

GLAST User's Group (GUG)

Telecon

August 9, 2007

Present on telecon:

User's Group Members: Josh Grindlay (Chair), Matthew Baring, Wim Hermsen, Buell Jannuzi, Don Kniffen, Henric Krawczynski, Scott Ransom, Ann Wehrle

Ex Officio Members: David Band, Lynn Cominsky, Neil Gehrels, Rick Harnden, Julie McEnery Peter Michelson, Steve Ritz, Chris Shrader

Colleagues: Sandy Barnes, Al Vernacchio

Meeting called to order at 1130 EDT. After Introductions and brief comments by Josh, Steve suggested we begin with a Project Report by Al since he (Al) had to leave soon for another meeting.

Project Report (Al Vernacchio)—Testing of the GLAST observatory is going well. A few issues have cropped up, but none are major. Dynamic testing begins tomorrow, and will continue into September. The schedule is tight, particularly as a result of a conflict with a Defense Department spacecraft for the General Dynamics thermal-vac chamber; GLAST can't get into the chamber until mid-October or later. Alternatives are being pursued aggressively, particularly at NRL, but will be relevant only if the chamber is not vacated by mid-October. Recovery of schedule without undue additional risk is also being studied.

The model of the GLAST reaction wheel has failed in other missions (e.g. FUSE and TIMED). The GLAST project is following the progress of the NASA Tiger Team studying the problem. The qualification process involves single axis testing, but on launch there are multi-axis loads which might have conspired in an unusual manner to cause limited lifetime. The GLAST project is carefully re-evaluating the testing and launch loads. Dampers may be necessary to accommodate the main engine cutoff loads. The GLAST spacecraft has four wheels, and can run on three. The GLAST project is considering operations without wheels, and methods to reduce the wear on the wheels (e.g., fewer revolutions during the mission). Replacing the wheels is not feasible. The GLAST project is confident that ground testing will not damage the wheels. Of 18 flying reaction wheels of this model, 6 have had anomalies and four have failed; the onset of failure is preceded by increased wheel currents. Of the six, the earliest failure occurred after a number of wheel revolutions that corresponds to approximately five years of GLAST operations. This topic will be presented in greater detail at the GUG's September 17 meeting.

Mission overview (Steve)—The Boston workshop was very successful, with attendance over 75 persons; another one will be held here at GSFC in two weeks. The Symposium proceedings were just received by the registrants only 6 months after the meeting (Rick and others congratulated Steve on the incredibly fast publication). Giselher Lichti has retired, and Joachim Greiner has taken his place as GBM co-PI. Giselher will remain involved in the mission.

News from HQ (Rick)—HQ is fighting for the schedule. The official launch date is still January 31, but a small slip will probably be announced.

LAT News (Peter)—Peter announced that Nancy Hofstader (Robert Hofstadter's widow) passed away.

The collaboration meeting was very successful. The International Finance Committee will be meeting next month in Frascati.

The launch version of the LAT flight software was delivered and installed. It includes the GRB algorithm. The instrument is functioning well during the tests. Approximately 400 hours of muon observations have been accumulated without any CPU resets.

GBM News—Chip is away on vacation.

GSSC and GI Program News (Chris)—Approximately 80 NOIs have been received thus far. David stated that we are not releasing details about the NOIs (e.g., numbers of different types of proposals) to reduce the 'gaming' of the program by proposers. David has been contacting people whose NOIs appear to conflict with the rules of the GI program. The number of NOIs submitted by instrument team members does not appear to be excessive.

The timing of the second GUG beta test of the science tools has not been set but will not coincide with the September meeting. The test may not be a face-to-face session, but instead may involve the GUG and additional testers working with the tools at their home institutions, in a manner that is more like what will actually happen after launch. Even if the beta test is held around the time of launch there will be enough time for changes to be implemented before the tools are released.

The schedule for user workshops and tool testing will be discussed at the next face-to-face meeting.

EPO News (Lynn)—The launch lithograph has been drafted; the question is whether it should be 2 or 4 pages (answer: 4 pages is fine). The GLAST brochure may be reprinted, but needs to be reviewed; Peter volunteered to do this. The GLAST poster will be reprinted, but needs changes (e.g., revision of the logos), and the artwork will be used on the cover of the writers' guide. This ~46 page guide provides information about GLAST for the press. The initial draft will be given to the dozen reporters who attend the media day at GSFC on 9/19 (the day before is an HST workshop). The GUG will be asked to

comment on the draft after it is laid out. A large press run of the guide will be produced for launch, after getting feedback from the media day. Materials are being prepared for the launch bag. The GLAST model has been approved for distribution, and the French have produced a scaled-up version of the model.

Discussion of NOAO MOU (Steve, Buell)—The MOU has been circulated. Josh thinks it looks good. Dan Blackwood (HQ) and David had minor textual issues. Chris asked about using money for optical equipment; Buell says that NOAO supplies the basic hardware but users do receive support for transporting their own detectors to the telescopes. Rick and Steve said the NASA HQ’s policy on what expenditures can be supported will be discussed.

The NOAO Users’ Committee asked about the other joint programs’ use of NOAO time. Buell provided them with statistics; most of the other joint programs do not use their full allocation. Many members of the NOAO Users’ Committee are traveling, slowing the approval of the joint program with GLAST.

Currently joint proposals are permitted only 4 pages, which Josh pointed out is inconsistent with other missions (e.g. Chandra, for which 6 pages are allowed); the GUG would like to increase this to 6 pages for the second cycle.

The first NOAO observations resulting from the joint program could be scheduled as early as Feb. 1.

Buell suggested that we set up a cutoff date for the NOAO approval of the joint program for inclusion in Cycle 1. The GUG set Friday, August 17, as the deadline.

If the program is approved for Cycle 1, then we need to make a splash. For example, everyone who submitted a NOI should be notified. If approved early enough, the program could be announced in an NOAO list of observing opportunities.

Update on GLAST Fellows Planning (Steve)—Steve and Don need to finalize the details of the fellows opportunity announcement based on the input they have received; the announcement must be released in September.

AI Items Discussion—postponed

Brief Report on Swift-GLAST Overlap (David)—postponed

The next face-to-face GUG meeting is Monday, September 17, at GSFC. It will be a full day starting at 8:30 am.

Adjourned 12:40 pm.



DRAFT Agenda

GUG Telecon Thurs. Aug. 9, 2007, 1130-1230 EDT

1130 Introductions (please announce yourself as you are connected if you join telecon after ~1132.

1132 Telecon goals (brief comments) - Josh

1135 News from HQ - Rick

1140 Update on mission overview - Steve

1150 LAT news - Peter
[Chip on vacation; no GBM news]

1155 GSSC and GI Program news - David, Chris
-NOIs for cycle 1 received
-Report on Helpdesk
-News on software planning and tools

1205 EPO news - Lynn

1210 Discussion of NOAO MOU - Steve, Buell

1220 Update on GLAST Fellows planning - Steve and Fellows Comm.

1225 AI items discussion
-AI45 proposal check list (closed)
-AI49 GBM projects' status in GI program

1230 Brief report on Swift-GLAST overlap - David

1235 Adjourn