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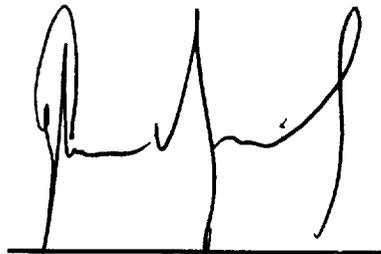
Mr. Edward E. Montgomery, IV
PS04
Marshall Space Flight Center AL 35812

26 August 93

Dear Sir:

The Sirius Group is pleased to submit this final report entitled "Laser Power Beaming System Analyses" in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Order No. H-2 0780D, 1-3-PP-02277(1F). The report includes no inventions or proprietary information, and has been approved for unlimited distribution.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Glenn W. Zeiders Jr.
President, The Sirius Group

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LASER POWER BEAMING SYSTEM ANALYSES

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STATEMENT OF WORK:

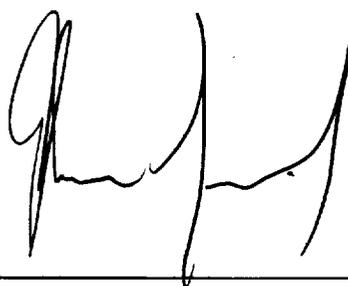
A series of developments during the past decade in high power lasers, large segmented telescopes, and adaptive optics, together offer the promise for power beaming from the Earth's surface as a cost-effective means for supplying the energy needs of a variety of space assets. Appropriately configured, the same optical systems should also be able to offer a quality of astronomical imaging heretofore restricted to space-based telescopes.

A Research and Development (R&D) program managed by NASA Marshall Space Flight Center and supported by JPL and industry is presently moving from the planning stage into testing of a complete multi-element adaptive optics subsystem and fabrication of a large telescope truss structure. The technologies represent the most current state of the art, and the efforts will be highly visible; therefore, their success will be critical to the progress of the overall program. It should be understood that they are intended primarily as test vehicles to validate concepts and to familiarize personnel with fabrication procedures, instrumentation, and operation. Many key parameters (segment size, edge sensing, control algorithms, and others) have not been optimized. It is critical that they be identified, their effects be quantified, and means be defined to specify them so that the significance of the tests and their results will not be misinterpreted.

The purpose of this initial effort, part of a much more extensive one to be undertaken to provide technical and planning support of the overall power beaming program, will be specifically to address the risk factors and potential solutions of the unresolved issues associated with the forthcoming Phased Array Mirror, Extendible Large Aperture (PAMELA) and truss telescope projects, and to initiate a detailed plan to identify the critical paths for these and other key program elements.

The contractor shall identify key unresolved issues in the PAMELA test and truss telescope fabrication projects of the NASA laser power beaming program, and shall provide technical and programmatic recommendations for solving these unresolved issues. A recommended selection of development path for the main beam director algorithm will be required. These will require evaluation of the modified multigrid method and the innovative deterministic method proposed by Applied Mathematical Physics Research.

The contractor shall be required to travel to MSFC. The contractor shall submit a final report of his findings and recommendations at the conclusion of the effort.



Dr. Glenn W. Zeiders Jr.
President, The Sirius Group

SUMMARY OF EFFORT

The successful demonstration of the PAMELA adaptive optics hardware and the fabrication of the BTOS truss have been identified by the program office as the two most critical elements of the NASA laser power beaming program, so it was these that received attention during this program. To that end, two trips were made by the contractor to MSFC to familiarize himself with the forthcoming PAMELA tests (especially the instrumentation and the plan prepared by Kaman) and to provide input to the ongoing BTOS truss effort. Meetings were held by the contractor at MSFC with Henry Waite, Gerald Nurre, Sandy Montgomery, Whitt Brantley, John Redmon Jr. and others, and he participated in several BTOS telecons. Detailed analyses were prepared and are attached of the AMP deterministic control scheme and the BTOS truss structure (both the JPL design and a spherical one), and recommendations are given.

Segment Control Techniques

The techniques considered to date in the NASA power beaming program for controlling the individual segments have been based on the use of a Shack-Hartmann sensor for measuring the local slope of the wavefront, then solving Poisson's equation to give the piston displacement.

A variety of iterative approaches (Jacobi, Gauss-Seidel, and successive over-relaxation) have been used for the latter and have proven to be effective for handling high-spatial-frequency disturbances, but their use of the values at nearest neighbors to update the state estimate cause low-frequency errors to be slowly attenuated. The multigrid technique offers promise to effectively circumvent this problem by forming the solution over multiple scales such that even low-frequency disturbances appear to occur over a small scale when viewed from a much larger one. Kaman describes the technique in detail in its 1992 final report, and, of particular interest for implementation with the PAMELA experimental hardware, specifically develops the system of equations needed for use with a 36-element hexagonal array. JPL and Kaman both claim that the multigrid estimator can be accomplished in hardware with a hierarchical controller, but MSFC as the system integrator should independently analyze the problem and define the system requirements -- especially to determine if and how the technique can be realistically extended to > 100,000 elements.

A deterministic alternative proposed by Applied Mathematical Physics Research (AMP) has met with less-than-enthusiastic response from much of the program's control systems community, but I continue to feel that it offers considerable promise and should be explored in more detail. Whereas the ultimate goal of all of the iterative solutions is essentially to converge to a solution which minimizes (in some sense) the edge differences of the segments, the AMP approach requires from the start that the sum of the squares of all of the edge differences at the midpoints be minimized. The resulting equations, one for each independent closed loop through the centers of the segments and the midpoints of abutting edges, involve only the local tilts and the geometry, and they can be cast in the form of a matrix that need be inverted only once to give the required piston displacements. The full solution for a 19-element mirror array was presented in my 1992 final report, and the results for the 36-element PAMELA array are given in Fig. 1 in anticipation of eventual implementation there; both show that, while the original matrices are quite sparse, the final one is not, indicating that the region of influence extends well beyond the nearest neighbors. The matrices would be extremely large if all loops had to be included, and this would have a serious impact on both the electronics and the cabling, so it is of interest to determine the region of influence beyond which tilt data can be neglected; note that a limited range would cause most interior points to have the same set of weighting functions. Fig. 2 gives the weighting functions for determining the center edge difference of symmetrical arrays with 16, 36, and 64 elements (the latter produced 98 X 98 matrices which exceeded the array capabilities of Excel and had to be solved by iteration), and shows that 34 neighboring loops have weighting functions larger than 10% of the maximum while 66 are larger than 3%. The ultimate effects of a particular "cutoff" on Strehl are not immediately apparent, and should probably be deduced numerically using Zernike phase models.

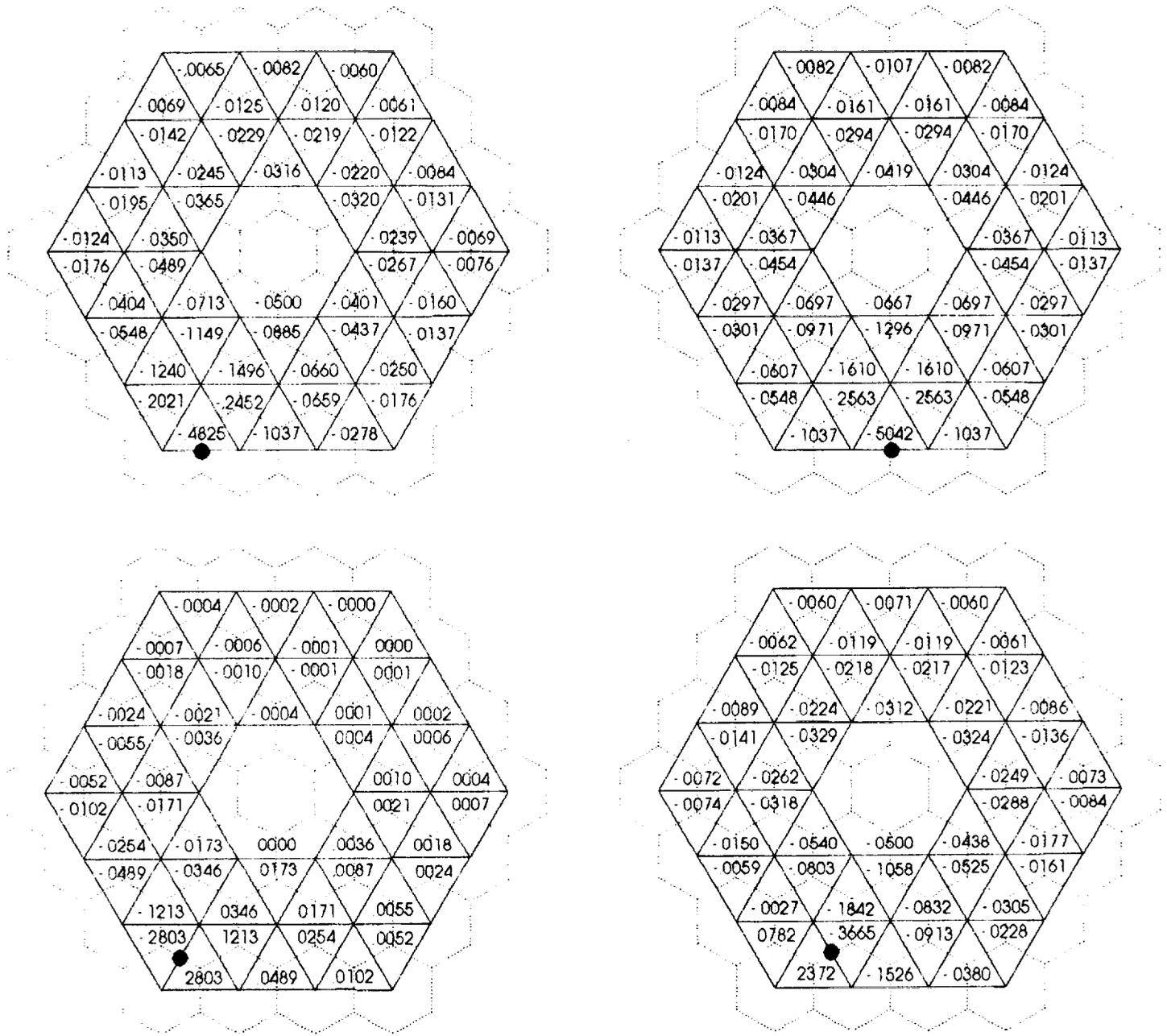
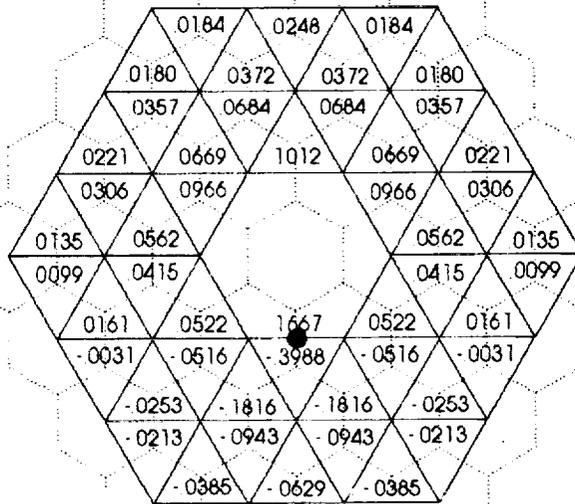
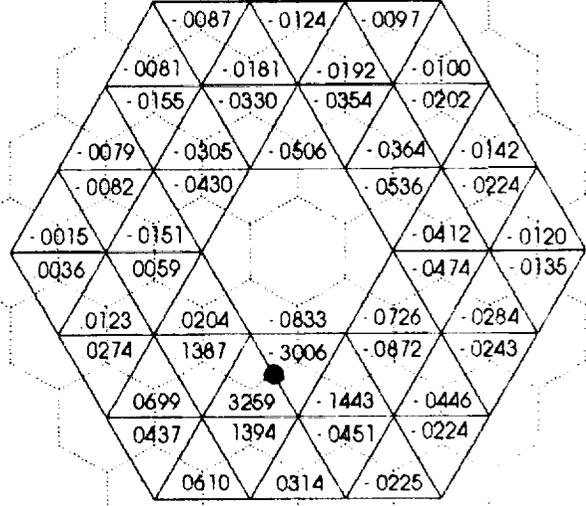
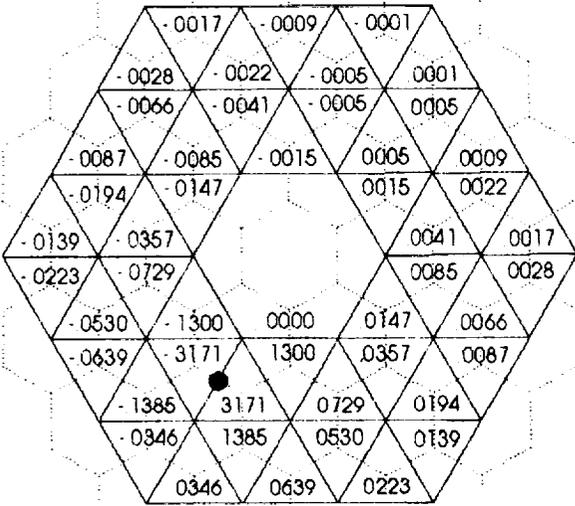
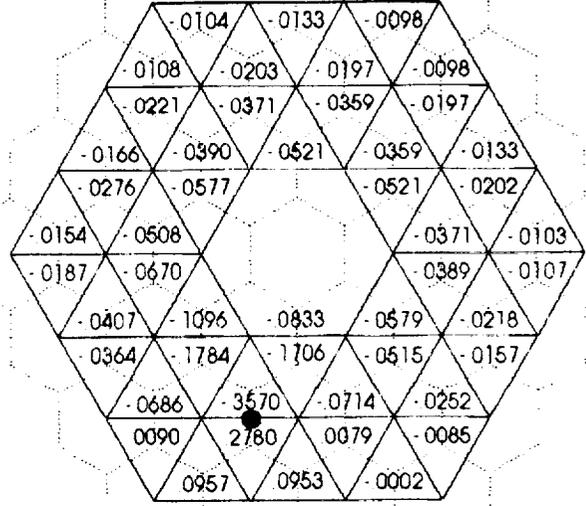
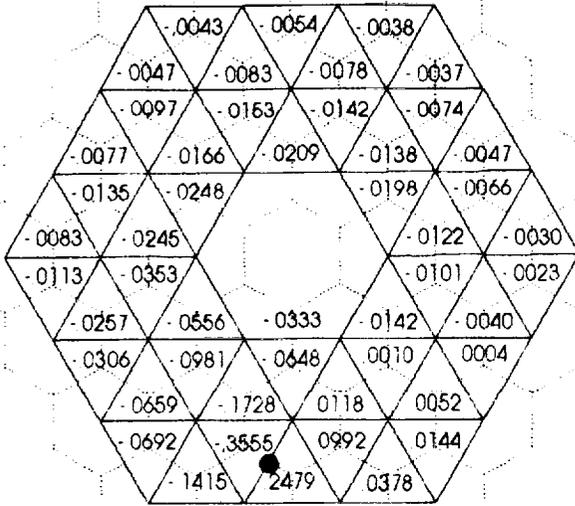


Fig. 1 Deterministic Weighting Functions for 36-Element PAMELA Array



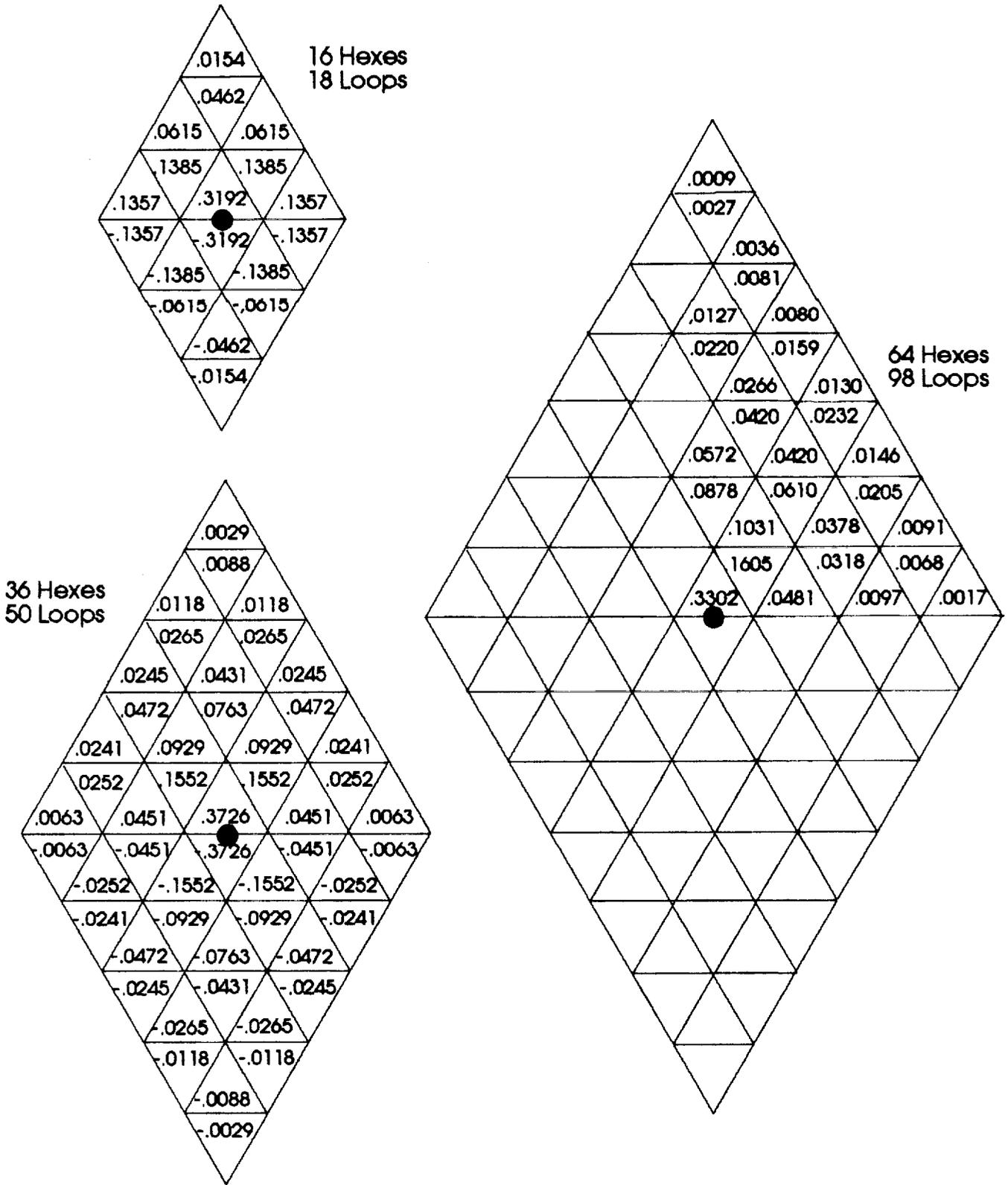


Fig. 2 Path Weighting Functions for Deterministic Control

It is, of course, the distribution of phase itself and not its slope that is important, and additional measurements or other references are needed to supplement the Hartmann data. The iteration schemes rely on edge sensors to establish local edge matching between adjacent segments, while the deterministic approach requires either edge sensors or, preferably, a more global reference from which the piston displacements can be measured. Inductive, capacitive, and optical edge sensors have been or are being specifically developed for this application, but cost and accuracy are key issues that need to be resolved. Accumulation of measurement errors with edge sensors would be a very serious problem in a one-dimensional case, but two-dimensional information propagation should tend to constrain them, and global tilt measurement should further reduce their effect. Global references can be provided mechanically through non-load-bearing auxiliary surfaces and/or electronically through moments of the beacon images at or near the focal plane. Global tilt is usually measured with the zeroth and first moments and corrected with a separate tilt mirror (which acts effectively a mechanical reference) to off load the stroke requirements of the high-frequency actuators; second moments (X^2 , Y^2 , and XY) are routinely taken at high speed with CCDs in many machine vision applications and could give useful information primarily relating to defocus and astigmatism, but the resulting correction would probably have to be made through a global command to the segments -- with piston displacement being measured relative to a mechanical reference.

BTOS Truss Structure

JPL has produced a detailed design of a graphite-epoxy truss structure based upon parallel projection of a regular hexagonal array onto a parabolic surface with the axes of cluster nodes aligned parallel to the projection direction (i.e. normal to the original base plane) and with a uniform truss depth in that direction. In view of the large number of expensive parts (789 struts and 198 cluster nodes) with many different strut lengths and node angles, Sirius has produced a vector-based Excel routine to verify the calculations (the program JPLTRUSS.XLS on the disk that has been provided to the NASA Technical Manager), and it is strongly recommended that MSFC use it to check the blueprints; the nomenclature for that analysis is shown in Fig. 3. Following JPL, the results given in Table I are based on a truss depth of 60", an effective focal length of 596.05" to the upper node surface (11" from the 12M, f/1.25 optical surface to the upper node surface), and a cluster panel face-to-face width of 51.181" (1.3 meters) in the base plane [*note that these dimensions actually result in a maximum diameter of 14.3 meters: 90 cluster panels with a flat-to-flat size of 1.200 meters would have the same area as a 12M aperture with a 1M hole.*] The routine assumes that the axes of all connecting struts at a node pass through a common point to prevent moments from being introduced, "strut lengths" are measured between such nodal points, and cluster angles are measured between the strut axes and the inward cluster axes. It has been found for the nominal design that there are 11 different upper and lower strut lengths varying from 51.181" to 52.347" (519 pieces), 11 diagonal ones from 62.323" to 72.195" (278 pieces), 21 different upper node clusters (108 pieces), and 17 lower ones (90 pieces.)

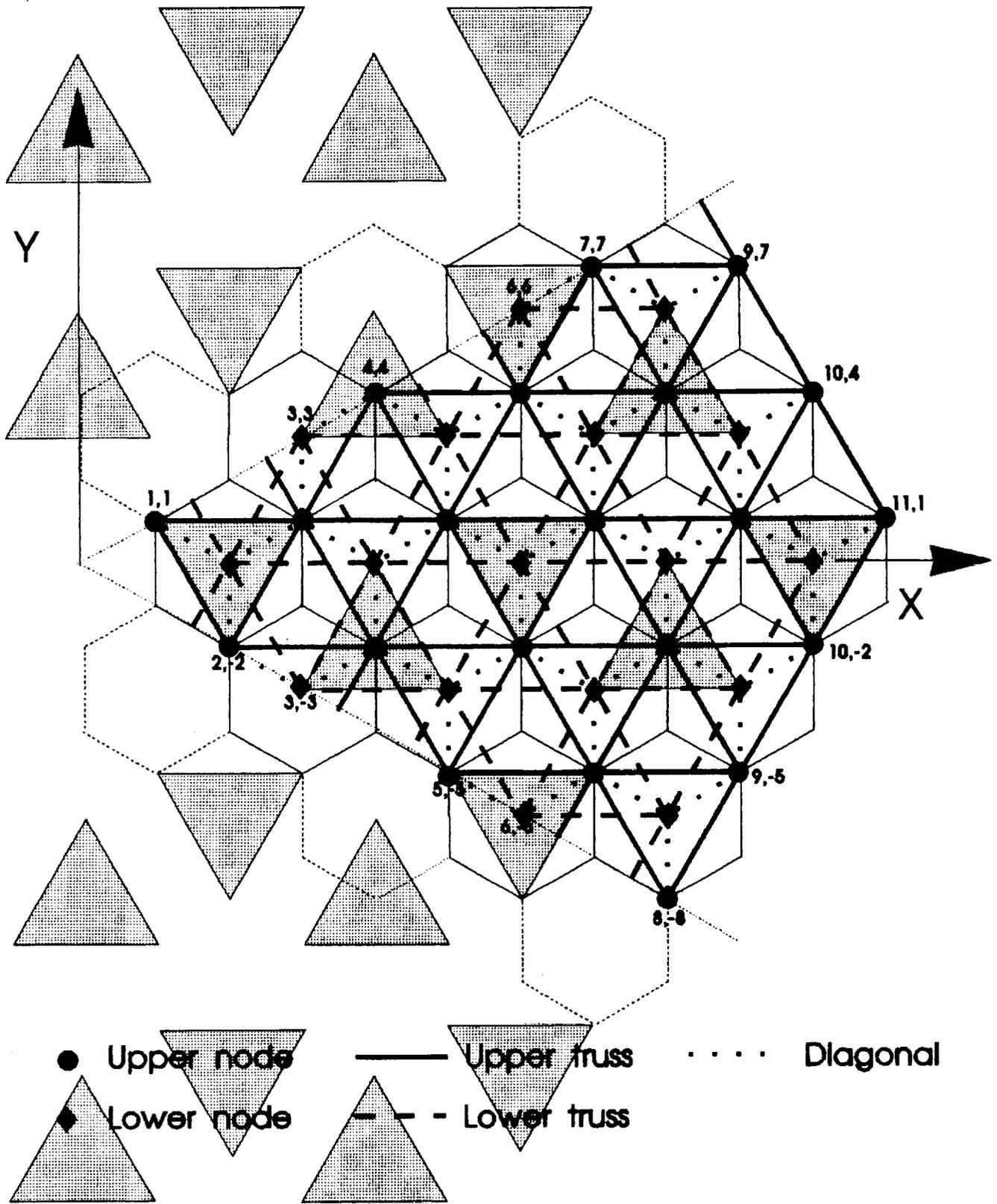


Fig. 3 Nomenclature for Truss Model

An alternate design is given in Table II based on the same nominal parameters but parallel-projecting the regular hexagonal array onto a spherical front surface, using a constant normal depth to a spherical rear surface, and aligning the axes of the cluster nodes normal to the surfaces (Excel program SPHTRUSS.XLS on the disk.) Spherical surfaces were chosen for computational convenience, and differ from parabolic by less than 0.24" for a 12M f/1.25 optic. This design would now have 54 different upper/lower struts from 51.181" to 54.790" and 27 different diagonals from 67.211" to 67.492", but many of the parts would be the same within standard tolerances. A major advantage of the spherical design would be that the upper mounting plates would all be normal to the cluster axes and could be cast in place, but this is offset somewhat by the small distortion (generally less than 0.5 degrees) of the angles between the flanges.

Both designs suffer from the fact that the mirror cluster plates are not regular hexagons and increase in radial size with distance from the center. It is well known that a spherical or parabolic surface cannot be generated with perfectly-mating regular hexagons, but it is likely that a better design than either of the present two would result if uniform regular hexagons were used and small gaps were allowed between them; a much more repetitive design should be expected to result with the spherical configuration. This could easily be incorporated into the Excel solutions.

With regard to fabrication, JPL has recommended that the holes in the cluster nodes be drilled a fixed distance from the nodal points, resulting in multiple strut lengths with little difference between them; since the angles to the holes vary as much as they do anyway, I would prefer to see that the holes be located so as to minimize the number of strut lengths (i.e., part numbers.) To minimize cumulative errors and recognizing that the basic element of the truss is a tetrahedron (albeit badly skewed with the JPL design), I would further recommend that 40 of them (perhaps those shown shaded in Fig. 3) be rigidly assembled and that they then be connected, either using assembled struts and drilling the holes to produce the proper distance between the nodes or pre-drilling the holes and allowing the epoxy to set after assembly in place.

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