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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 09-02-2012		2. REPORT TYPE Briefing Charts		3. DATES COVERED (From - To)	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE An Overview of Advanced Concepts for Launch				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Marcus Young and Jason Mossman				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER 50260542	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air Force Research Laboratory (AFMC) AFRL/RZSA 10 E. Saturn Blvd. Edwards AFB CA 93524-7680				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air Force Research Laboratory (AFMC) AFRL/RZS 5 Pollux Drive Edwards AFB CA 93524-7048				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S NUMBER(S) AFRL-RZ-ED-VG-2012-030	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited (PA #12088).					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES For presentation at the USC Rusch Undergraduate Honors Colloquium, Los Angeles, CA, 24 Feb 2012.					
14. ABSTRACT This briefing presented an overview of advanced concepts for launch at AFRL. It explored "the" launch problem and "the" nanoLaunch problem, then discussed advanced concepts for cost effective launch/nanoLaunch.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code)
Unclassified	Unclassified	Unclassified	SAR	36	N/A



An Overview of Advanced Concepts for Launch

Marcus Young
Jason Mossman

USC Engineering Honors Colloquium
Feb. 24, 2012



Outline



1. Advanced Concepts at AFRL

2. “The” Launch Problem

3. “The” nanoLaunch Problem

4. Advanced Concepts for Cost Effective Launch/nanoLaunch

1. Advanced Concepts at AFRL

- *Air Force Research Lab*
- *Advanced Concepts Group*
- *What is an Advanced Concept?*



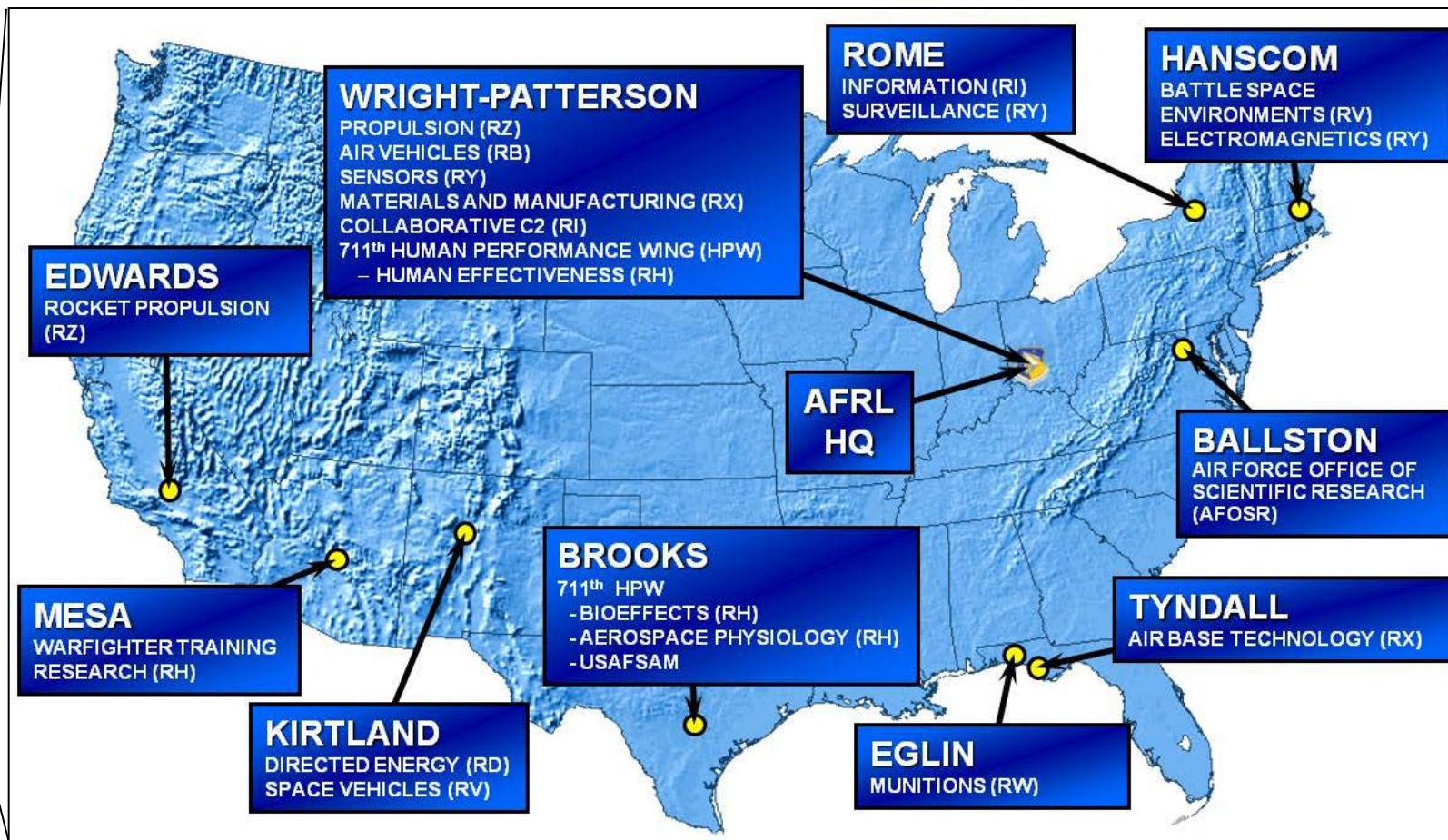
Air Force Research Lab



Propulsion
Directorate

Aerophysics
Branch

Advanced
Concepts
Group



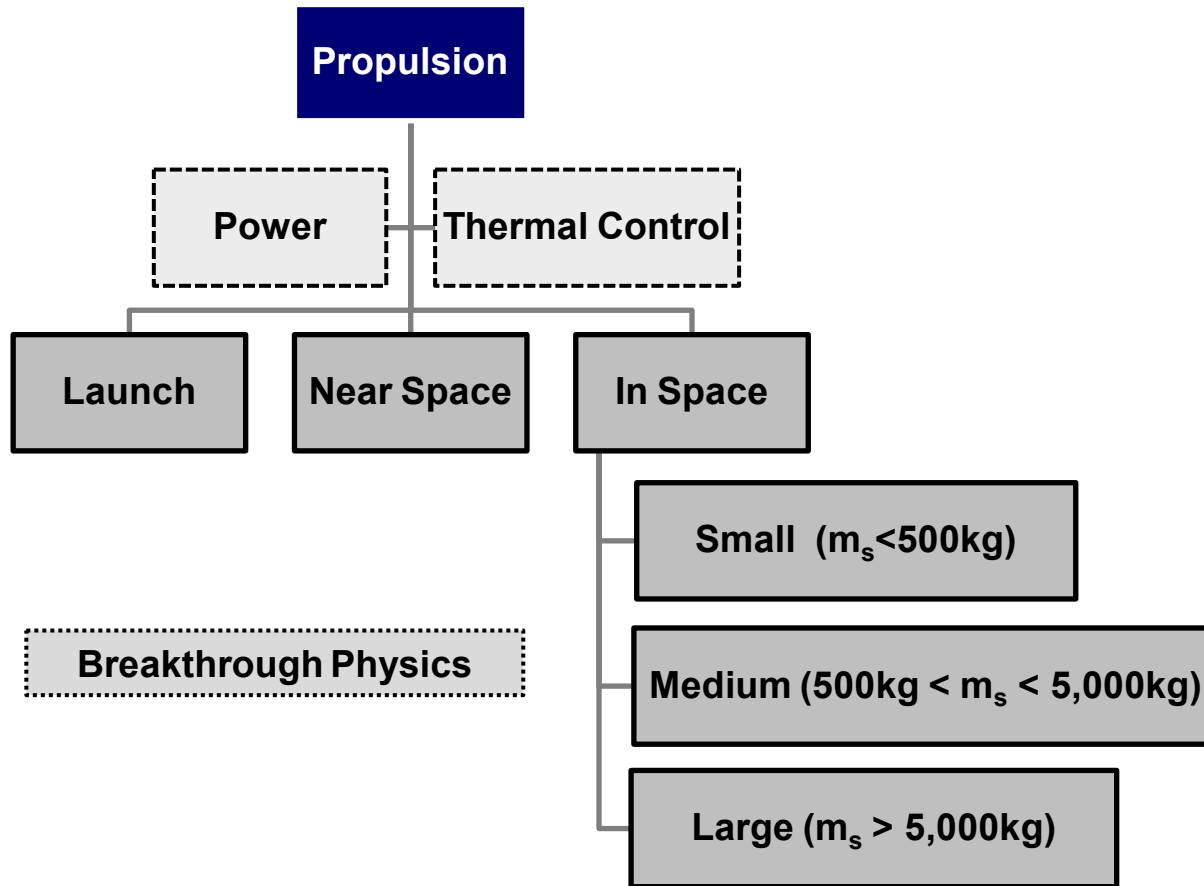
- AFRL Does: Research and Develop Advanced Tech.
- AFRL Does Not: Manufacture or Use Advanced Tech.



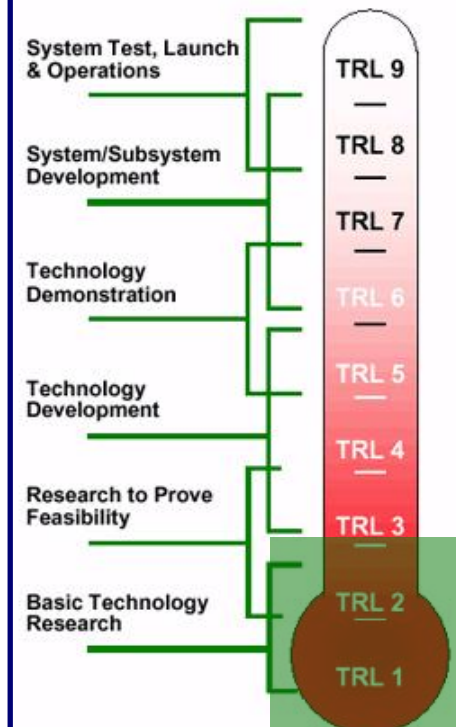
Advanced Concepts Group



“Enable Future AF Missions Through the Discovery and Demonstration of Emerging Revolutionary Technology”



•15-50 Years
•Technology Push

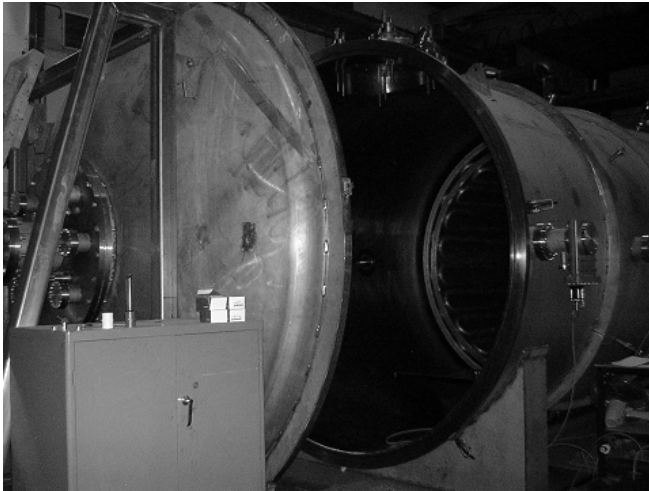




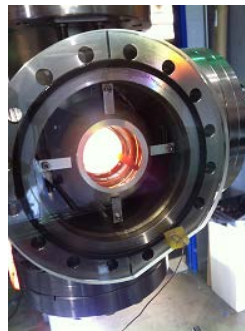
Advanced Concepts Group USC Activities



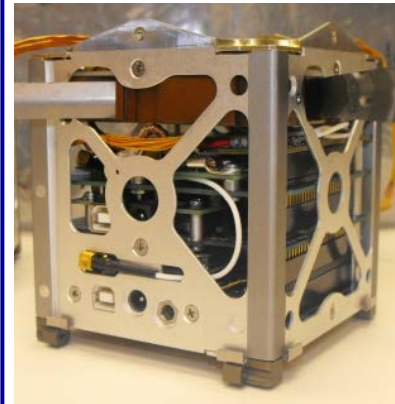
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HEATS



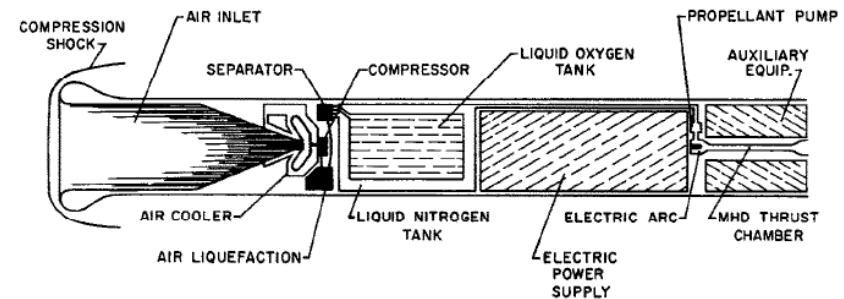
Cubesat Propulsion (Future?)



- Nanosat: $m_p = 1-10\text{kg}$.
- Cubesat: Adhere to specs.
- Lightweight
- Cheap.
- Fast.
- Simple.
- Risk O.K.
- Wrong Orbit.
- Limited/No Propulsion.

→ Significant DV Propulsion is Enabling.

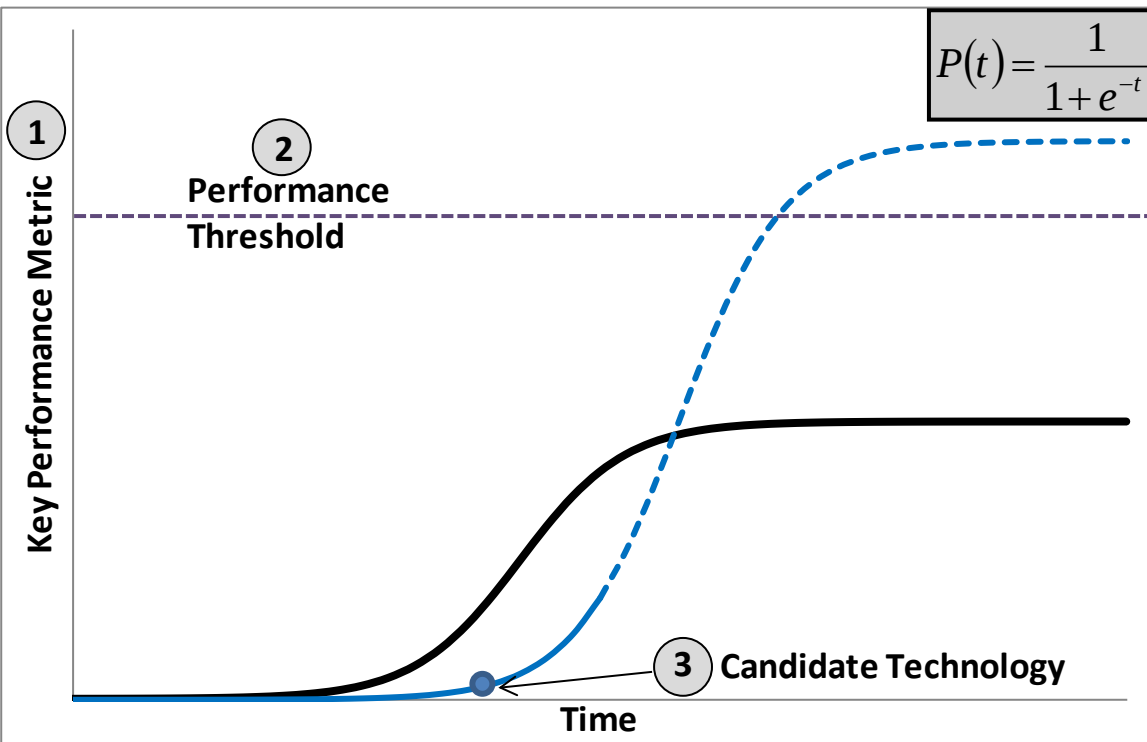
Air Breathing Satellite (Future?)



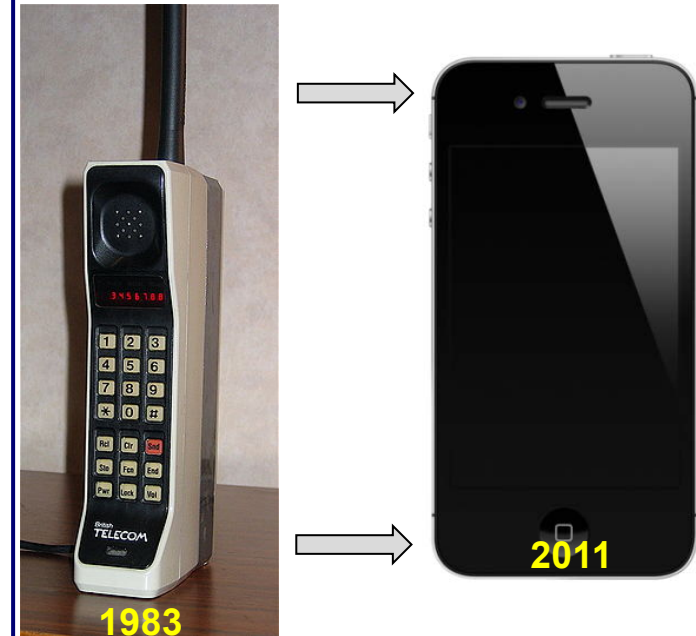
- Dip lower (150km) to collect propellant.
- Dramatic increase in achievable ΔV .
- Scooping at 7.8km/s is difficult problem...



Advanced Concept



Cell Phone Example



1. Identify Key Metric.
 2. Identify Enabling Threshold.
 3. Identify Technology Required to Cross Metric.
- Insufficient Modeling Available.
 - Require Unknown Breakthroughs.

(\$/Performance)
(10x Reduction)
(Many)

2. “The” Launch Problem

- *Space Operations Process*
- *Typical Launch Parameters*
- *Recent Launch Statistics*
- *Lessons Learned*



Delta IV Heavy Launch



Delta IV Payload Planners Guide
September 2007
06H0233

SHG055905-057.2

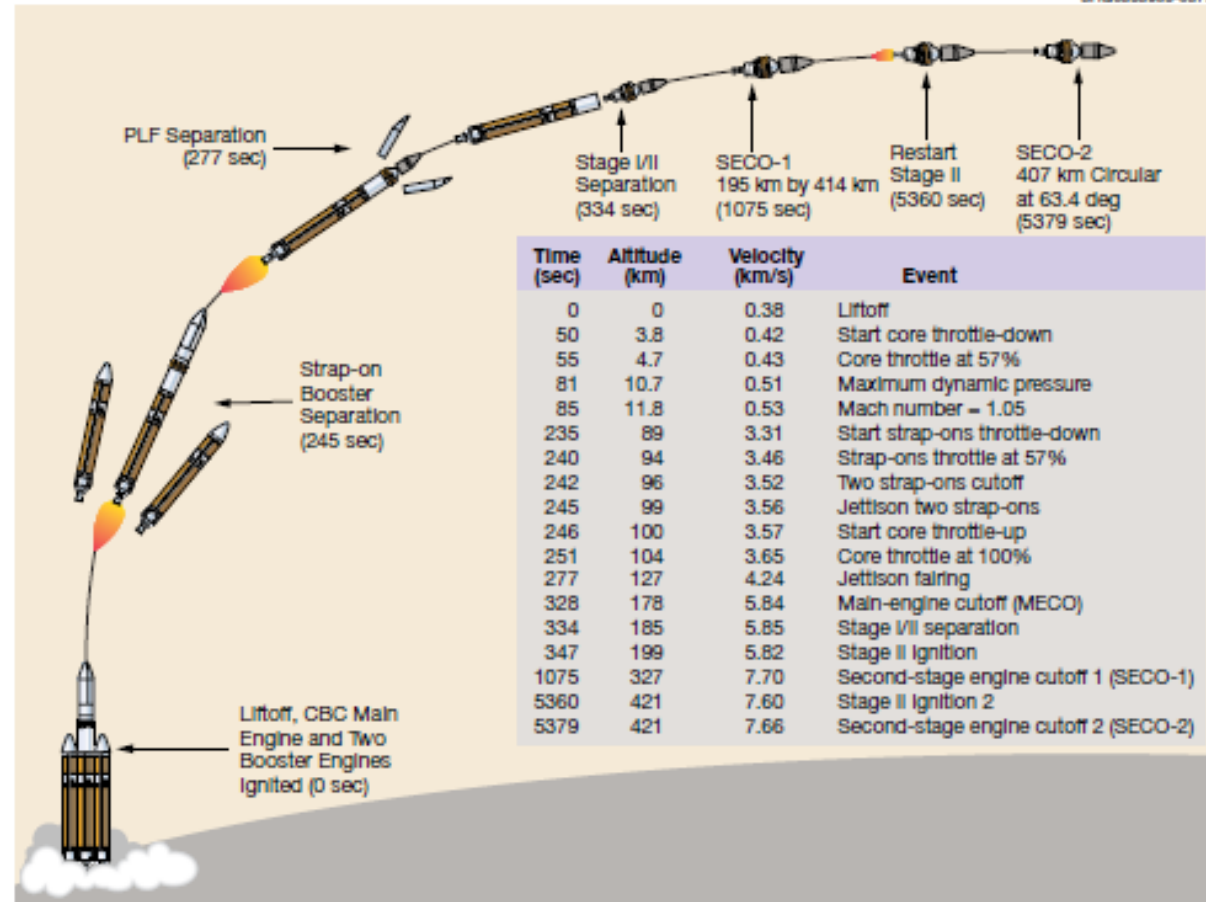


Figure 2-6. Delta IV H Sequence of Events for LEO Mission (Western Range)



Typical Launch



Typical Launch Magnitudes

	Falcon I	Saturn V
Payload (LEO) [kg]	450	119,000
Cost [\$]	\$7M	\$1.1B (2011\$)
Cost/mass [\$ /kg]	\$15,600	\$9,200
Height [m]	22.25	110.6
Diameter [m]	1.7	10.1
Wet Mass [kg]	3.32×10^4	3.03×10^6
Payload Fraction	1.4%	3.9%
Th_{SL} [MN]	0.343	34
P_{throat} [GW]	0.85	130

•Responsiveness:

- Now: years → Want: weeks/days.
- Desert Storm: Sept. 1990 → Launch Feb. 1992!
- Solids (Minotaur I) → Launch in Days.

Typical Launch Breakdowns

Energy Efficiency

$$\eta_{en} = \eta_{int} \cdot \eta_{pr} \cdot \eta_{me} \cdot \eta_{dr} \cdot \eta_g$$

η_{en} (20%)

Mass Breakdown

$$M_{lo} = M_{fuel} + M_{str} + M_{pay}$$

M_{fuel} (85%)
 M_{str} (14%)
 M_{pay} (1-4%)

\$ Efficiency

\$10,000/kg

$$\$_l = \$_{r\&d} + \$_{ve} + \$_{go} + \dots + \$_{en}$$

$\$_{r\&d}$ (50%)
 $\$_{ve}$ (30%)
 $\$_{go}$ (20%)
 $\$_{en}$ (.01%)

- Launch Involves Extreme Numbers and is Extremely Difficult.
- Rockets Are an Inefficient and Expensive Way to Launch.
- Rockets Are All We Have.



Space Operations



~10% costs due to launch

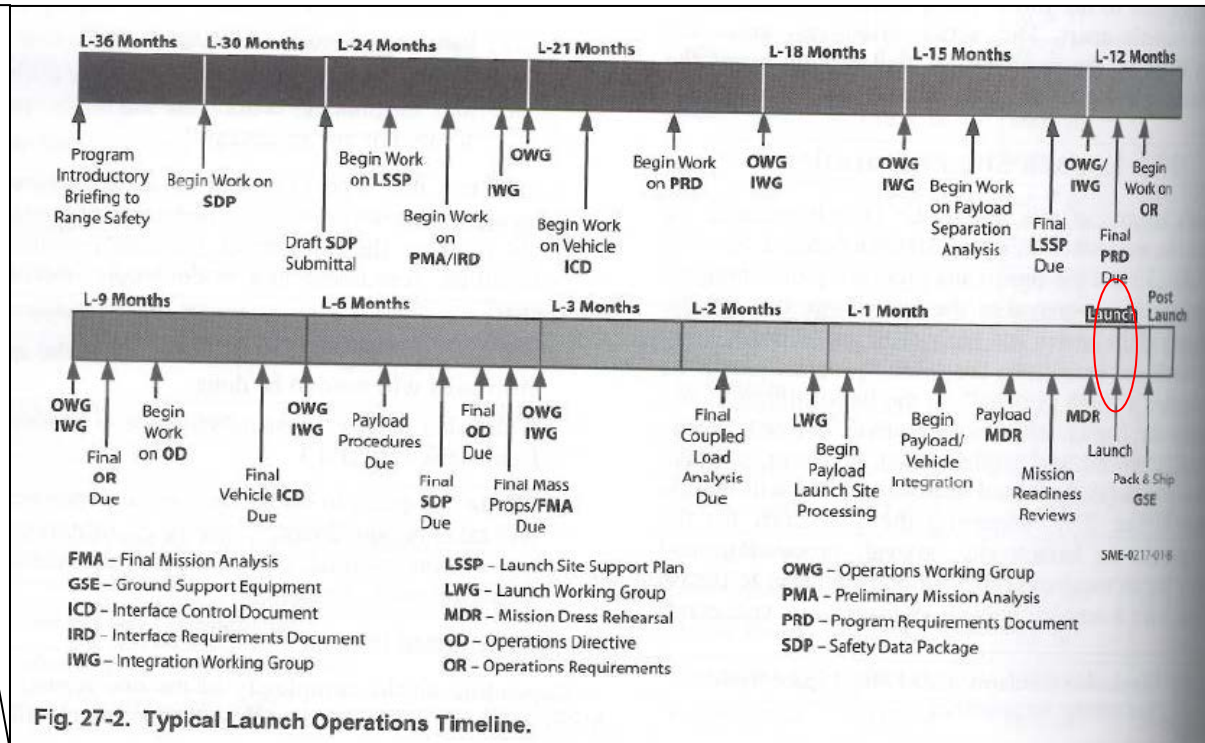
- Small number of unique launches.
- Standing army for facilities/vehicles.
- ~~Increase total number of launches.~~
- Increase launch/vehicle (all fly same).
- Need competition.

~25% costs due to spacecraft

- Nearly all space hardware is unique.
- Extremely low risk tolerance.
- *Increase capabilities/mass.*
- *Expand cubesat paradigm.*
 - Well defined specification.
 - Risk accepted.

~65% costs due to ground ops.

- Large ground workforce.
- *Automation, Simplification.*



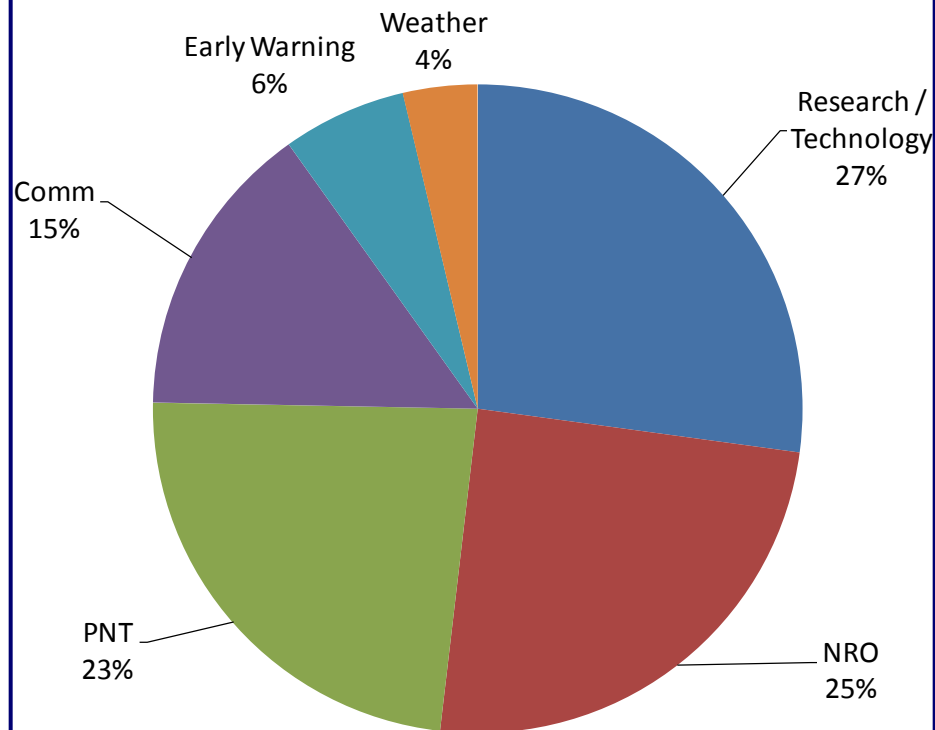
Space operations is much more than just the launch day.
Free launch → still 90% of space operation cost.
Cheap launch is a critical part.



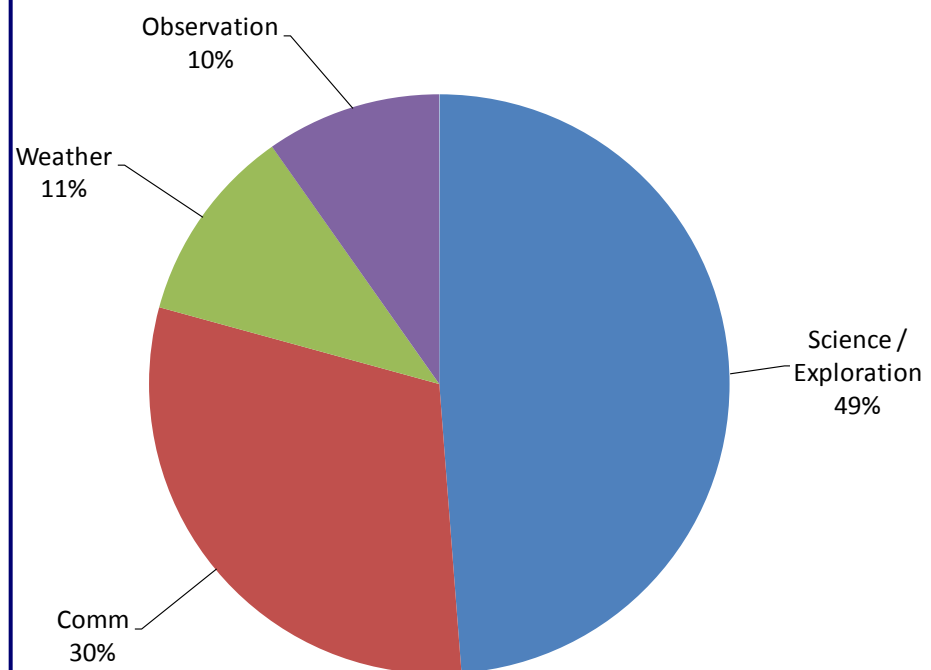
MIL and CIV Space Why?



2000 – 2010 Launch Missions (Military)



2000 – 2010 Launch Missions (Civilian)



- Wide Range of Applications for Both MIL and CIV.
- Core Metric is \$ per Mission Performance.
- Launch is a Key Component of \$.



MIL and CIV Space How Often?



2000–2010 U.S. Averages

MIL	7.4
CIV	8.0
(U.S.) 15.4/yr	

Worldwide Launches

1957 – 2009	4,621
2006 – 2009	259
'06-'09 avg.	~65

Large Missions

- Apollo → 13 (6 yrs).
 - Shuttle → 135 (30 yrs).
 - ISS → 105 (13 yrs).
 - GPS → 62 (33 yrs).
-
- SBSP(GW) ~ 100 (<10 yrs)
 - Virgin Galactic ~ 70 (suborb)

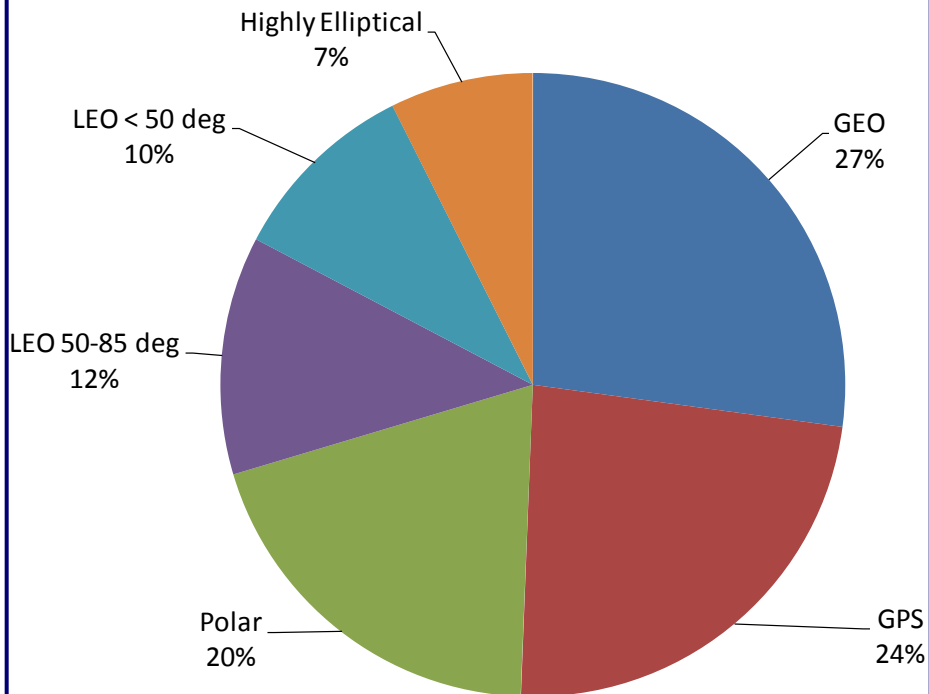
- ~15 Total US Launches/Year (1/4 of World). MIL & non MIL Roughly Equal.
- Historical Trends and Candidate Applications Require Few Launches.



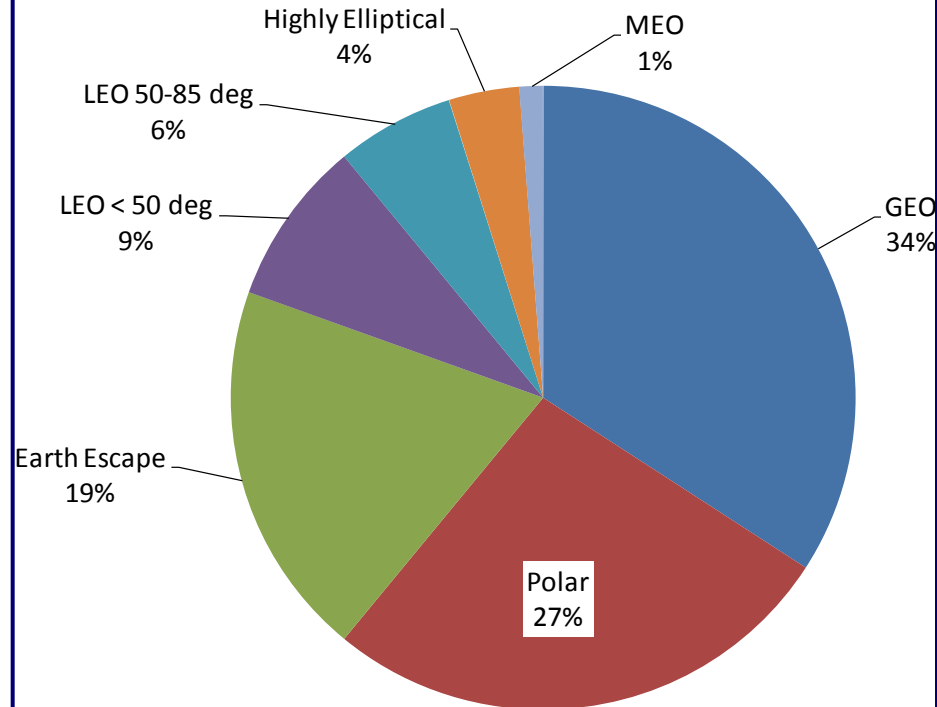
MIL and CIV Space Where To?



2000 – 2010 Launch Destination (Military)



2000 – 2010 Launch Destination (Civilian)



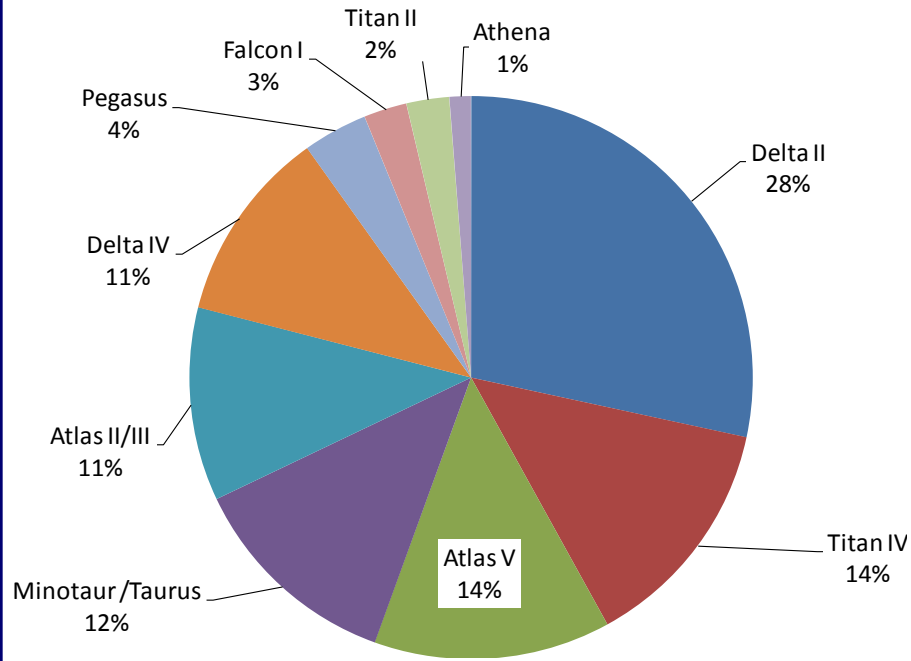
- Large Range of Destinations Required for Missions.
- Not Condensable to Single Site and Vehicle.



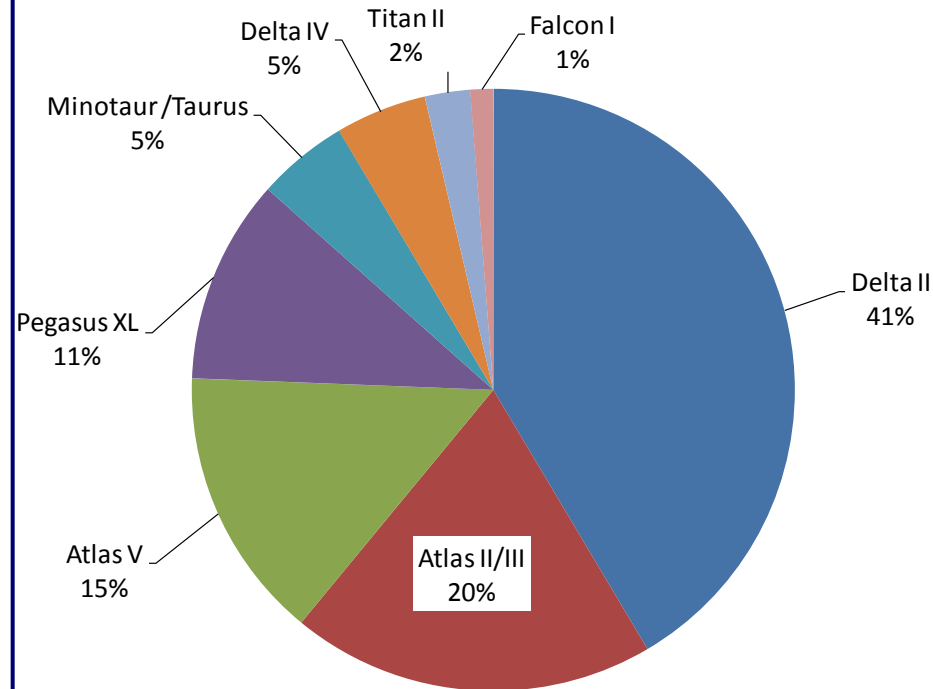
MIL and CIV Space How?



2000 – 2010 Launch Vehicles (Military)



2000 – 2010 Vehicles (Civilian)



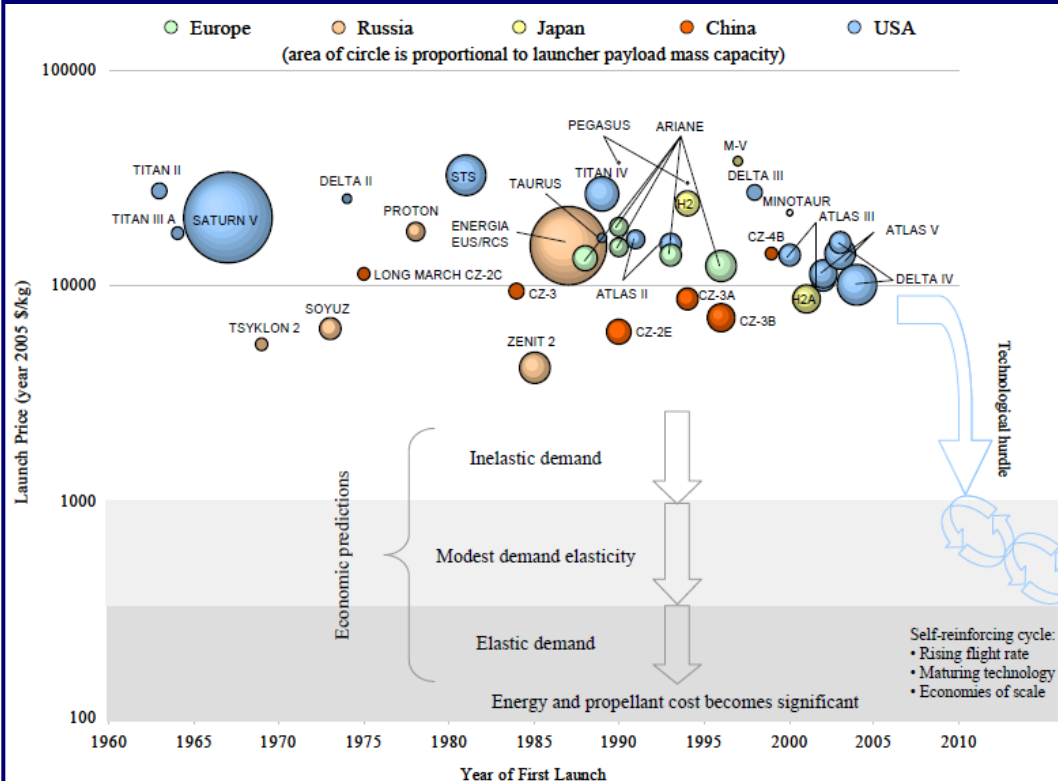
- ~10 Vehicles for MIL and CIV launches.
- No Launch Vehicle Used More than 5.7x per Year (Delta II).



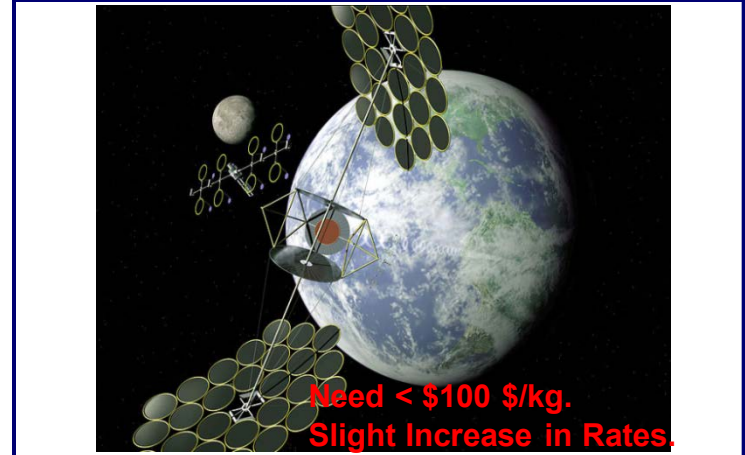
"The" Problem Launch Costs



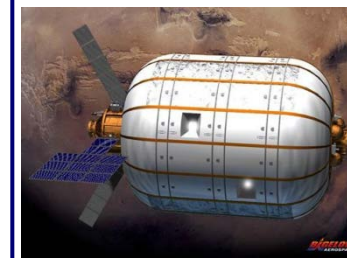
Historical Launch Costs (Parkin, 2006)



Space Based Solar Power



Space Tourism



- 3/4 price for transport.
- \$23M for 30 day stay.
- America's Space Prize.
- Man Rated!

- 1/10 Cost May Yield Market Elasticity and Further Reductions.
- 1/10 Cost May Also Enable Candidate Markets.
- **Reduce Launch Costs by One Order of Magnitude. (At Current Rates)**

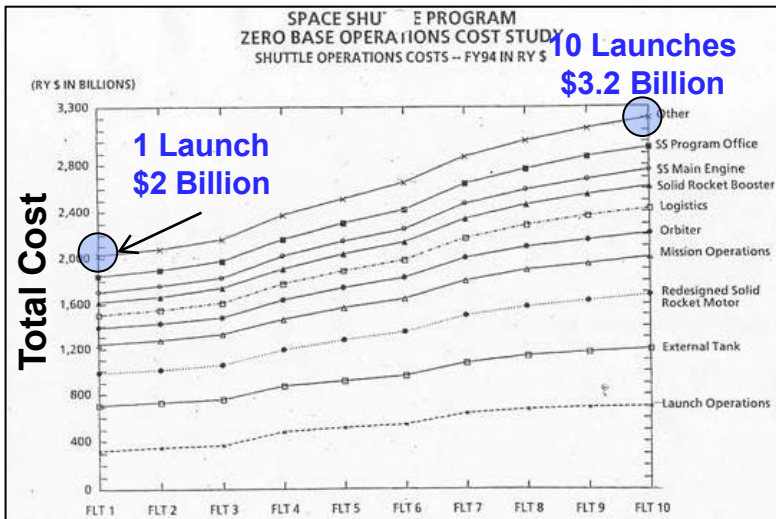
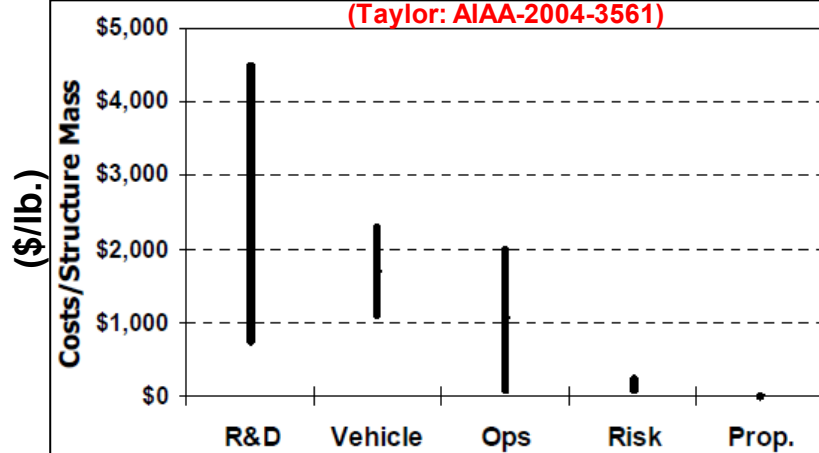


Reducing Costs



Cost of Launch

(Taylor: AIAA-2004-3561)



R&D, Vehicle, Operations, and LAUNCH RATE.

Common Solutions

- Reusability
 - Payback (~10s).
 - High Reliability.
 - Shuttle: "Weekly Launches"
 - Inspect & Rebuild.
- SSTO
 - LOx/LH₂: $m_s < 10\%$
 - Advanced Structure/Tank.
 - Aerospike.
 - Sensitive Design Space.



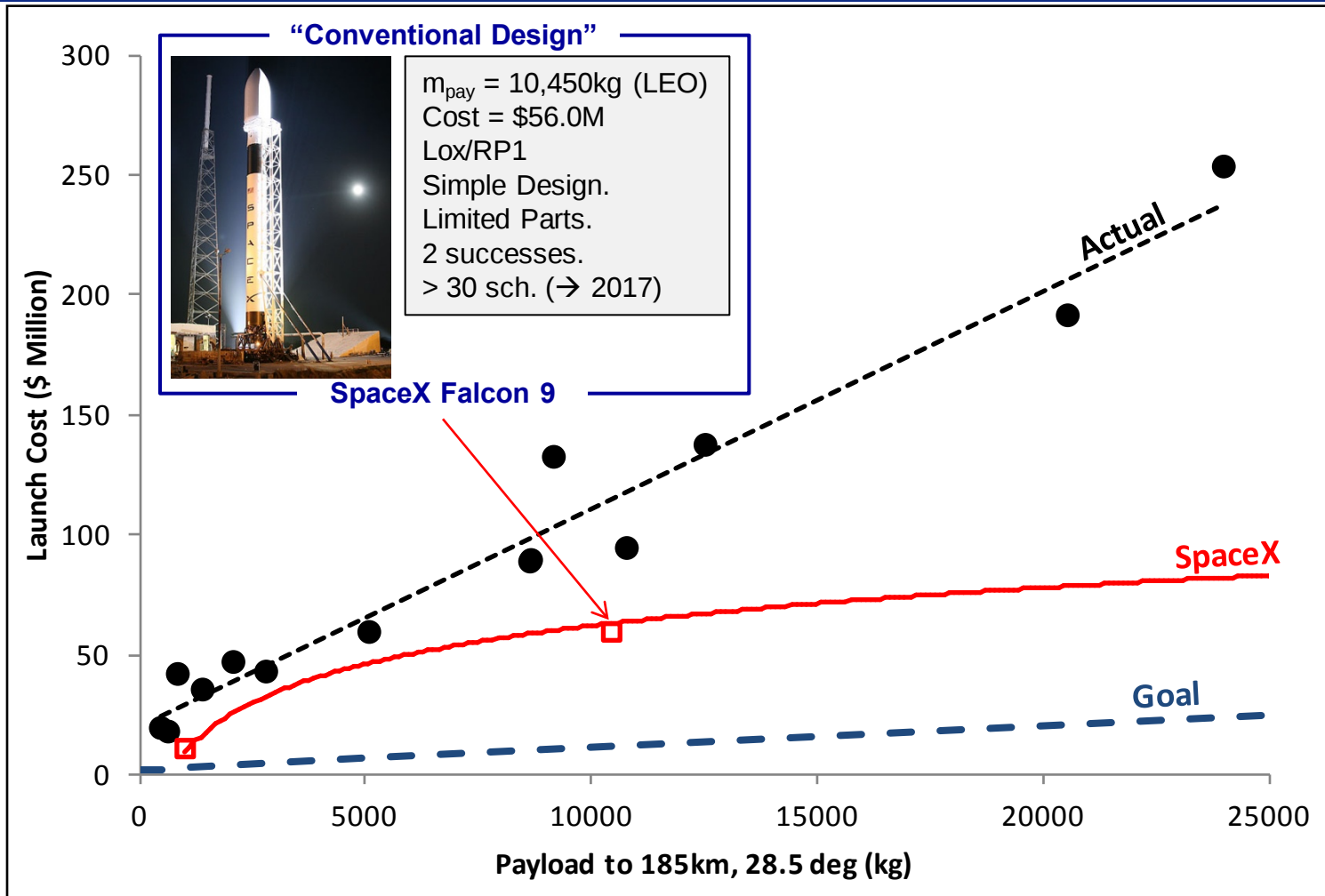
Reusable & SSTO do not guarantee \$ savings.

Can We Avoid Launching?

- Reuse orbital mass
 - DARPA Phoenix.
 - MDA Corp.
- Avoid launching
 - Lockheed Martin HAA.



Recent and Future Options



- Recent/Active Launch Vehicles Follow Trend and Haven't Improved Towards Goal.
- Near-Term Solutions Hope to Demonstrate Improvement, but do NOT Achieve the Goal.

3. The nanoLaunch Problem



Nanolaunch Costs

Nanosatellite Operations (Cubesats)

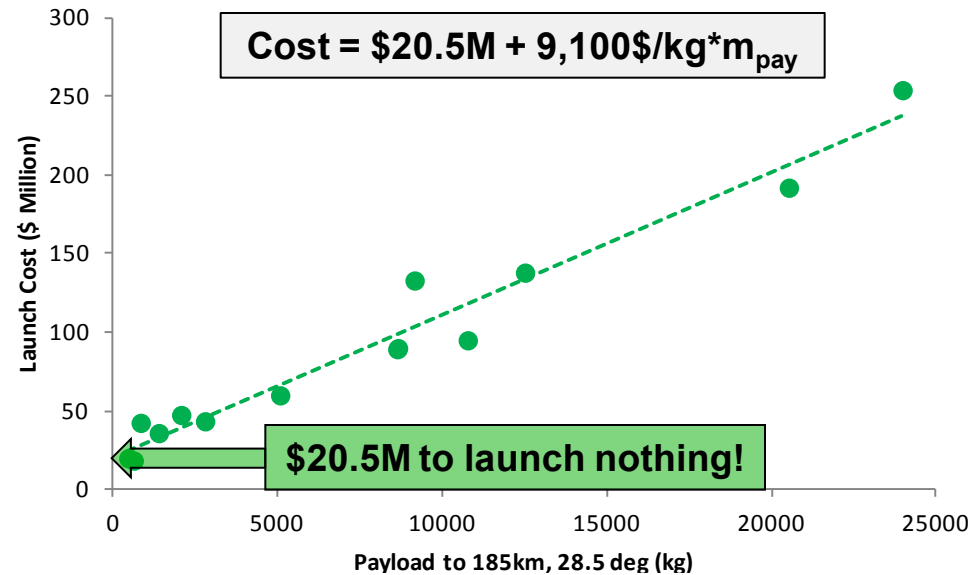
- Nanosatellite: $m_{\text{sat}} = 1 - 10\text{kg}$.
- Cubesat: Adheres to specs.
 - Simplified Design.
 - Specified Release.
 - System Unification.
- Very Short Time-Scales.
- Very Low Cost.
- Accept Higher Risk.
- Limited Functionality, Propulsion.
- Dropped off in Wrong Orbit with Little/No Propulsion.



➔ Need Dedicated Nanolauncher.

- Must Maintain Paradigm
 - Simple, Responsive, Very Low Cost
- BUT
 - Cost/kg increases with decreasing size.
 - Uncertainties → hard to accurately deliver.

- Real need for responsive, cost effective nanolaunch.
- Acceptable solution possible in near term.
- Better solution needed for long term.



“Conventional Design”



2-Stage NLV

10kg to 250km polar.
LOX/Densified C_3H_8 .
 $d = 0.65\text{m}$
 $h = 7\text{m}$
 $Th_{s1} = 20\text{kN}$
 $Isp_{s1} = 212\text{s}$
Cost ~ \$1M.

Garvey Spacecraft

4. Advanced Concepts for Launch

New Combustion Reactants

- Advanced Propellants/Oxidizers
- Air Breathing Concepts

Onboard, but Separate Energy Storage

- Nuclear Thermal Upper Stage

Beamed Energy

- Solar Thermal Upper Stage
- Laser Booster
- Microwave Booster

Launch Assist

- Gas Dynamic Guns
- Railguns

Mechanical Assistance

- Space Platforms and Towers
- Space Elevator

Breakthrough Physics

Not Covered

- Skyhook
- Space Escalator
- Rotovators
- Orbital Ring
- Launch Loop
- Space Fountain
- Maglev
- Ram Accelerator
- Slingatron

...



Evaluation Technique

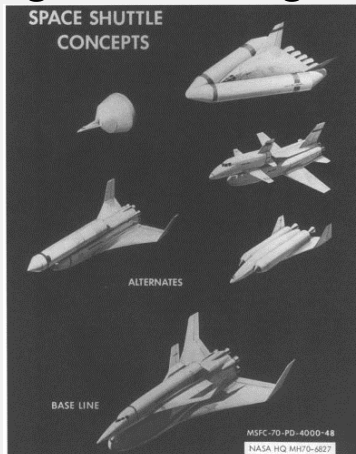


Ideal Process

Concept	Cost	Performance
Rank #1	???	???
Rank #2	???	???

Difficulties

- Large uncertainties.
Uncertainty > Advantage.
- Large changes in designs.



- Rough performance estimates.
- Cost models inadequate.

Practical Process

- Simple, Systematic Evaluation.
 - Fundamental & Rules of Thumb.
 - Subset of Probable & Visible Technologies.
 - Accept Researcher's Estimates.
 1. Technical Feasibility.
 2. Current Status. (*Magnitude of Scaling*).
 3. System Advantage.
 - \$/kg for payload > 500kg
 - \$/kg for payload < 10kg (Nanolaunch)
- Only technical considerations

Technical Feasibility

LTF	:	No	Force	Method
nTF	:	No	Force	Method

Magnitude of Scaling

nMS	:	>100x	10-100x	<10x
LMS	:	>100x	10-100x	<10x

Cost Advantage

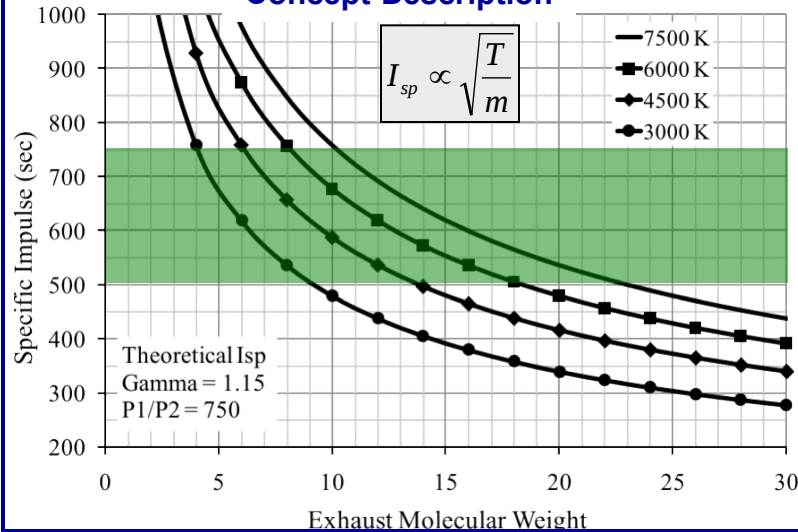
LCA	:	None	Net?	Clear
nCA	:	None	Net?	Clear



Advanced Propellants



Concept Description



Pros

- Higher stored energy.
- Higher reaction temp.
- Higher specific impulse.
- Less fuel.
- More payload or smaller vehicle.
- Fewer stages → SSTO.

Cons

- Low m usually low ρ .
- High E/m less stable.
- Propellant reactivity.
- Much more expensive.
- May need new nozzles.
- Many requirements to meet.

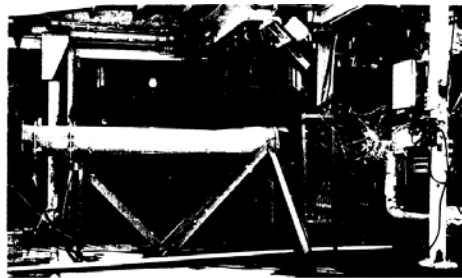
Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

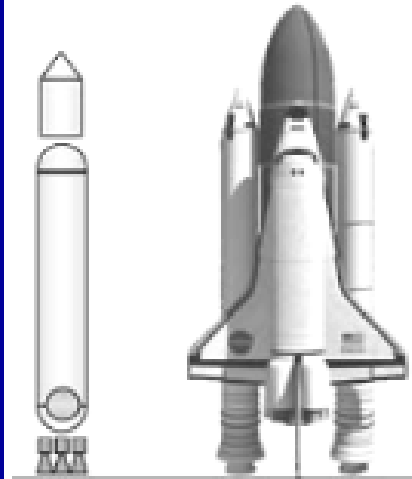
Exemplar Status



Li/F₂/H₂
60:1 Nozzle.
Included Mixing.
Isp = 509s
P_c = 750 psia
Th = 8,896N

Lithium-Fluorine-Hydrogen

Envisioned Design



E/m_{mH} = 138MJ/kg
H₂/mH = 3
Height = 50m
m_{pay} = 25MT
GLOW = 126MT
T_{ch} = 3240K
Isp = 911s

Cole: mH Concept

nTF

nMS

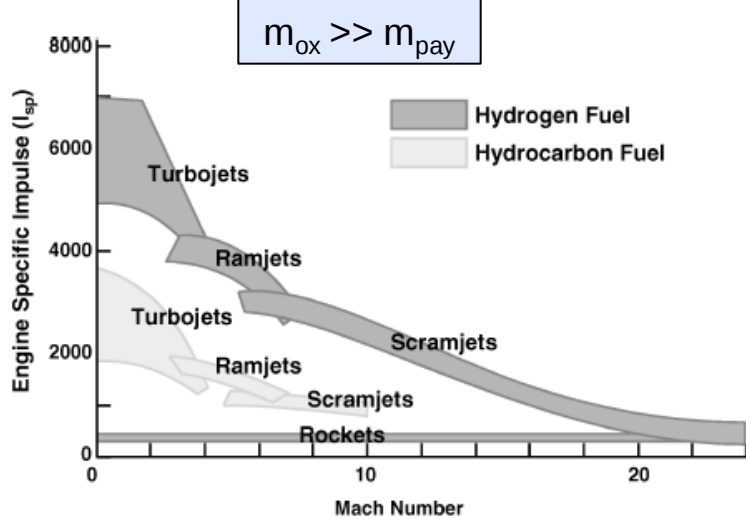
nCA



Air Breathing Concepts



Concept Description



Pros

- Use atmospheric oxidizer.
- Avoid bringing O_2 . (30% for STS).
- More payload or smaller vehicle.
- Advertised as reusable.
- "SSTO"

Cons

- Multiple modes required.
- Flow path integration.
- Ignition/Transition.
- Low Thrust-to-Weight (2 vs. 75)
- Longer flight times.
- Aero-thermal heating.

Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status

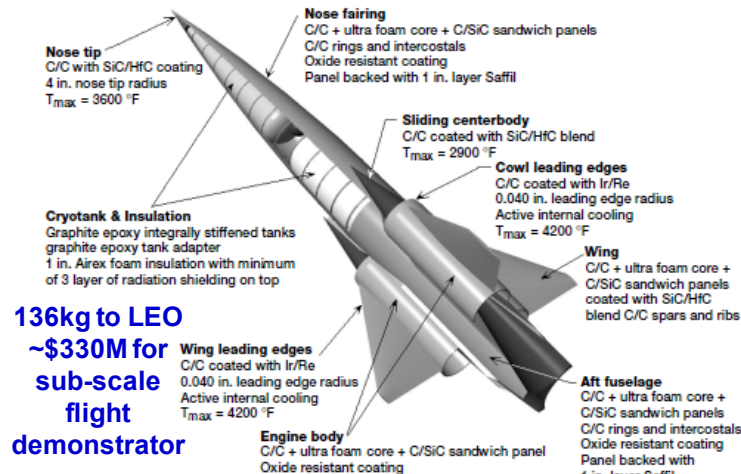


Scramjet

- hydrocarbon
- $h = 15.2\text{km}$
- $M = 4.5 \rightarrow 5$.
- 120 kg of JP-7.
- $\Delta t = 140\text{s}$.
- $L = 7.9\text{m}$.
- $m_{dry} = 1814\text{kg}$.

X-51 WaveRider

Envisioned Design



136kg to LEO
~\$330M for
sub-scale
flight
demonstrator

GTX

nTF

nMS

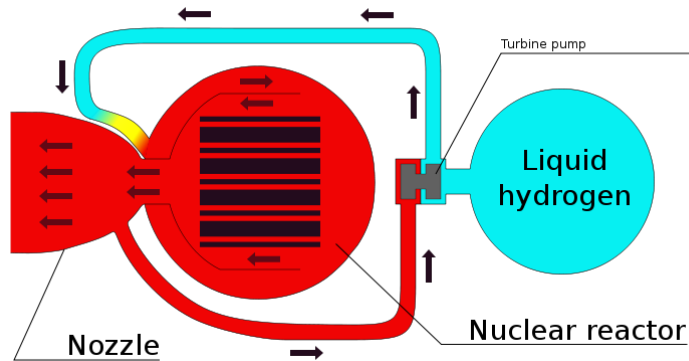
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Propellant: Nuclear

Concept Description

- Fission: 7×10^{13} J/kg
- Fusion: 6×10^{14} J/kg
- $\sim 10^7 - 10^8 >$ chemical



Pros

- Separate energy storage and ejecta.
- Optimized ejecta.
- High Isp
- High T & High Isp upper stage.
- Reduce 1st stage size.
- Enabling for larger interplanetary missions.

Cons

- Inert mass.
- Expensive.
- High T Hydrogen.
- Radioactive Plume.
- Sociopolitical Concerns.

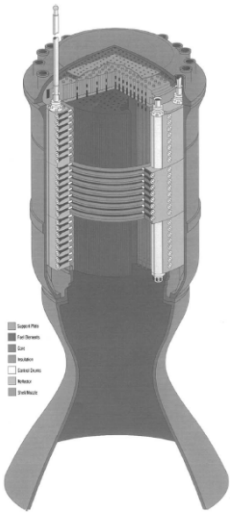
Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status

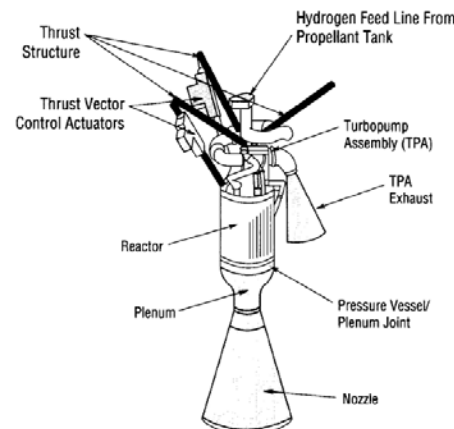


Hexagonal Fuel Elements

Met requirements for manned Mars mission.
Total test time 115 minutes, 24 starts.
Saturn upper stage: 155,000kg to LEO.
Full power test @ 1100MW.
 $T_{\text{core}} = 2272$ K.
25,000 – 250,000lb thrust are validated.

NERVA NRX

Envisioned Design



Pebble Bed

Radioactive Plume
 $\text{Th/W} \sim 25\text{-}35\text{:}1$
 $T_{\text{ex}} = 2750\text{K}$
 $\text{Isp} = 925\text{-}950\text{s}$
 $\text{Th} = 0.2\text{-}0.37\text{MN}$
 $t_{\text{fire}} = 200\text{-}1050\text{s}$

SNTP

nTF

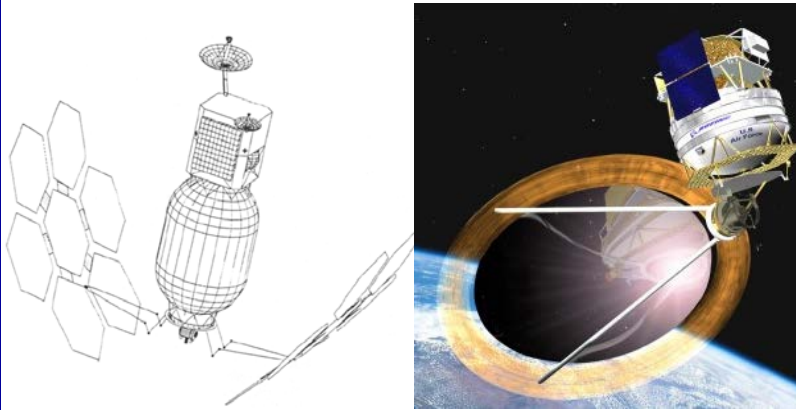
nMS

nCA



Solar Thermal Upper Stage

Concept Description



ISUS → → → SOTV

Pros

- Upper stage: propulsion and power for satellite.
- More responsive than EP.
- Moderate F_{th} , high η .
- Step-down launch vehicle
- Save up to 60% cost.
- Titan IV → Delta III save ~\$200M.
- Low mass power system
- Thermal storage
- No safety/political issues
- Technology proven in ground tests, TRL = 6.

Cons

- High T operation.
- H_2 storage, but methane and ammonia are higher density, lower efficiency options
- 0.1 degree pointing accuracy required
- Temperature change during thruster firing
- May require batteries as well.

Eval.

LTF

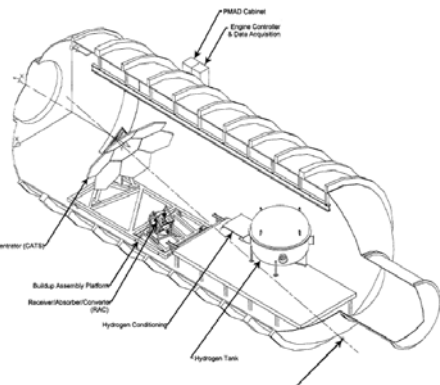
LMS

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Exemplar Status

Full ground test completed in 1997; TRL = 6.

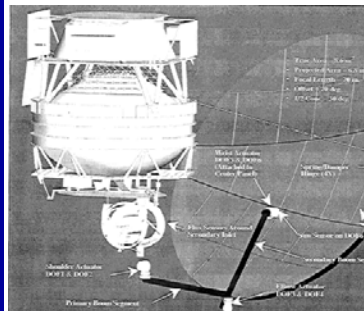
- 117 burns, 2-27 min
- 320 hours RAC at T
- $I_{sp} = 758$ s
- $T_{exhaust} > 2000$ K
- 90% effective heat exchanger



Tested RAC, system for power gen, distribution, & management, solar concentrator, and cryogen feed/storage

ISUS EGD @ NASA LeRC

Envisioned Design



Propulsion, RAC, power systems validated by EGD. Space test planned, 1999...

- Various sizes envisioned
- 14,400 kg, 5000 kg payload
- 160 N @ 800 s I_{sp}
- 30 days LEO – GEO
- 15,000 W @ 100 W/kg thermionics

Uses: Upper stage that stays with satellite, refuelable/reusable stage, move defunct or stranded satellites, delivery to ISS.

nTF

nMS

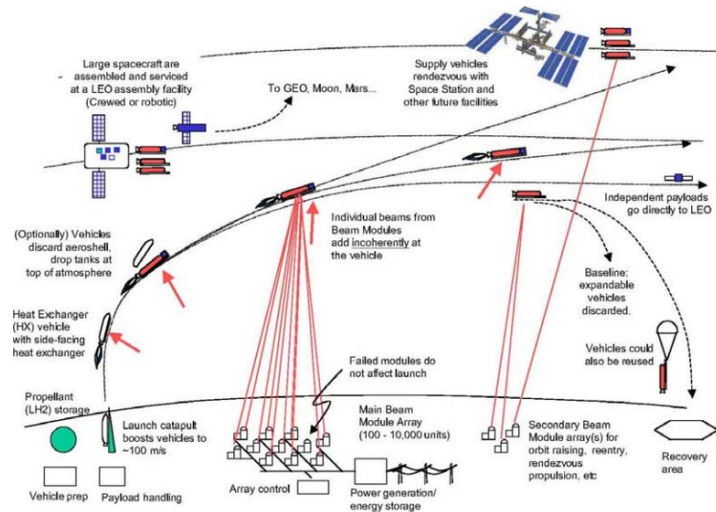
nCA



Beamed Energy Laser



Concept Description



Pros

- Leave energy storage on ground.
- Better optimized ejecta.
- Higher specific impulse.
- Many candidates:
 1. Heat Exchange
 2. Plasma Formation
 3. Laser Ablation
 4. Photon Pressure
- SSTD
- Reusable

Cons

- Low Density Propellant.
- Power Levels
~1MW/1kg in LEO.
- Many Individual Sources.
- High Installation costs.
- Fixed Installation.
- Weather Limited.
- Laser Clearinghouse.
- Aiming/Tracking.

Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

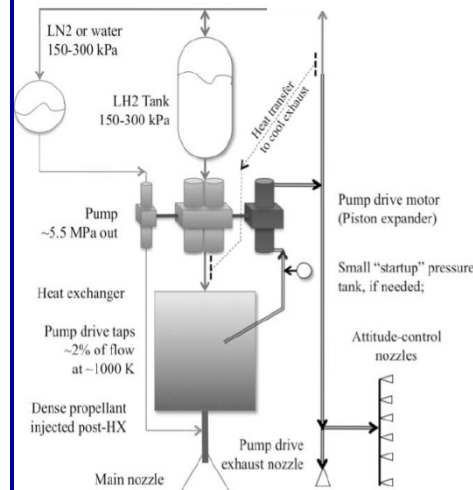
Exemplar Status



10kW Pulsed CO₂ Laser.
 $m = 50.62g$
 $d = 12.2cm.$
 $h = 71m.$
 $spin > 10,000rpm.$
 $\Delta T = 12.7s.$

Lightcraft

Envisioned Design



Multiple 10kw fiber lasers.
120-160MW total laser power.
 $R < 400km.$
 $P/A_{HX} = 10MW/m^2$
 $T_{exit} = 2000K$
 $GLOW = 2800kg.$
 $m_{pay} = 80-100kg.$
System Cost ~ \$2 Billion

HX Laser Launch

nTF

nMS

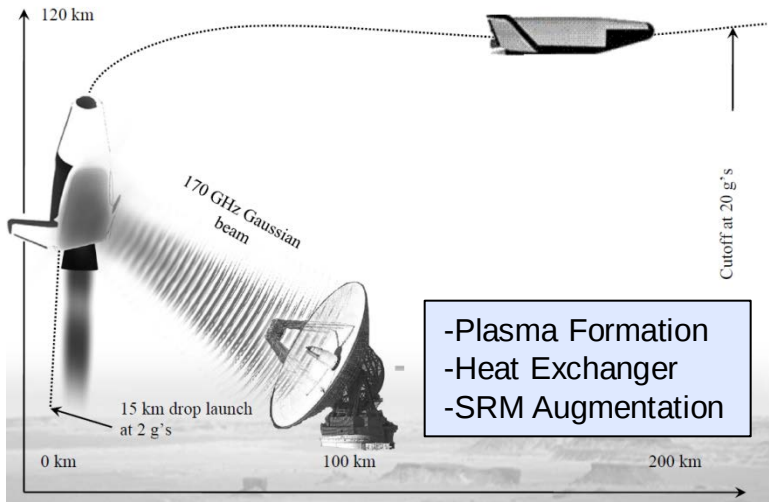
nCA



Beamed Energy Microwaves



Concept Description (Parkin)



Pros

- Mass & Energy on ground.
- Better Optimized Ejecta.
- More Payload.
- Low Consumables Cost.
- SSTO.
- Reusable.
- Thorough System Analysis.

Cons

- Low density propellant.
- Power Levels
~1MW/1kg in LEO.
- High installation cost.
- Fixed installation.
- Many sources required.
- Beam attenuation.
- Weather.

Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

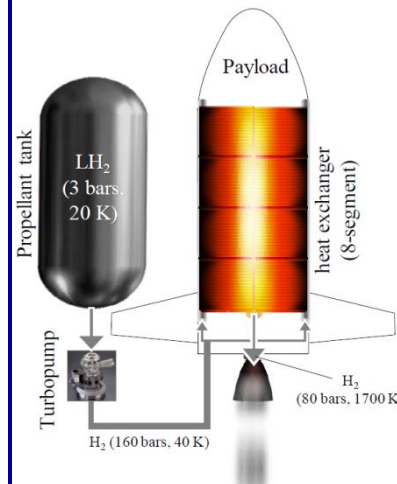
Exemplar Status



$P = 1\text{MW}$
 $f = 110\text{ GHz}$
 $\Delta t = 0.175\text{ms}$
 $C_m = 395\text{ N/MW.}$
 $m = 9.5 - 19.5\text{g}$
 $\Delta x = 30\text{cm}$
 $h < 0.5\text{m}$
 $v_o < 3\text{m/s}$

Oda

Envisioned Design



Propellant: LH₂
 $I_{sp_{vac}}: 800$
 $Th/W: 50$
 $m_{LO}: 636\text{kg}$
 $m_{pay}: 30\text{kg}$
 $HX\text{ size: } 3.3 \times 6.7\text{m}$
 $P_{HX}: 140\text{MW}$
 $f_{mw}: 170\text{ GHz}$
 BF Cost: \$760M

Microwave Thermal Rocket

nTF

nMS

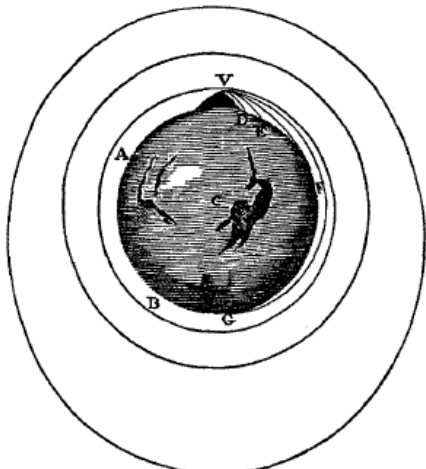
nCA



Launch Assist Gas Dynamic Gun Launch



Concept Description



Newton



Verne

Pros

- Mature technology.
- Mass & Energy on ground.
- Payload mass fractions.
- Low consumables cost.

Cons

- High T,P Operation.
- $a_{peak} \sim 5,000$ gees.
- $V_{max} \sim 3\text{km/s}$
- Fixed installation.
- Aero-thermal Heating.

Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status

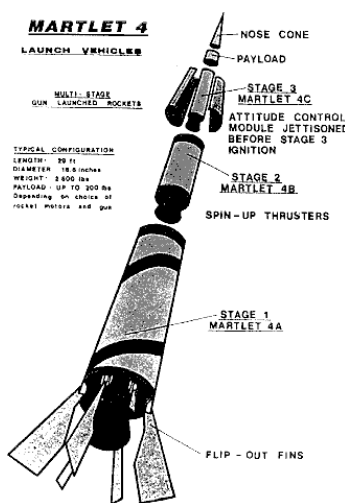
Stage 1: Gas Dynamic Gun
Stage 2: Solid Rocket Motor

- 570 HARP Shots.
- Demonstrated payloads.
- $h \sim 180\text{km}$
- $m \sim 85\text{kg}$
- $V \sim 3.6\text{km/s}$
- $\Delta t_{reload} \sim 1$ hour
- Cost $\sim \$3000/\text{launch}$
- Installation cost: $\$2\text{M}$ (1960s)

- multipoint ignition system.
- fluid filled SRM.

HARP

Envisioned Design



- Gun adequate.
- Martlet improvements.

- $m_{shot} = 1300\text{kg}$
- $m_{pay} = 90\text{kg}$ (LEO)
- $V = 1.2 - 1.8\text{km/s}$
- $a_{peak} = 5,000$ gees.

Project Babylon
2,000kg to 200km
for $\$600/\text{kg}$.

HARP & Martlet 4

nTF

nMS

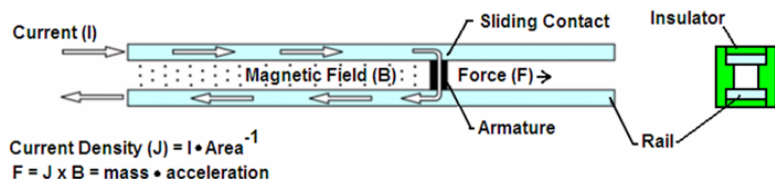
nCA



Launch Assist Railguns



Concept Description



Pros

- Mass & Energy on Ground.
- Increased Payload Fraction
- Low Consumables Cost.
- Fast Cycle Time.

Cons

- High Acceleration.
- High Installation Cost.
- Pulsed Power System Must be Developed.
- Aero-thermal Loads.
- Fixed Installation.
- Harsh Environment.

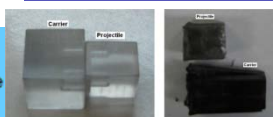
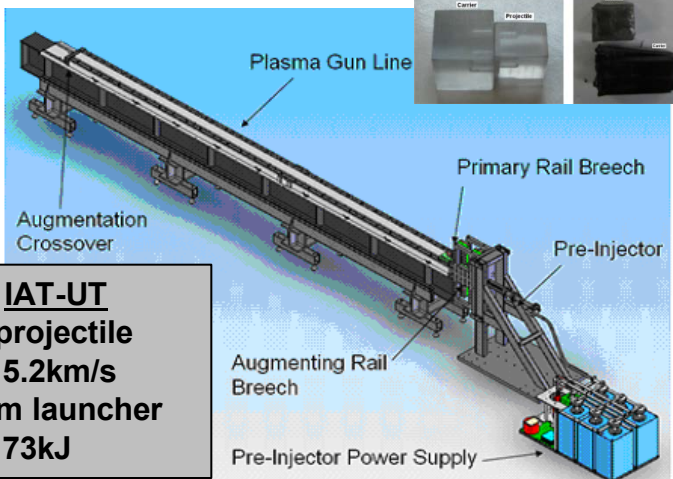
Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status



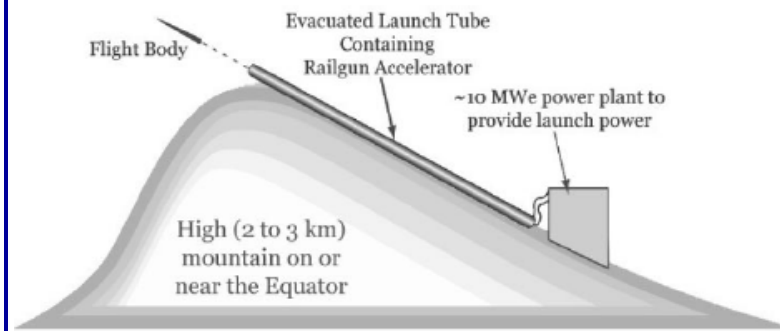
IAT-UT

5.4g projectile
 $V_{ex} = 5.2\text{km/s}$
 $L = 7\text{m}$ launcher
 $E_{ex} = 73\text{kJ}$

IAT-UT

Envisioned Design

• $V > 7.5\text{km/s}$, $E > 10\text{GJ}$, $m_{pay} = 250\text{kg}$, $L > 1\text{km}$,
 System cost $> \$1\text{B}$, 10,000 launches $\rightarrow \$530/\text{kg}$.



IAT-UT

nTF

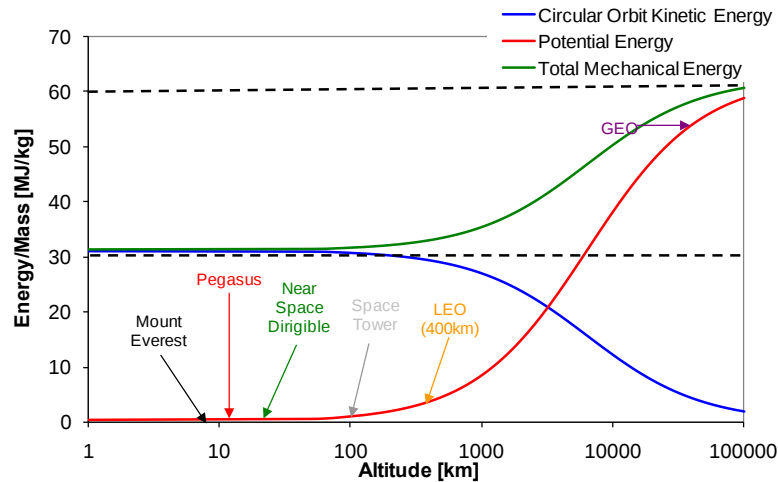
nMS

nCA



Space Platforms and Towers

Concept Description



Pros

- Above atmosphere.
- Above winds.
- Minor ΔV benefit.
- Multiple candidates.
 1. Solid
 2. Inflatable
 3. Electrostatic

Cons

- Extreme materials requirements.
- Must Support Launch Vehicle & Launch.
- Winds/Weather.
- Single Launch Site.

Eval.

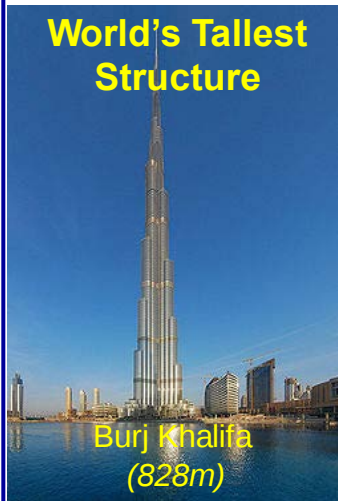
LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status

World's Tallest Structure

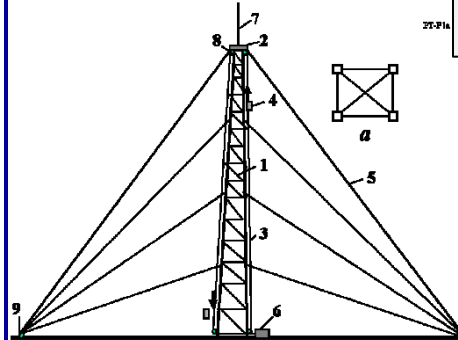


York Univ. (7m)



Envisioned Design

$h = 100\text{km}$
Steel?
 $t_{\text{build}} < 1\text{yr}$
Cost: "cheap"



Bolonkin

nTF

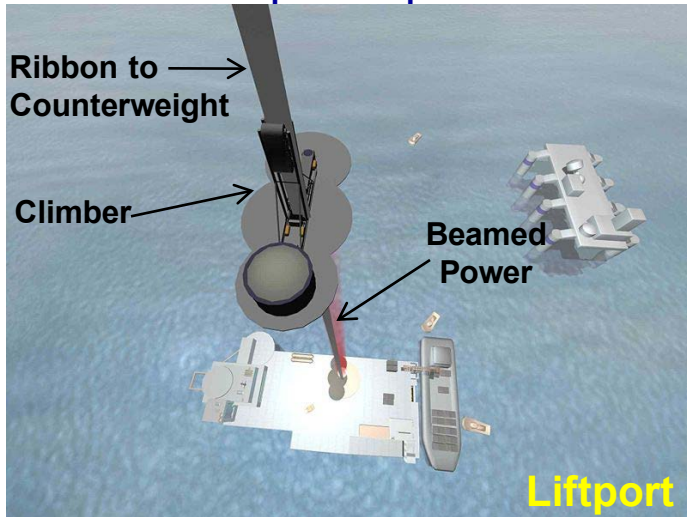
nMS

nCA



Space Elevator

Concept Description



Pros

- No stored energy required.
- No propellant/launch.
- Low consumables.
- Reusable.

Cons

- Long tether.
- $L \sim X \times C_E$
- Tensile Strength (~100GPa)!
- Installation Cost.
- Micrometeoroids/Debris.
- Weather.
- Atomic oxygen.
- Power/Beaming Efficiency.

Eval.

LTF

LMS

LCA

Exemplar Status

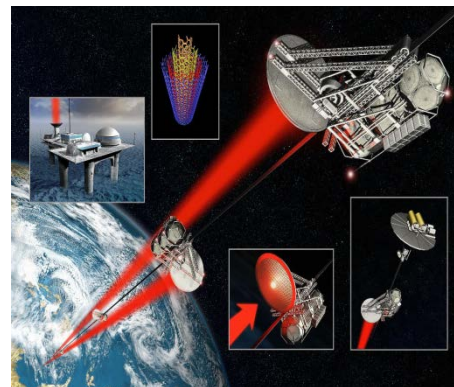


Space Elevator Games

$h = 1\text{km}$
 $v_{cl} = 2\text{m/s}$
 $\eta_{DC-DC} = 10\%$
 $P_{cl} = 1\text{kw.}$

LaserMotive

Envisioned Design



$C_{D\&B} \sim \$10\text{B.}$
 $C_{elec} \sim \$250/\text{kg}$
 $t_{D\&B} = 15\text{ years}$
 1m wide ribbon.
 $T_{climb} = 8\text{days.}$
 $m_{pay} = 11,800\text{kg}$

Brad Edwards

nTF

nMS

nCA

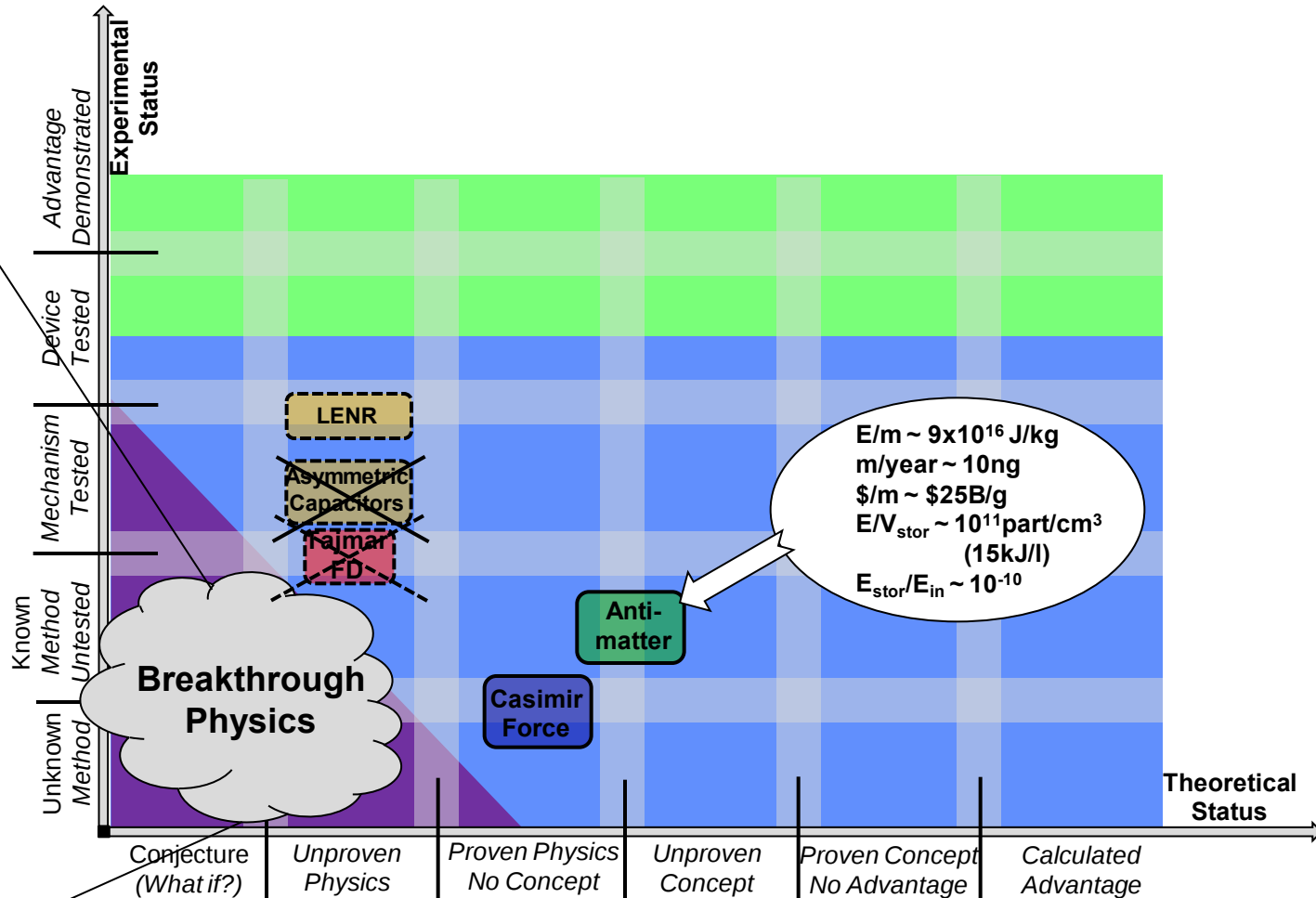


Breakthrough Physics



Millis, 2009

Concepts & Devices	Categories
Modify grav or inertia scalars [3]	Inertia modification [3, 11, 13]
Modify quantum vacuum [3, 4, 12, 13]	
Medley dynamic Casimir effect [10]	Space drive: sails [5, 12]
Woodward Mach-Lorentz thruster [3, 11]	Space drive: fields [3]
Corum DMB & Brink "EMIM" [10]	Negative matter propulsion [3, 4]
Biefeld-Brown [3, 9]	Electromagnetic technology [4, 5, 7, 12]
Oscillators & gyro anti-gravity [10]	Mechanical techniques [6]
Yamashita electrogravitics [7]	Spacetime modification / gravity control [3, 4]
Podkletov gravity shield [3, 5]	Quantum approaches to gravity control [4]
Forward dipole [4]	
Levi-Civita effect [4]	
Negative energy [4, 15]	
Gravitational wave propulsion [4, 9]	
Pinto levitation [7]	
Alzofon anti-grav [4]	
Helm-Lorentz force [4]	
Warp drives & wormholes [12]	
Retrocatal [16]	
Forward Casimir battery [10]	
MEG device [23]	
Nachoson [11]	
Koch voltage fluctuation coils [10]	
Ground state suppression [10]	
Cyclic Casimir [10]	
Shoulders EV energy trapping [10, 20]	
Potapov water swirl chamber [24]	
Sonolum energy harvesting [10]	



- Large Number of Concepts.
- Some May be Useful for Propulsion in the Long Term.
- Nothing Immediately Applicable to Saving \$\$\$.

Distribution A: Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

PA Clearance Number XXXXX



Summary for Launch



Concept	LTF	LMS	LCA	Primary Challenges for Launch	Alternative Mission
Advanced Propellants	Green	Red	Red	Many Requirements, Harsh Conditions, Storage.	---
Air Breathing	Green	Red	Red	Thermal Loads, Time-scales, Th/W.	---
Nuclear Thermal	Green	Green	Yellow	System Mass, Hot Hydrogen	Space Tug
Solar Thermal	Green	Green	Green	Hydrogen Storage, Hot Hydrogen.	Space Tug
Laser	Green	Red	Red	Aiming, Absorbing, Operations.	---
Microwave	Green	Red	Red	Beam Combining, Propagation, μ W conversion.	---
Gun Launch	Green	Yellow	Red	High gees, Power Sources, Aerothermal Loads.	Rapid, Robust Payload
Railgun	Yellow	Red	Red	High gees, Power Sources, Loads, System.	---
Space Platforms	Red	Red	Red	Unfeasible.	---
Space Elevator	Yellow	Red	Red	Materials, O, μ meteoroids, weather, vibrations..	Asteroid Mining
Breakthrough Physics	Black	Black	Black	No known feasible concepts.	---

- Save \$ “Now”**. Solar Thermal Upper Stage.
- Build “Now”**. NTP Upper Stage, Gun Launch.
- Research Now**. BEP (Laser, Microwave), Launch Assist, Adv. Propellants.
- Avoid**. Complexity, Multiple Breakthroughs,
- Alternative Missions**. Space Tug or Rapid Delivery of Robust Payloads.



Summary for nanoLaunch



Concept	NTF	NMS	NCA	Primary Challenges for Launch	Alternative Mission
Advanced Propellants	Green	Yellow	Red	Many Requirements, Harsh Conditions, Storage.	---
Air Breathing	Green	Yellow	Red	Thermal Loads, Time-scales, Th/W.	---
Nuclear Thermal	Green	Red	Red	System Mass, Hot Hydrogen	Space Tug
Solar Thermal	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Hydrogen Storage, Hot Hydrogen.	Space Tug
Laser	Green	Red	Red	Aiming, Absorbing, Operations.	Rapid, Small Payload
Microwave	Green	Red	Red	Beam Combining, Propagation, μ W conversion.	Rapid, Small Payload
Gun Launch	Green	Green	Yellow	High gees, Power Sources, Aerothermal Loads.	Rapid, Robust Payload
Railgun	Green	Yellow	Red	High gees, Power Sources, Loads, System.	Robust, Small Payload
Space Platforms	Red	Red	Red	Unfeasible.	---
Space Elevator	Yellow	Red	Red	Materials, O, μ meteoroids, weather, vibrations..	Asteroid Mining
Breakthrough Physics	Black	Black	Black	No known feasible concepts.	---

- **Save \$ “Now”.** NONE.
- **Build “Now”.** Gun Launch.
- **Research Now.** BEP (Laser, Microwave), Launch Assist, Adv. Propellants.
- **Alternative Missions.** Space Tug or Rapid Delivery of Many Small Payloads.
- **Cubesat Paradigm.** (simple, specs., accepted risk, cheap) must be kept.