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THE ARO SINGLE INVESTIGATOR PROGRAM

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The ARO core investigator program in the area of Propulsion and Energetics (P&E) is designed to allow highly motivated University-based and National Laboratory-based investigators to pursue research on topics of interest to the Army. In general, the P&E program funds stand alone projects for 3-year duration, providing research funds in the vicinity of \$100K/year. For FY06, there are 15 individual research projects, 12 of which will be represented at the ARO/AFOSR contractors meeting.

As Army needs and interests change, so too do the research topics represented within the single investigator program. Recently, we have seen a partitioning of resources used to fund programs within P&E. Overall, energetic materials (e.g., explosives) research has shifted in the direction of MURI (Multi-University Research Initiative) funding, while research into combustion of hydrocarbon-based fuels is the topic of most single investigator programs. For FY06, approximately 80% of the single investigator programs address some aspect of hydrocarbon fuels combustion.

Although difficult to predict, we are now seeing the direction of research in the single investigator program within the P&E program move towards investigations of synthetic fuels (non-boiling fraction-derived), towards predicting behavior of new fuels in modern, highly efficient combustors, and towards fuels formulation that is fully science-based. The P&E program is well suited to these tasks.

Finally, the P&E program today is the product of the efforts of Dr. David Mann. His influence on the program extends to each researcher, and will continue for many years. The directions of the program, and the abilities of the program to combine cutting edge science with topical Army needs, are due to his stewardship.