

# **Assessment of MSFC's Process for the Development and Activation of Space Act Agreements**

Rachel A. Daugherty

*NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL, 35812*

A Space Act Agreement (SAA) is a contractual vehicle that NASA utilizes to form partnerships with non-NASA entities to stimulate cutting-edge innovation within the science and technology communities while concurrently supporting the NASA missions. SAAs are similar to traditional contracts in that they involve the commitment of Agency resources but allow more flexibility and are more cost effective to implement than traditional contracts. Consequently, the use of SAAs to develop partnerships has greatly increased over the past several years. To facilitate this influx of SAAs, Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) developed a process during a kaizen event to streamline and improve the quality of SAAs developed at the Center level. This study assessed the current SAA process to determine if improvements could be implemented to increase productivity, decrease time to activation, and improve the quality of deliverables. Using a combination of direct procedural observation, personnel interviews, and statistical analysis, elements of the process in need of remediation were identified and potential solutions developed. The findings focus primarily on the difficulties surrounding tracking and enforcing process adherence and communication issues among stakeholders. Potential solutions include utilizing customer relationship management (CRM) software to facilitate process coordination and co-locating or potentially merging the two separate organizations involved in SAA development and activation at MSFC.