

Q 37: Can you provide additional guidance on what the NASA policy will be for Mars Scout landing site final selection?

A 37: Yes.

Landing Site Selection and Certification Policy for 2007 Scout:

Given that Mars Scout missions are PI-led, it is NASA's intent to Maximize (to the extent possible) PI control of the landing site identification, certification, and final selection process. NASA expects the PI of any Mars Scout mission to develop a formal landing site selection for his or her mission, on the basis of detailed engineering certification and safety analysis, as well as community input. Final concurrence of such a selection will be made by NASA HQ, under the direction of the Lead Scientist for Mars Exploration (also the Mars Scout Program Scientist). This final concurrence cycle may involve a formal landing site selection briefing at NASA HQ and a NASA-sponsored peer review, but specific details will be negotiated at a later time. Science community input, as with the 2003 MER mission, will be developed using a NASA Landing Site Steering Committee co-chaired by Dr. Matt Golombek (JPL Landing Site scientist) and a peer-selected external scientist (presently Dr. J. Grant, NASM), and on the basis of one or more open workshops. NASA's Mars Exploration Program will fully fund this community input process. Any Mars Scout PI whose mission involves selection of a specific landing site should use this externally funded process as a source of science input for their landing site identification, certification, and final selection process. It is anticipated that such PI's will provide the NASA Landing Site Steering Committee with specific landing site engineering constraints and fully participate in the landing site workshops via their science teams. Final landing site selection, however, rests upon the PI, with final concurrence by NASA HQ. The costs associated with full engineering assessment and safety certification of any landing sites under consideration must be borne by the PI. Should NASA HQ require a formal peer review of the landing site process prior to the final landing site concurrence briefing, the costs associated with this activity will be borne by NASA's Mars Exploration Program, and should not be included in mission-specific costing by the Scout Mission PI. The intent of the process described above is to ensure PI-control of his/her landing sites, with minimal influence by the NASA Mars Exploration Program, with the exception of the final concurrence step.