

NASA's In Space Manufacturing Initiatives: Overview and Update



**Manufacturing Problem
Prevention Program
November 7, 2017
Aerospace Corporation**

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Science and Technology Office
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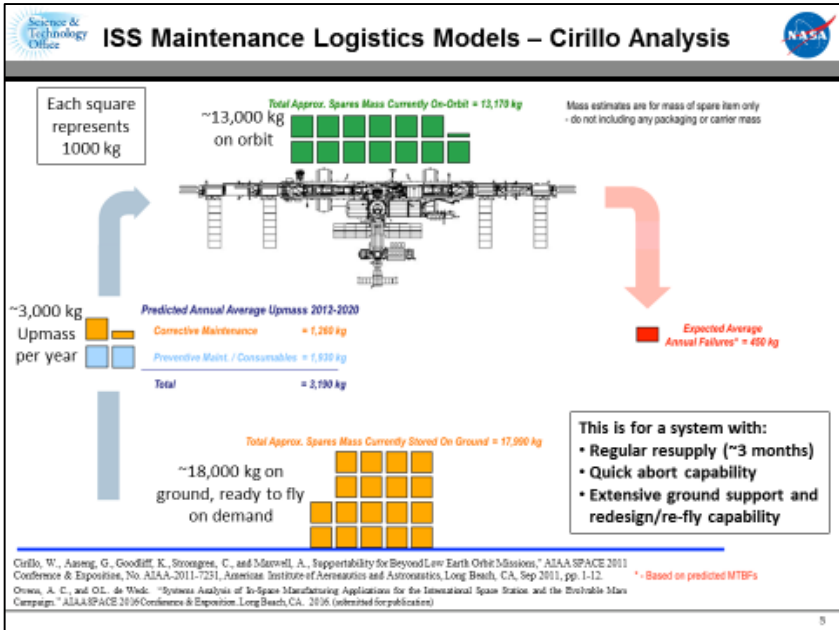
Contributors

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- Mike Snyder: Made In Space, Chief Designer

NASA's In Space Manufacturing Initiative (ISM)

- A. The Case for ISM: WHY
- B. ISM Path to Exploration
- C. In Space Robotic Manufacturing and Assembly (IRMA)
- D. Additive Construction

Summary

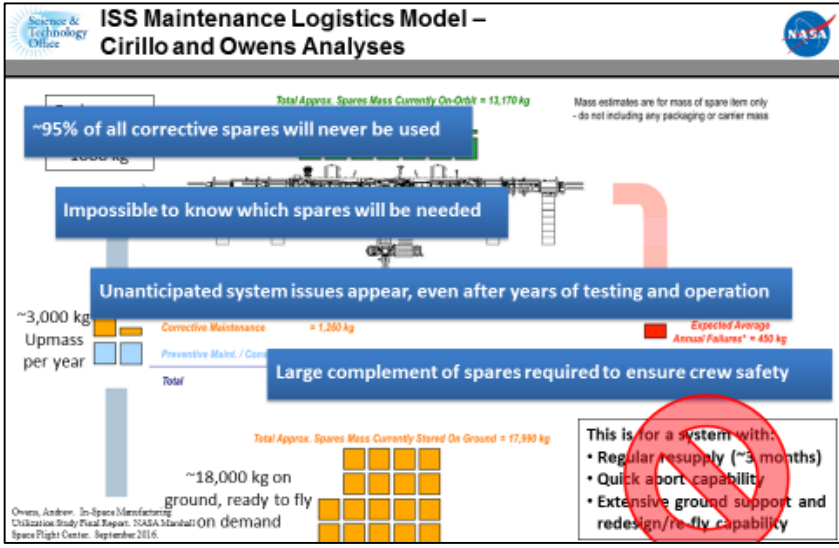


Current maintenance logistics strategy **will not be effective** for deep space exploration missions

Benefits from Incorporation of ISM

ISM offers the potential to:

- Significantly reduce maintenance logistics mass requirements
- Enable the use of recycled materials and in-situ resources for more dramatic reductions in mass requirements
- Enable flexibility, giving systems a broad capability to adapt to unanticipated circumstances
- Mitigate risks that are not covered by current approaches to maintainability





In-Space Manufacturing (ISM) Path to Exploration

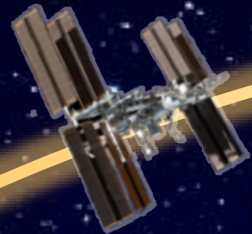


GROUND-BASED

Earth-Based Platform

- Certification & Inspection Process
- Design Properties Database
- Additive Manufacturing Automation
- Ground-based Technology Maturation & Demonstration
- **AM for Exploration Support Systems (e.g. ECLSS) Design, Development & Test**
- **Additive Construction**
- **Regolith (Feedstock)**

EARTH RELIANT ISS



ISS Test-bed – Transition to Deep Space Gateway

- 3D Print Demo
- Additive Manufacturing Facility
- In-space Recycling
- In-space Metals
- Printable Electronics
- Multi-material Fab Lab
- In-line NDE
- **External Manufacturing (IRMA)**
- **On-demand Parts Catalogue**
- **Exploration Systems Demonstration and Operational Validation**

CIS-LUNAR



EARTH INDEPENDENT Mars



Planetary Surfaces Platform

- **Multi-materials Fab Lab (metals, polymers, automation, printable electronics)**
- **Food/Medical Grade Polymer Printing & Recycling**
- **Additive Construction Technologies**
- **Regolith Materials – Feedstock**

Space Launch System

Text Color Legend

Foundational AM Technologies

AM Capabilities for Exploration Systems

Surface / ISRU Systems

Key ISM Thrust Areas

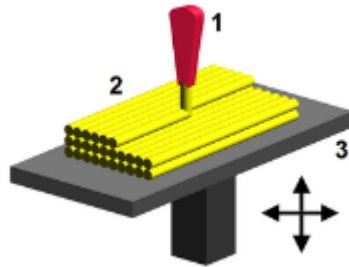




The First Step: The 3D Printing in Zero G Technology Demonstration Mission



The 3DP in Zero G Tech Demo delivered the first 3D printer on the ISS and investigated the effects of consistent microgravity on fused deposition modeling by printing 55 specimens to date in space.



Fused deposition modeling:
1) nozzle ejecting molten plastic,
2) deposited material (modeled part),
3) controlled movable table

- **Phase I prints (Nov-Dec 2014)** consisted of mostly mechanical test coupons as well as some functional tools
- **Phase II specimens (June-July 2016)** provided additional mechanical test coupons to improve statistical sampling

3D Print Specifications	
Dimensions	33 cm x 30 cm x 36 cm
Print Volume	6 cm x 12 cm x 6 cm
Mass	20 kg (w/out packing material or spares)
Power	176 W
Feedstock	ABS Plastic



Printer inside Microgravity Science Glovebox (MSG)



Material Properties

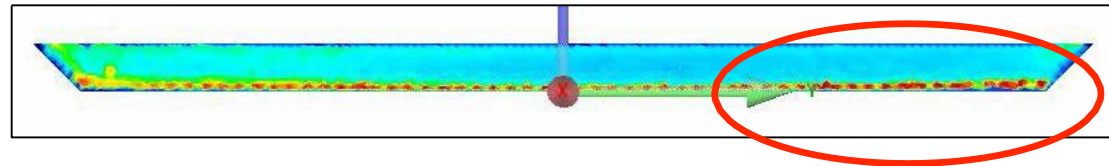
- Tensile and Flexure: Flight specimens stronger and stiffer than ground counterparts
- Compression: Flight specimens are weaker than ground specimens
- Density: Flight specimens slightly more dense than ground specimens; compression specimens show opposite trend

X-ray and CT Scans

- CT scans show more pronounced densification in lower half of flight specimens. [Not statistically significant]
- No significant difference in number or size of voids between the flight and ground sets

Structured Light Scanning

- Protrusions along bottom edges indicate that extruder tip may have been too close to the print tray (more pronounced for flight prints)

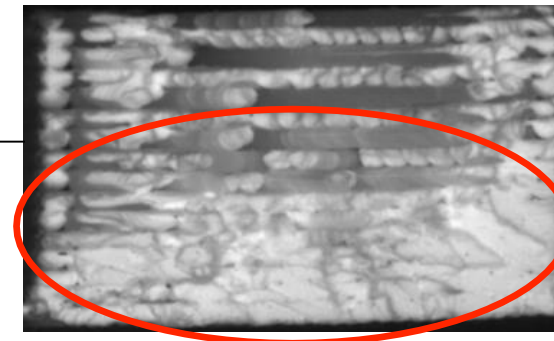


Microscopy

- Greater Densification of Bottom Layers (Flight tensile)

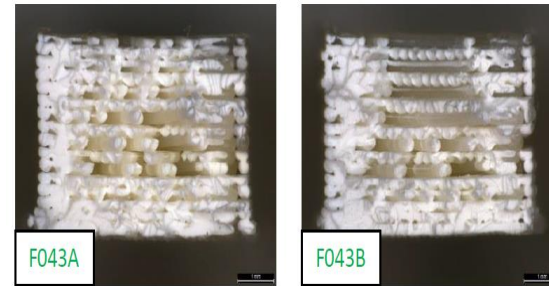
Process

- Z-calibration distance variation suspected to be primary factor driving differences between flight and ground sample
- Potential influence of feedstock aging are being evaluated further



Key Results: The 3D Printing in Zero G Technology Demonstration Mission (Phase II)

- For phase II operations, 25 specimens (tensile and compression) were built at an optimal extruder standoff distance.
- For the last 9 prints in the 34 specimen print matrix, extruder standoff distance was decreased intentionally to mimic the manufacturing process conditions for the phase I flight prints.
- Complete phase II data will be published on the NASA Technical Reports Server in December 2017.
- Key findings:
 - All prints to date with 3DP appear to be broadly part of the same family of data
 - No substantive chemical changes in feedstock noted through FTIR analysis
 - No evidence of microgravity effects noted in SEM analysis, although there is some variation in internal material structure between builds and with changes in process settings



Densification of first layers observed at slightly closer extruder distance; also noted in phase I.

Specimen set	Average ultimate tensile strength (KSI)	Coefficient of variation
Phase II	3.68	6.71
Phase II optimal	3.63	6.61
Phase II off-suboptimal	3.93	0.07
Phase I ground	3.46	1.71
Phase I flight	4.04	5.95

Mass and density data for phase I and phase II (considers all subsets of data) appear to be part of the same data family

Analysis of PII tensile data and comparison with previous results suggests all data collected to date is part of a single large, albeit variable, data set

Ground compression specimen performance is still somewhat distinct (higher) than other specimen sets, but these specimens were manufactured at the farthest extruder distance

Structured light scanning data shows phase II flight specimens manufactured at the optimal extruder distance exhibit good agreement with the CAD model, although there is some slight build to build variability in geometry

Suboptimal compression specimens (manufactured at closer extruder standoff distance) show fiber distortion and distortion in the center of the specimen (defined as the x-y plane about halfway up the specimen) for phase II specimens

Interestingly, warpage and protrusions observed for phase I tensile specimens are not present in phase II flight tensile prints, even those manufactured at the suboptimal extruder setting

Microscopy

Compression specimens manufactured at the suboptimal condition contain surface defects along the sides that appear to be printing defects where the fiber is distorted. The cross-section showed voids in the center of the sample, likely due to separation between the fiber layers such that the sample was not completely dense. Specimens manufactured at this condition are mechanically weaker than specimens manufactured at greater standoff distances.

Microscopy results for tensile specimens at closer extruder distance shows characteristic densification of first layers noted in phase I flight specimens and subsequent ground-based study

FTIR showed some small chemical changes between phase I and phase II flight feedstock (phase II feedstock was nearly two years older than phase I feedstock at time of printing). However, spectra still show a very high degree of similarity and are considered in family with one another.

X-ray/CT analysis results still pending.

Overall we cannot attribute any of the observations to microgravity effects. Variations in phase I data appear to be traceable to printer variability, differences in manufacturing process settings (extruder standoff distance), and data scatter characteristic of many additively manufactured materials and processes.



ISM Utilization and the Additive Manufacturing Facility (AMF): Functional Parts



The Made in Space Additive Manufacturing Facility (AMF)

- Additive Manufacturing Facility (AMF) is the second generation printer developed by Made in Space, Inc.
- AMF is a commercial, multi-user facility capable of printing ABS, ULTEM, and HDPE.
- To date, NASA has printed several functional parts for ISS using AMF



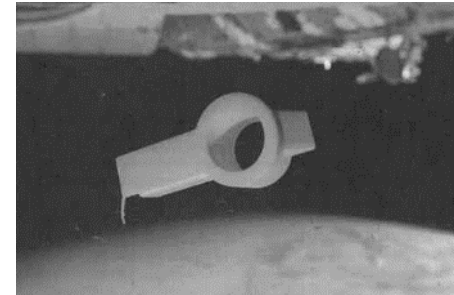
SPHERES Tow Hitch: SPHERES consists of 3 free-flying satellites on-board ISS. Tow hitch joins two of the SPHERES satellites together during flight. Printed 2/21/17.



REM Shield Enclosure: Enclosure for radiation monitors inside Bigelow Expandable Activity Module (BEAM). Printed 3/20/17 (1 of 3).



Antenna Feed Horn: collaboration between NASA Chief Scientist & Chief Technologist for Space Communications and Navigation, ISM & Sciperio, Inc. Printed 3/9/17 and returned on SpaceX-10 3/20/17.

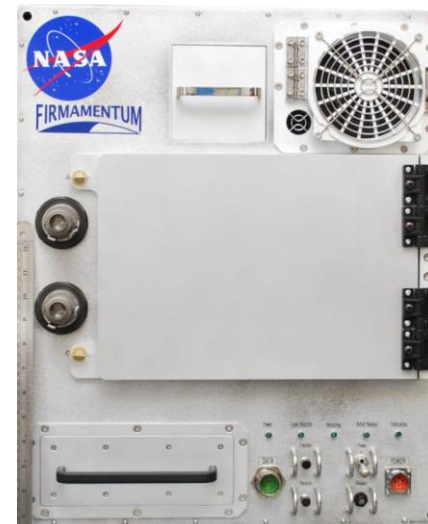


OGS Adapter: adapter attaches over the OGS air outlet and fixtures the velocicalc probe in the optimal location to obtain a consistent and accurate reading of airflow through the port. 7/19/2016.



ReFabricator from Tethers Unlimited, Inc.: Closing the Manufacturing Loop

- Technology Demonstration Mission payload conducted under a phase III SBIR with Tethers Unlimited, Inc.
- Refabricator demonstrates feasibility of plastic recycling in a microgravity environment for long duration missions
 - Closure of the manufacturing loop for FDM has implications for reclamation of waste material into useful feedstock both in-space and on-earth
- Refabricator is an integrated 3D printer (FDM) and recycler
 - Recycles 3D printed plastic (ULTEM 9085) into filament feedstock through the Positrusion process
- Environmental testing of engineering test unit completed at MSFC in April
 - Payload CDR completed in mid-June
 - Operational on ISS in 2018



Refabricator ETU





Common Use Materials Development: Recyclable Materials

- Logistics analyses show the dramatic impact of a recycling capability for reducing initial launch mass requirements for long duration missions
 - Current packaging materials for ISS represent a broad spectrum of polymers: LDPE, HDPE, PET, Nylon, PVC
- Tethers CRISSP (Customizable Recyclable ISS Packaging) seeks to develop common use materials (which are designed to be recycled and repurposed) for launch packaging
 - Work under phase II SBIR
 - Recyclable foam packaging made from thermoplastic materials using FDM
 - Can create custom infill profiles for the foam to yield specific vibration characteristics or mechanical properties
- Cornerstone Research Group (CRG) is working under a phase II SBIR on development of reversible copolymer materials
 - Reversible copolymer acts as a thermally activated viscosity modifier impacting the melt properties of the material
 - Designs have strength and modulus values comparable to or exceeding base thermoplastic materials while maintaining depressed viscosity that makes them compatible with FDM



CRISSP (image from Tethers Unlimited)



FDM prints using reclaimed anti-static bagging film with reversible cross-linking additive (image from Cornerstone Research Group)



Toward an In-Space Metal Manufacturing Capability

- Made in Space Vulcan unit (Phase I SBIR)
 - Integrates FDM head derived from AMF, wire and arc metal deposition system, and a CNC end-mill for part finishing
- Ultra Tech Ultrasonic Additive Manufacturing (UAM) system (Phase I SBIR)
 - Prints parts using sound waves to consolidate layers of metal from foil feedstock
- Tethers Unlimited MAMBA (Metal Advanced Manufacturing Bot-Assisted Assembly) (Phase I SBIR)
 - Builds on ReFabricator recycling process
 - Bulk feedstock is CNC-milled
- Techshot, Inc. SIMPLE (Sintered Inductive Metal Printer with Laser Exposure) (Phase II SBIR)
 - AM process with metal wire feedstock, inductive heating, and a low-powered laser



Illustration of Vulcan Exterior Unit (image courtesy of Made in Space)

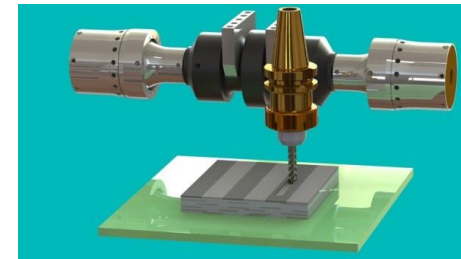
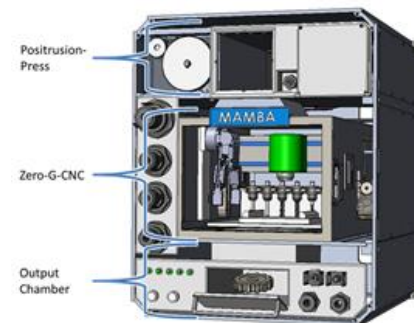
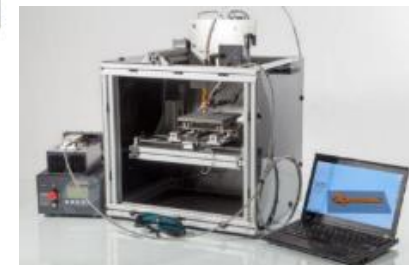


Illustration of UAM process (image courtesy of Ultra Tech)



Tethers Unlimited MAMBA concept. Image courtesy of Tethers Unlimited.



Techshot's SIMPLE, a small metal printer developed under a Phase I SBIR. Image courtesy of Techshot.

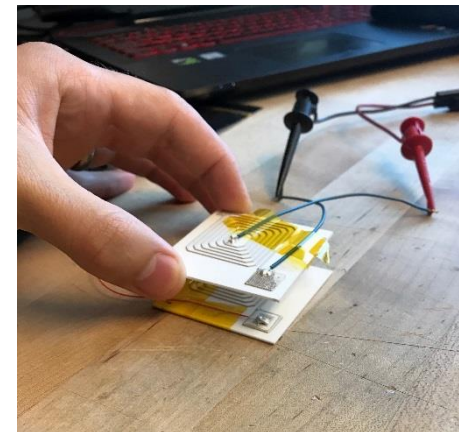


Ground-based Work on Printed Electronics

- Evaluating technologies to enable multi-material, on-demand digital manufacturing of components for sustainable exploration missions
 - In-house work uses nScript printer
 - 4 heads for dispensation of inks and FDM of polymers; also has pick and place capability
- Development of additively manufactured wireless sensor archetype (MSFC)
 - Printed RLC circuit with coupled antenna
 - Capacitive sensing element in circuit is pressure, temperature, or otherwise environmentally sensitive material
 - Sensing material also developed in-house at MSFC
- Design of pressure switch for urine processor assembly (UPA)
 - Existing pressure switch has had several failures due to manufacturing flaw in metal diaphragm
 - In additive design, switching is accomplished via a pressure sensitive material turning a transistor on when the system exceeds a certain pressure
- Work on miniaturization and adaptation of printable electronics for microgravity environment will continue through two contracts (phase I) awarded under SBIR subtopic In-Space Manufacturing of Electronics and Avionics
 - Techshot, Inc. (STEPS – Software and Tools for Electronics Printing in Space)
 - Optomec working on miniaturization of patented Aerosol Jet technology



nScript multimaterial printer



Printed wireless humidity sensor (wires attached for characterization purposes)

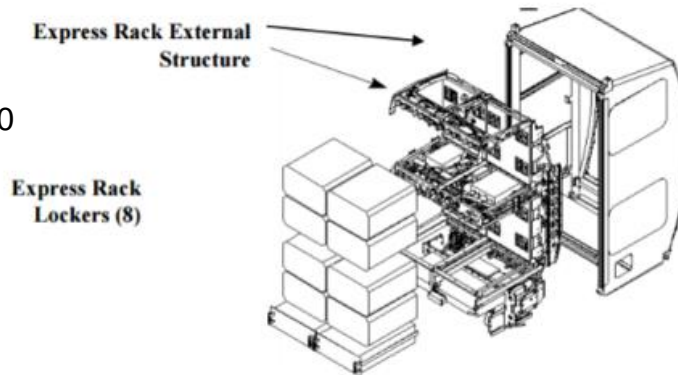


The Multimaterial Fabrication Laboratory for ISS (“FabLab”)

Typical EXPRESS Rack structure

Power consumption for entire rack is limited to 2000 W

Payload mass limit for rack is less than 576 lbm



Threshold
The system should have the ability for on-demand manufacturing of multi-material components including metallics and polymers as a minimum.
The minimum build envelope shall be 6" x 6" x 6".
The system should include the capability for earth-based remote commanding for all nominal tasks.
The system should incorporate remote, ground-based commanding for part handling and removal in order to greatly reduce dependence on astronaut time.*
The system should incorporate in-line monitoring of quality control and post-build dimensional verification.

- NASA is evaluating proposals to provide a feasible design and demonstration of a first-generation multimaterial, multiprocess In-space Manufacturing Fabrication Laboratory for demonstration on the ISS
- Minimum target capabilities include:
 - Manufacturing of metallic components
 - Meet ISS EXPRESS Rack constraints for power and volume
 - Limit crew time
 - Incorporate remote and autonomous verification and validation of parts
- Phased approach
 - Phase A – scaleable ground-based prototype
 - Phase B – mature technologies to pre-flight deliverable
 - Phase C – flight demonstration to ISS



In-space Robotic Manufacturing and Assembly (IRMA) Overview



Concept by Made In Space



Concept by Space Systems/Loral



Concept by Orbital ATK

Archinaut

A Versatile In-Space Precision Manufacturing and Assembly System

Dragonfly

On-Orbit Robotic Installation and Reconfiguration of Large Solid Radio Frequency (RF) Reflectors

CIRAS

A Commercial Infrastructure for Robotic Assembly and Services

Tipping Point Objective

A ground demonstration of additive manufacturing of extended structures and assembly of those structures in a relevant space environment.

A ground demonstration of robotic assembly interfaces and additive manufacture of antenna support structures meeting EHF performance requirements.

A ground demonstration of reversible and repeatable robotic joining methods for mechanical and electrical connections feasible for multiple space assembly geometries.

Team

Made In Space, Northrop Grumman Corp., Oceaneering Space Systems, Ames Research Center

Space Systems/Loral, Langley Research Center, Ames Research Center, Tethers Unlimited, MDA US & Brampton

Orbital ATK, Glenn Research Center, Langley Research Center, Naval Research Laboratory

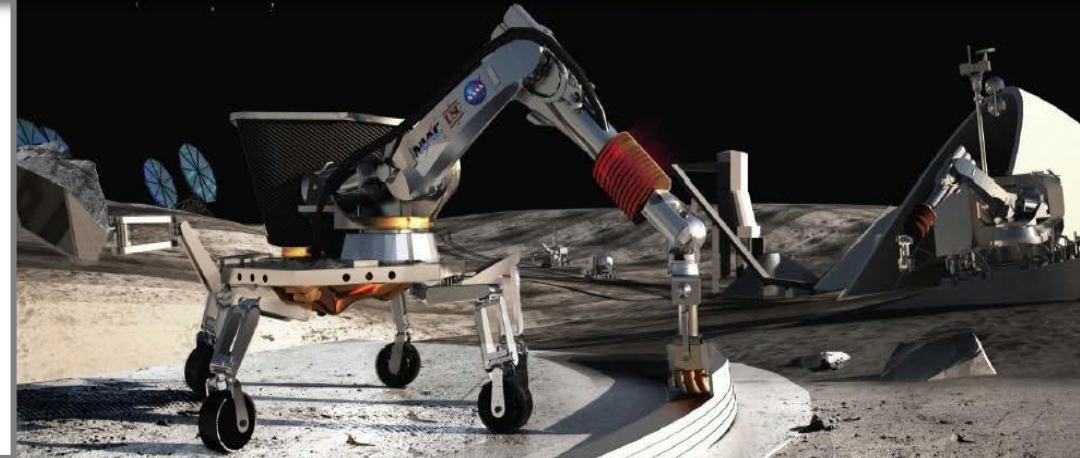


Additive Construction Dual Use Technology Projects For Planetary and Terrestrial Applications



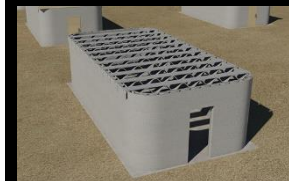
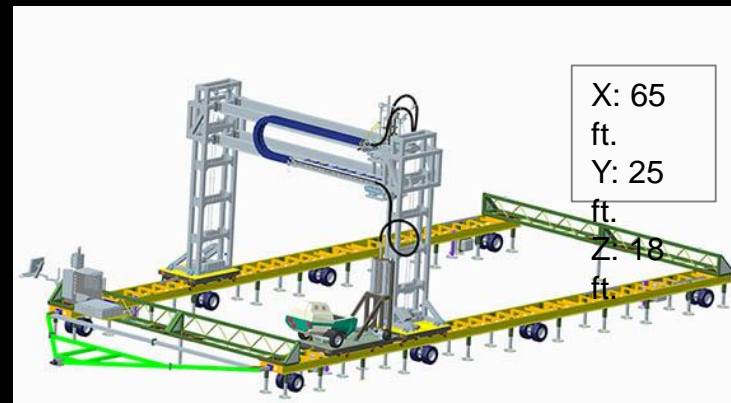
US Army Corps of Engineers.
Engineer Research and Development Center

Additive Construction with Mobile Emplacement (ACME) NASA



Shared Vision: Capability to print custom-designed expeditionary structures on-demand, in the field, using locally available materials.

Automated Construction of Expeditionary Structures (ACES) Construction Engineering Research Laboratory - Engineer Research and Development Center (CERL – ERDC)



**B-hut (guard shack)
16' x 32' x 10'**

ACES-3: The World's Largest 3D Structural Printer



Model of ACES-3 Gantry System



ACES-3 System in Champaign, IL



ACES-3 in Champaign, IL, aerial view



KSC Material Delivery System

- Current maintenance logistics strategy **will not be effective** for deep space exploration missions
- ISM offers the potential to:
 - Significantly reduce maintenance logistics mass requirements
 - Enable the use of recycled materials and in-situ resources for more dramatic reductions in mass requirements
 - Enable flexibility, giving systems a broad capability to adapt to unanticipated circumstances
 - Mitigate risks that are not covered by current approaches to maintainability
- Multiple projects are underway currently to develop and validate these capabilities for infusion into ISM exploration systems
- ISS is a critical testbed for driving out these capabilities
- Developing and testing FabLab is a major milestone for springboard to DSG/Cis-lunar Space applications
- ISM is a necessary paradigm shift in space operations – design for repair culture must be embraced
- ISM team needs to be working with exploration system designers now to identify high-value application areas and influence design