of candidate IRIS spacecraft mission orbits in an accurate and timely fashion. The software is a suite of Fortran subroutines and data files organized as a “computational” engine that is used to accurately predict the long-term orbit evolution of IRIS mission orbits while searching for Earth shadow conditions.

The core algorithms of this software product have been used to solve a variety of unique orbital mechanics and targeting problems. Past applications include lunar shadow requirements for Chandra, perigee decay of geosynchronous transfer orbits due to third-body point-mass perturbations, and prediction of orbital lifetime and decay of Earth satellites.

This work was done by David Eagle of a.i. solutions Inc. for Kennedy Space Center. For additional information, contact David Eagle at (321) 867-8913. KSC-13519

Automated and Manual Rocket Crater Measurement Software

An update has been performed to software designed to do very rapid automated measurements of craters created in sandy substrates by rocket exhaust on liftoff. The previous software was optimized for pristine lab geometry and lighting conditions. This software has been enhanced to include a section for manual measurements of crater parameters; namely, crater depth, crater full width at half max, and estimated crater volume. The tools provide a very rapid method to measure these manual parameters to ease the burden of analyzing large data sets.

This software allows for rapid quantization of the rocket crater parameters where automated methods may not work. The progress of spreadsheet data is continuously saved so that data is never lost, and data can be copied to clipboards and pasted to other software for analysis. The volume estimation of a crater is based on the central max depth axis line, and the polygonal shape of the crater is integrated around that axis.

This work was done by Sean P. Kenny of Langley Research Center and Luis Crespo of the National Institute of Aerospace. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1). LAR-17483-1

Patched Conic Trajectory Code

PatCon code was developed to help mission designers run trade studies on launch and arrival times for any given planet. Initially developed in Fortran, the required inputs included launch date, arrival date, and other orbital parameters of the launch planet and arrival planets at the given dates. These parameters include the position of the planets, the eccentricity, semi-major axes, argument of periapsis, ascending node, and inclination of the planets. With these inputs, a patched conic approximation is used to determine the trajectory.

The patched conic approximation divides the planetary mission into three parts: (1) the departure phase, in which the two relevant bodies are Earth and the spacecraft, and where the trajectory is a departure hyperbola with Earth at the focus; (2) the cruise phase, in which the two bodies are the Sun and the spacecraft, and where the trajectory is a transfer el-
lipse with the Sun at the focus; and (3) the arrival phase, in which the two bodies are the target planet and the spacecraft, where the trajectory is an arrival hyperbola with the planet as the focus.

This work was done by Brooke Anderson Park and Henry Wright of Langley Research Center. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1). LAR-17446-1

Ring Image Analyzer

Ring Image Analyzer software analyzes images to recognize elliptical patterns. It determines the ellipse parameters (axes ratio, centroid coordinate, tilt angle). The program attempts to recognize elliptical fringes (e.g., Newton Rings) on a photograph and determine their centroid position, the short-to-long-axis ratio, and the angle of rotation of the long axis relative to the horizontal direction on the photograph. These capabilities are important in interferometric imaging and control of surfaces. In particular, this program has been developed and applied for determining the rim shape of precision-machined optical whispering gallery mode resonators.

The program relies on a unique image recognition algorithm aimed at recognizing elliptical shapes, but can be easily adapted to other geometric shapes. It is robust against non-elliptical details of the image and against noise.

Interferometric analysis of precision-machined surfaces remains an important technological instrument in hardware development and quality analysis. This software automates and increases the accuracy of this technique. The software has been developed for the needs of an R&TD-funded project and has become an important asset for the future research proposal to NASA as well as other agencies.

This work was done by Dmitry V. Strekalov of Caltech for NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1). This software is available for commercial licensing. Please contact Daniel Broderick of the California Institute of Technology at danielb@caltech.edu. Refer to NPO-47579.

SureTrak Probability of Impact Display

The SureTrak Probability of Impact Display software was developed for use during rocket launch operations. The software displays probability of impact information for each ship near the hazardous area during the time immediately preceding the launch of an unguided vehicle.

Wallops range safety officers need to be sure that the risk to humans is below a certain threshold during each use of the Wallops Flight Facility Launch Range. Under the variable conditions that can exist at launch time, the decision to launch must be made in a timely manner to ensure a successful mission while not exceeding those risk criteria. Range safety officers need a tool that can give them the needed probability of impact information quickly, and in a format that is clearly understandable. This application is meant to fill that need.

The software is a reuse of part of software developed for an earlier project: Ship Surveillance Software System (S4). The S4 project was written in C++ using Microsoft Visual Studio 6. The data structures and dialog templates from it were copied into a new application that calls the implementation of the algorithms from S4 and displays the results as needed. In the S4 software, the list of ships in the area was received from one local radar interface and from operators who entered the ship information manually. The SureTrak Probability of Impact Display application receives ship data from two local radars as well as the SureTrak system, eliminating the need for manual data entry.

This work was done by John Elliott of Goddard Space Flight Center. Further information is contained in a TSP (see page 1). GSC-16064-1