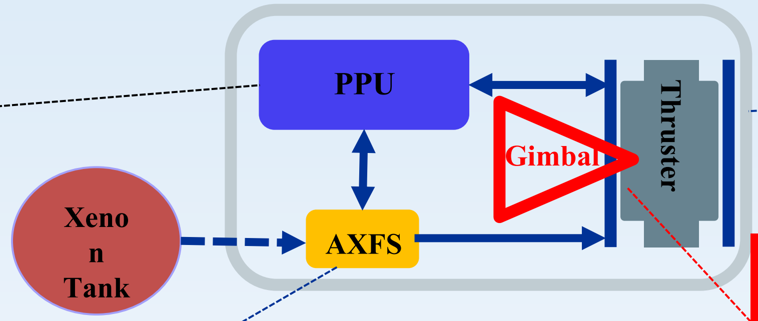
Projected Qualification Level:	583 kg	Projected Throughput:	875±75 kg
Equivalent Qualification Level:	533 kg	**NEXT LDT Demonstrated (as of 1/3/2013):**	**800kg**
Original NEXT Design Goal :	300 kg	Original NEXT Qualification Requirement:	450.0 kg

High Voltage Hall Accelerator (HIVHAC) for low cost Discovery-class and Sample Return Missions

Objective: *Develop key components of a HIVHAC Hall propulsion system (thruster, PPU/DCIU, feed system) to TRL 6 to enable/enhance new SMD Discovery missions; expand operational capability to close near-earth mission applications*



CPE Brassboard PPU



Single String

HIVHAC EDU2

Gimbal

VACCO XFCM

- The HIVHAC EDU thruster offers improved performance and mission benefits over SOA
- The HIVHAC project has leveraged OCT SBIR funding to advance the HIVHAC thruster system readiness
- A flight-qualified VACCO XFCM was delivered to NASA GRC in March 2012 and will be integrated with the HIVHAC thruster

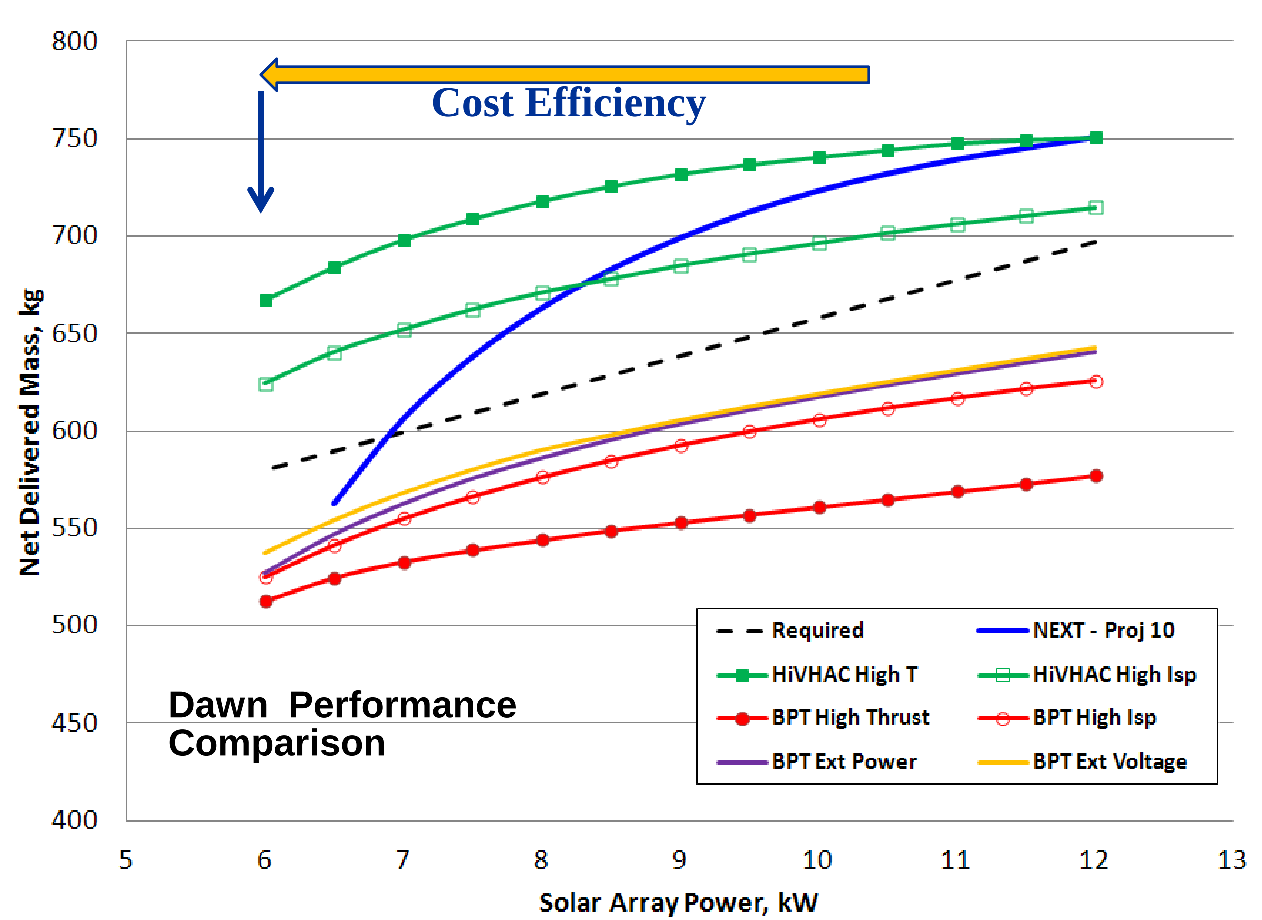
• Critical tests have been completed, or are imminent, on high fidelity hardware	EDU2 	BB PPU/DCIU 	Feed System 
Functional , Performance, & Vacuum Testing	Complete	Complete	Complete
Qual-Level Vibration Test	Complete	Planned FY13	Complete
Qual-Level Thermal	Planned FY13/Q2	Planned FY13	Complete

Hall System Mission Analysis

- **Compared HIVHAC, BPT-4000, SPT-140, and NEXT performance**

- **Comparison of Mission Performance**

1)Dawn – Discovery DRM
2)Kopff Comet Rendezvous – Discovery DRM
3)Nereus Sample Return – Discovery DRM
4)NEARER – Double NEA Sample Return
5)Wirtanen – CSSR – NF DRM
6)C-G - Decadal CSSR - NF DRM
7)Uranus – Decadal Flagship DRM



Hall System Mission Analysis (cont)

Thruster	Summary of Mission Performance Comparison
HIVHAC	• Performance is sufficient for all Discovery Class missions evaluated - High Thrust throttle table generally shows higher performance than high Isp • Is the highest "cost efficient" EP system (Requires the lowest system power and spacecraft mass)
BPT-4000	• Has sufficient performance for a subset of Discovery Class missions • Modifications to the BPT-4000 for higher voltage operation can increase BPT-4000 mission capture - Modifications to BPT-4000 do not match HIVHAC performance for low/modest power spacecraft (i.e. cost efficient)
NEXT	• Performance is sufficient for all Discovery Class missions evaluated • Is the highest overall performance, and is required for Flagship EP missions.

Advanced Xenon Feed System (AXFS)

OBJECTIVE

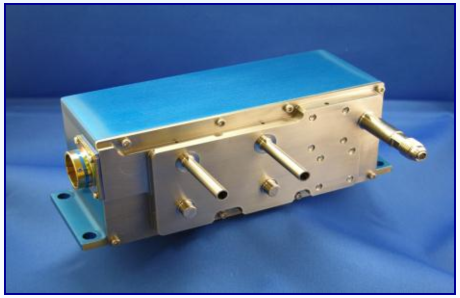
- ISPT award a contract with VACCO industries to develop a modular Advanced Xenon Flow System (AXFS) with significant reductions in mass, cost, and volume over SOA while increasing system reliability.
  - Flow control accuracy error < 3% EOL
  - TRL 6 testing
  - Award for two Flight CMs, 1 PCM, 1 controller with LabVIEW software

STATUS

- The ISPT project has invested in an AXFS, developed by VACCO Industries:
- Completed limited qualification level environmental testing
  - Demonstrated hot-fire operation
  - Pressure control
  - Current control
- Demonstrated 70% reduction in Mass,
- 50% reduction in footprint, and
- Expected 50% cost reduction over NEXT SOA PMS.

- **The VACCO AXFS is ready for technology infusion.**

Dawn Feed System



VACCO XFCM

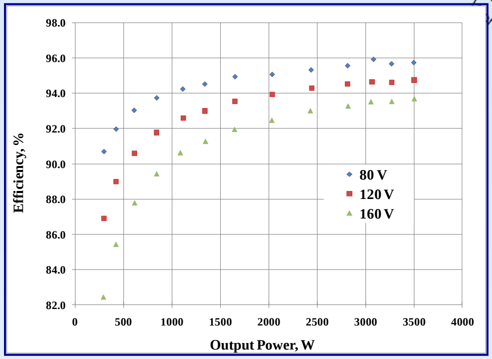
	NSTAR	NEXT	AXFS	XFCM
Mass, kg	11.4	5.0	1.5	1.25
Estimate Footprint, cm^2	1,900*	1,654	800	115
# Channels Controlled	2	3	3	2
Duration to Throttle, min	45	<1	<1	<1
Average Power (Max), W		7.9(81)	<0.01	<0.01

* Does not include plenum tanks

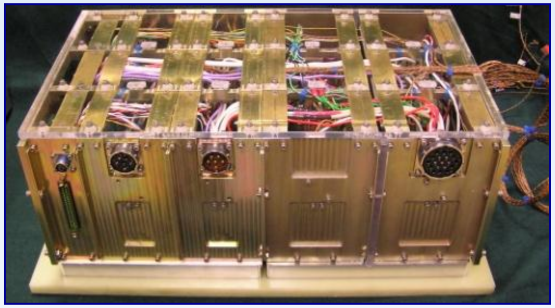
The AXFS was a small investment on feed system technology to leverage commercial investments and push the limits of technology without adding risk to EP projects.

Power Processing Unit (PPU) Options for HIVHAC

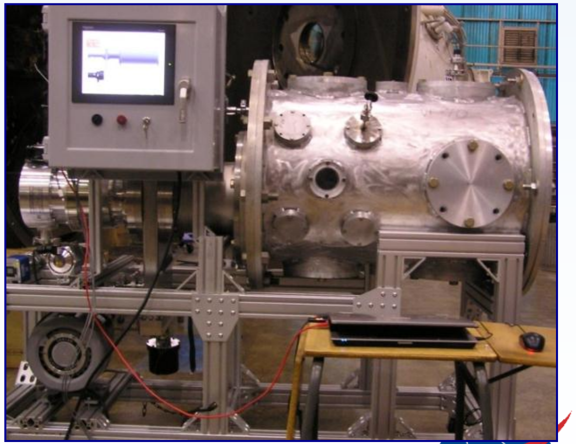
- The functional power requirements of a HIVHAC PPU are that it operates:
    - Power range 0.3 to 3.9 kW
    - Input voltage range 80 to 160 V
    - Output Voltage range 200 to 700 Vdc
    - Output current range 1.4 to 5 A



- NASA is looking at various options to perform some critical design and testing of PPU converter topologies dependent on funding availability.
    - The near term plan is to leverage converter/PPU development by other projects where possible and applicable



- One option for developing a HIVHAC PPU is modifying the design of the BPT-4000 PPU



- Another option is to develop a HIVHAC PPU that is a new custom design

- Within NASA's small business innovative research (SBIR) program, there are three projects that are developing wide range discharge modules for integration with Hall thrusters

Ultra Lightweight Tank Technology (ULTT)
for future planetary missions

Description

- This effort aims to develop the Composite Overwrapped Pressure Vessel (COPV) tanks for propellants and pressurants for Mars Sample Return (MSR) mission
- Tanks are most often the heaviest component on a spacecraft
- Currently component technologies are maturing and ready to be "harvested"

Objective

- To design ultra-lightweight propellant and pressurant tanks sized for MSL/MSR Skycrane with an option to manufacture and qualify.
- Goal: Achieve highest mass saving with reliability

Benefits

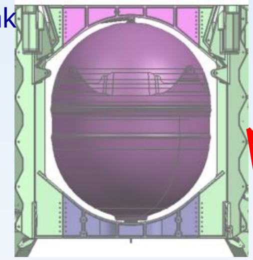
- **23** kg mass savings are achievable for 3 tanks sized for the Skycrane **(48% mass reduction)**
  - Mass savings can be passed on to the scientific payload or increase mass margin
- Broad impact to virtually ALL space missions as most use liquid propellants or pressurant
  - Europa Explorer tank mass can be reduced by 60 kg

Baseline Approach

- To complete CDR design package (June 2013)
- Option: To build and test three (3) Skycrane size tanks
- Option: To ready the tanks for flight demonstration in 2019 or beyond

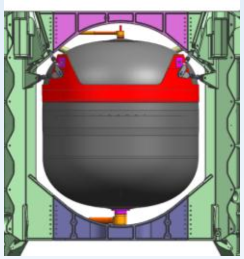
Descent Stage Propellant Tanks

Existing MSL Titanium Tank

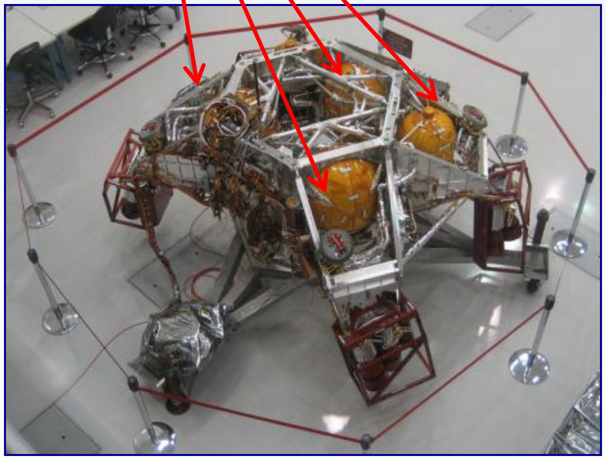


594mm Diameter, ~720mm Tall

Drop in replacement ultralight tank



594mm Diameter, 684mm Tall



ISPT FY13-14 Budget and Content

The ISPT budget: \$5.6M in FY13, \$3.2M in FY14, and \$0.0M in ≥ FY15

1) Conclude Lt Wt COPV propellant tank NDI tech development at CDR in 2013.
2) Conclude NEXT LDT after ≥ 800Kg throughput and conduct post test analysis, and complete NEXT PPU post-repair performance and EMI testing in 2013.
3) Complete Aerocapture activities and documentation in 2013. Complete M-SAPE tool development, validation testing, and documentation in 2014.
4) Eliminate Competed Missions Capability Enhancement Study of ISPT products
5) Focus remaining technology budget resources in 2012 and 2014 on Hall System Technology Development for Discovery-class and MSR missions.

Budget distribution for ISPT		PY13 plus PY12 Carry-in	Tentative PY14
Entry Vehicle Technologies	Earth Entry Vehicles & Aerocapture	\$0.97M	\$0.65M
Propulsion Technologies	NEXT: Long Duration Test (LDT), and PPU Perf Validation & EMI Testing	\$1.68M	
	Hall System Development	\$1.91M	\$1.3M
Spacecraft Technologies	Lt Wt COPV Propellant Tanks	\$0.53M	
Systems/Mission Analysis		\$0.50M	\$0.10M
Project Management + Reserves		\$1.28M	\$1.10M
		\$7.2M	\$3.2M

ISPT Technology Infusion

- ISPT is maturing technologies to be proposal/flight-ready
  - Development:
    - Hall Propulsion System for low-cost Discovery missions
    - Ultra-light weight propellant tank design as a drop-in replacement for Skycrane on a future Mars mission.
  - Proposals:
    - Technology infusion incentives were offered under the recent Discovery and New Frontiers AO's for NEXT, AMBR, and Aerocapture
    - Supporting use of ISPT developed technologies on proposals to OCT BAA's (AMBR, Solar Sails, Balance Flow Meter, and ultra-light weight propellant tank)
  - Flight:
    - Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) using ISPT developed HEAT sensors as part of the MSL Entry, Descent, and Landing Instrumentation (MEDLI) package
    - Fabricating 2 flight qualified AXFS. Interest (commercial, too) has increased due to pursuing the flight qualification step!

ISPT has several technologies which are ready for infusion
ISPT has several more technologies which will be ready tech infusion in the next several years

Questions?

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