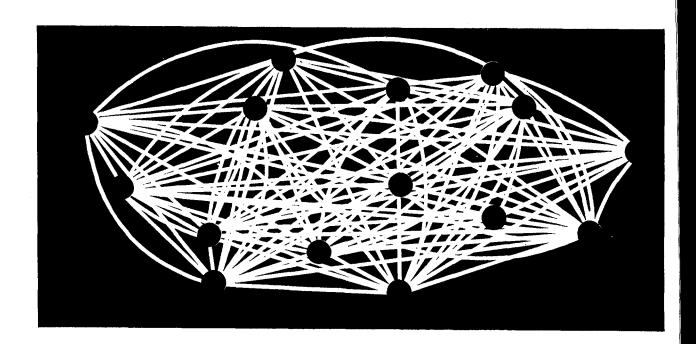
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GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

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NATIONAL AERONAUTIOS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

BACKGROUND



THE MANNED SPACE FLIGHT NETWORK FOR APOLLO

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MSFN - THE APOLLO GROUND NETWORK

The Apollo network, currently consisting of fourteen ground stations, four instrumented ships and eight instrumented aircraft, provides the data link between the manned spacecraft and the control center. The network was developed by the Goddard Space Flight Center under the overall direction of the Associate Administrator for Tracking and Data Acquisition, NASA Headquarters, to meet requirements of the Office of Manned Space Flight (Headquarters) and the Manned Spacecraft Center, Houston, Texas.

Although the design of the Apollo network followed closely behind the modification of the Mercury network for the Gemini program, many site modifications were necessary to provide Apollo support due to the greater scope of the Apollo program. The Apollo program requires instrumentation for support of the S-I, S-II, S-IVB/IU, command Service Module (CSM), and Lunar Module (LM) stages. Support must also be provided at both orbital and lunar distances. Increased data processing capability was required for processing and displaying significantly Larger amounts of information. The ground network requires the capability of processing both Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) telemetry and command data for the CSM, LM, and S-IVB/IU.

MISSION CONTROL AND TRACKING

In support of Apollo, as in Gemini, the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center is responsible for the overall operation of the NASA Manned Space Flight Network (MSFN). For Apollo there will be fourteen land stations and four ships providing one or more of the following real time functions for flight control purposes:

- 1. telemetry reception and decommunitation,
- 2. tracking,
- 3. commanding, and
- 4. voice communications with the spacecraft.

In addition to the MSFN land stations and ships there are several network aircraft in each of the prime recovery areas to provide a voice relay between the spacecraft and MSFN during the landing phase.

MISSION CONTROL CENTER - HOUSTON (MCC-H)

The Mission Control Center at the Manned Spacecraft

Center in Houston is the focal point for all Apollo flight

control activities. In performing the control function, and

dstermining the progress of the flight, the MCC-H receives

tracking and telemetry data from the MSFN. This data is

processed through the MCC-H Real Time Computer Complex

(RTCC) and used to drive displays for the flight

controllers and engineers in the Mission Operations Control Room and Staff Support rooms. In addition to receiving data from the tracking and telemetry systems, the MCC-H flight controllers are able to obtain verbal information concerning the flight by talking to the astronauts via the voice relay facilities at the sites. Real time spacecraft television will be received at the MCC-H from the network's MILA (Merritt Island Launch Area) site at Cape Kennedy & Corpus Christi, Tex.

NETWORK SUPPORT TEAM

The team mans the various communications positions at the Manned Space Flight Operations Center (MSFNOC). The NST is comprised of technical and operational personnel required by the Network Director, Network Operations Manager (NOM) and the Network Controller (NC) to operate the MSFNOC, assist in controlling the MSFN, and coordinating its activities.

The NST is responsible to ensure that all MSFN communications is coordinated in a business-like manner. The team provides the Network Operations Manager and/or Network Controller with the necessary technical assistance required to effectively control and coordinate the MSFN and its activities. The NST is also responsible for communicating with external facilities for assistance not available in-house.

NASCOM NETWORK FACILITIES

The NASCOM network consists of several systems of diversely routed communications channels leased from various domestic and foreign communications common carriers on a worldwide basis.

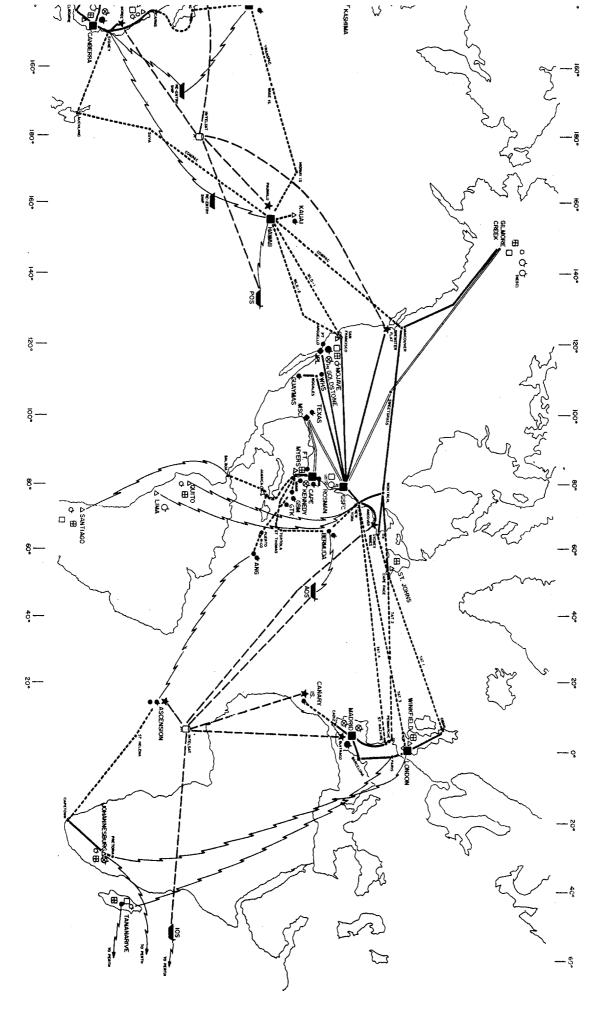
These channels are leased in landlines, submarine cables, and communications satellites wherever available, and in hf radio facilities where necessary to provide the access links.

The system consists of both narrow and wideband channels, and some TV channels. Included are a variety of telegraph, voice, and data systems (digital and analog) with a wide range of digital data rates. Wideband and TV systems do not presently extend overseas. To the extent possible, channels are diversified on routes available to minimize system degradation in the event of communications outages, and in instances where necessary, alternate routes or redundancy is provided to meet reliability criteria for critical mission operations.

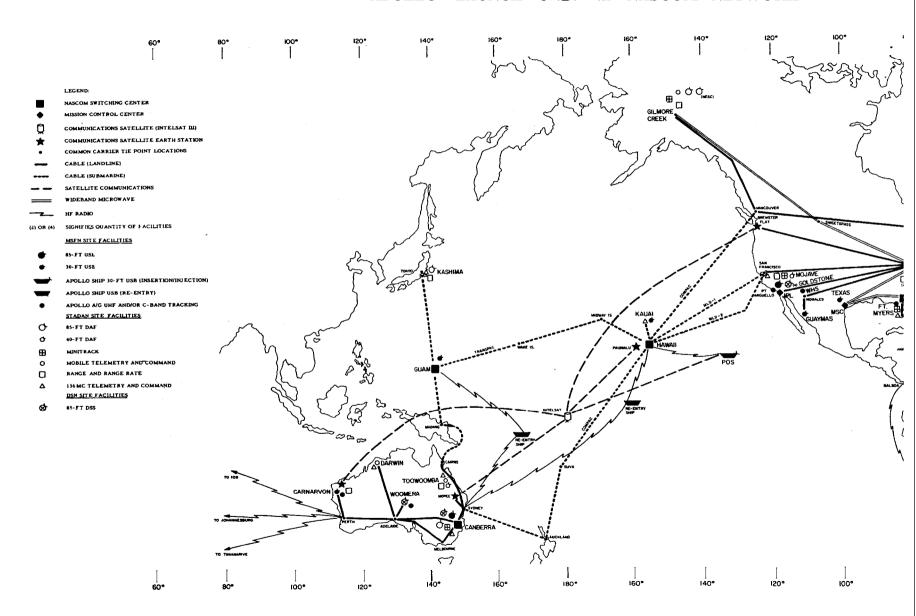
A primary switching center and intermediate switching and control points are established to provide centralized facility and technical control, and switching operations under direct NASA control. The primary switching center is at GSFC, Greenbelt, Maryland, and intermediate switching centers are located at Canberra, Madrid, London, Honolulu, Guam, and Cape Kennedy.

Attached map illustrates approximate geographic locations and ident'ifies the type of long-haul common carrier facilities; important cable and communications satellite tie points used on the major portion of the NASCOM network.

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APOLLO LAUNCH/ORBITAL NASCOM NETWORK



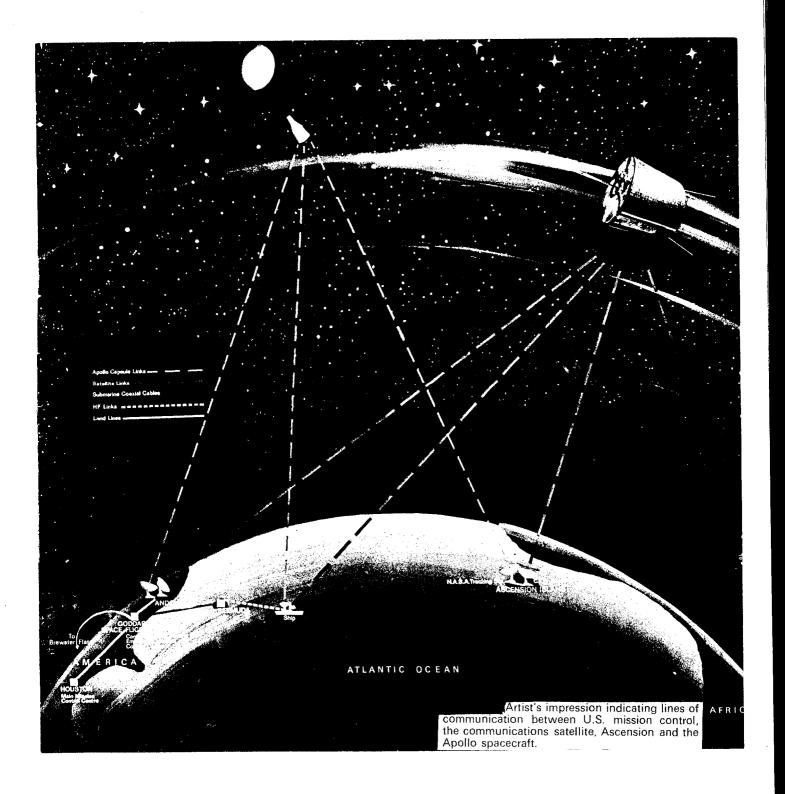
For a typical Apollo launch, Cape Kennedy is connected directly to the Mission Control Center, Houston, by NASCOM's Apollo Launch Data System, a combination of data gathering and transmission systems designed to handle launch data exclusively. A high speed data (2400 bit per second) line connects the Cape to Goddard. At Goddard the transmission rate is increased to 40,800 per second rate from there to Houston.

Once launch is achieved, all network and tracking data is directed to the Mission Control Center, Houston, through Goddard. Upon orbital insertion, tracking responsibility is transferred between the various stations as the spacecraft circles the earth.

There are two Apollo (Intelsat) communications satellites.

One is positioned over the Atlantic Ocean in an equatorial orbit varying approximately six degrees between North and South latitude and six degrees West longitude. The Atlantic satellite will service the Apollo Indian Ocean ship, Ascension Island USB station, the Atlantic Ocean ship, and the Canary Island site.

Only two of these four stations will be transmitting information back to Goddard at any one time; however, all four stations will have the capability of receiving information at



all times. During launch, for example, the NASCOM connects with the Apollo Atlantic Ocean ship or will shift to the Ascension Island USB site. For the next revolution, Canary Island and the Indian Ocean ship, or some suitable combination is arranged to achieve the best coverage. During these events, realtime communications (no delay) switching is required.

The second Apollo COMSAT is located at approximately 170 degrees east longitude over the Mid-Pacific near the intersection of the equator and the international dateline. It will service the Carnarvon, West Australian USB site and the Pacific Ocean ship. Both of these stations will be able to transmit simultaneously through the satellite to Houston via Brewster Flat, Washington, and the Goddard Space Flight Center.

Thirty-nine (UNIVAC 642B) Computers, key components in the globe-encompassing NASCOM network, accept records, and - in critical cases - transmits data originating from the spacecraft ("down" data), computes and transmits commands to the Apollo capsule ("up" data).

A great many more peripheral devices - magnetic tape units, input/output consoles, Teletypewriters, keyboard units, etc. - are included in the "NASCOM" (NASA Communications Net-work).

COMPUTERS AT WORK

At fraction-of-a-second intervals, the network's digital data processing systems, with NASA's Manned Spacecraft Center at Houston, Texas, as the focal point, "talk" to each other or to the astronauts in real-time (without noticeable time loss). High speed computers at the remote sites (tracking ships included) issue commands or "up" data on such matters as control of cabin pressure, orbital guidance commands, or "go-no-go" indications to perform certain functions.

In the case of information originating from Houston, the computers refer to their pre-programmed information for validity before transmitting the required data to the capsule.

Such "up" information is communicated by ultra-high frequency radio at a rate of about *2,000 bits per second. communication between remote ground sites, via high-speed communications links, occurs at about the same rate. Houston reads information from these ground sites at a rate of 2,000 bits per second, as well as from remote sites at about 100 words per minute.

The computer systems perform many other functions, including:

.Assuring the quality of the transmission lines by

^{*} Four bits equal one digit (Binary 1-9). According to prearranged data format, any variation of 600 digits/sec of information may be moved.

continually exercising data paths.

*Verifying accuracy of the messages by redundant (repetitive) operations.

'Constantly updating the flight status.

In the case of "down" data, sensors built into the space-craft continually sample cabin temperature, altitude of the capsule, or such physical traits of the astronauts as heart beat and respiration. Such data is transmitted to the ground stations at a rate of 51.2 kilobits (12,800 binary digits) per second.

The computers will then:

'Detect and select changes or deviations, compare with their stored programs, and generate the problem areas or pertinent data to the flight controllers.

'Provide continual display to cognizant personnel.

'Assemble output data in proper formats.

·Log data on magnetic tape for replay.

-Provide storage for "on-call" display for the flight controllers.

'Keep time.

Twelve land stations are outfitted with computer systems to relay telemetry and command information between Houston and Apollo spacecraft: Canberra, Australia: Guam; Kauai, Hawaii; Goldstone, California: Corpus Christie, Texas; Cape Kennedy: Grand Bahama Island: Bermuda; Madrid, Spain: Antigua; Grand Canary Island; and Ascension Island.

At various stages both USB and VHF telemetry links are required. To provide support for the Apollo program, many significant changes have been made to the network systems:

- 1. Unified S-Band system combines the functions of acquisition, telemetry, command, voice, and tracking on one radio link. The use of this system increases the data processing task, but reduces the number of required antenna mounts, transmitters; receivers, etc.
- 2. Stored program PCM telemetry decommutators were installed to provide increased data handling capability and flexibility.
- 3. Computer-driven (alpha numeric) displays were selected to provide a greater operational and decision-making capability to flight directors. This system permits the display of printed information and charts of real-time data on a cathode ray tube.

- 4. A general purpose data processing system utilizing
 Univac 642B computers is provided at each site to
 drive displays, process telemetry, command and
 teletype data and to select and format data for
 transmission to the Houston, Texas control center.

 This system processes and stores command data
 received from the control center for delayed
 transmission to the spacecraft. The data processing
 system at each site is connected to the Houston tenter by high speed data circuits. This feature
 provides the control center with the capability
 of remotely changing data parameters being
 transmitted to the control center and the capability of remotely up-linking data to the spacecraft.
- 5. Other miscellaneous systems added to the network for Apollo support include: TV monitors, high speed printers, stored program PCM simulators, VHF predetection (diversity combining) receivers and wide band recorders.

Maximum flexibility, through modularity of design, and high reliability, through selected systems redundancy and

the was of solid state directive were considered important factors in the design of network equipment.

Planned redundancy was provided in systems design to improve reliability. Expansion and rapid configuration capabilities were also designed into the major equipment. Most modifications to the network due to differences in mission profiles can be made by software change rather than hardware modifications. Programmable units include the computers, PCM decommutators, console computer incellace adapter, and the display system. Flexibility of design in network systems will enable the network to support a great variety of future missions.

APOLLO TV SYSTEM

The Apollo television link as currently planned will serve a twofold purpose. First, it will permit visual observation and confirmation of astronaut activities by ground control: secondly, it will enable selected portions of these televised activities to be distributed to the commercial networks for public viewing, pending release approval by NASA.

The television signals are transmitted from the spacecraft in the Apollo slow scan format, are received at the USB stations and then recorded on magnetic tape. The MILA (Merritt Island Launch Area) and TEXAS (Corpus Christi) sites are equipped with slow scan converters to render it compatible with commercial TV requirements. The signal is then transmitted in real time to the MCC.

THE APOLLO SHIPS

The Manned Space Flight Network (MSFN) has four floating sites. Called the Apollo Instrumentation Ships (AIS), these sites are integral parts of the MSFN, equally important to mission success, and more dynamically equipped than some land stations.

The Apollo space vehicle will be launched on a launch azimuth between 72 and 108 degrees from Cape Kennedy.

There is a point over the earth, fixed with respect to the center of the earth and the center of the moon, at which the spacecraft must be injected into its trajectory to the moon. Since the earth is rotating on its axis under this point in space, the required launch azimuth varies with the time of day and month. On any given day, the launch window (that is, the time interval during which an acceptable launch can be made) should be at least 2-1/2 hours in length; thus, the required launch azimuth may vary over a sector bounded roughly by Bermuda on the north and Antigua on the south.

After the lower (booster) stages of the Saturn have burned out and dropped off, the first powered phase of the S-IVB upper stage "inserts" the Apollo into an earth orbit, known as a parking orbit, at approximately 100 miles altitude. This "insertion" maneuver is one of the crucial phases which must be covered by a tracking station, and since it will occur over the broad ocean area between Bermuda and Antigua, a tracking ship is required to fill the gap not covered by either of these two land stations. This ship must be able to track for an interval of at least three minutes in order to determine the suitability of the orbit for the later injection into translunar trajectory.

Three existing T-2 tanker type hulls were converted for Apollo spacecraft insertion/injection coverage and one C-2 victory ship for earth atmosphere re-entry. Instrumentation requirements for the re-entry ship are less demanding than for the insertion/injection ships, therefore, equipment and other comparable items differ.

Along with surface stations and aircraft, these ships

will serve as links in the Manned Space Flight Network

(MSFN) chain between the Apollo spacecraft and the Manned.

Space Flight Control Center (MCC-H), Houston, Texas.

These ships include Apollo support instrumentation for space data acquisition, communications, tracking, in-flight checkout, command control, telemetry reception, data accumulation, processing, display, and retransmission.

These ships participate in the following mission phases:

- * Coverage of selected areas to maintain contact with
 the spacecraft during critical phases of the mission,
 including periods before, during, and subsequent
 to any crucial decision on the conduct of the mission.
- * Insertion of the spacecraft into a near-earth parking orbit after lift-off, supplementing the land stations with one Atlantic Ocean ship.
- * Parking orbit in-flight checkout to assure spacecraft readiness for lunar trajectory injection, supplementing ground station coverage.

- * Post-injection of the spacecraft into lunar trajectory from a parking orbit until land station coverage, of the lunar trajectory is reached (Indian and Pacific Oceans are to be covered by one ship each).
- * Re-entry using one ship in Pacific Ocean which can make contact before spacecraft return into the earth's atmosphere, and cover spacecraft "skip out" to attain final re-entry coverage.

The ships are operated as an independent unit by civilian Military Sea Transport (MSTS) crews. The instrumentation is operated and maintained by civilian technical crews. These technical crews are trained to NASA specifications and standards, and will operate in accordance with NASA specified procedures in operation, calibration, checkout, maintenance, failure-reporting and modifications control. Goddard is responsible for certifying the mission readiness of these ships as elements of the NASA/MSFN.

During the flight in parking orbit, a complete checkout of the Apollo spacecraft and the s-IVB stage will be accomplished by ships and land stations to assure its readiness for the next powered flight phase, the injection into a lunar trajectory. This checkout is in effect an in-orbit countdown, with telemetry data being transmitted to the ground stations for examination and decisions.

The parking orbit phase will last at least one-half an orbit, and perhaps as long as three orbits, at the end of which the S-IVB engines will be re-ignited to develop the thrust required for injection into the lunar trajectory. Tracking of the spacecraft is required in order to make a go-no-go decision on the mission. This tracking must begin shortly after injection and continue for approximately 75 minutes to provide trajectory data to the degree of accuracy for this decision.

Since the injection phase of flight may occur any—where over that portion of the earth subtended by the path of three parking orbits (with launch azimuth as determined by the time of the launch), the MSFN has been planned to assure the required coverage for tracking and communication. This requires two tracking ships to fill in gaps between land stations in the network. One of these will be in the Wester'n Indian Ocean, the other in the Western Pacific

Ocean. With this coverage, the ground network will impose minimum restraints on launch opportunities for lunar mission. Tracking and communication coverage during the lunar phase of the mission will be accomplished through the 85-foot deep space antennas of the Apollo network and will impose no additional requirements on instrumentation ships.

During the return flight to earth, the Apollo spacecraft will execute the trajectory corrections needed to
attain the proper path for re-entry. Just before re-entry,
the service module which contains the engines for these
corrections is jettisoned. Re-entry into the earth's.
atmosphere is the next critical phase of flight for
which tracking is mandatory. Re-entry will occur some
1,500 to 5,000 miles back from the landing area. Because
the re-entry areas are located over the Western Pacific,
one additional tracking ship is required to cover re-entry
only. Since the requirement for this tracking is not as
stringent as the insertion and injection tracking, the reentry ship requires less instrumentation. Modifications
to an existing ship.

APOLLO RANGE INSTRUMENTATION AIRCRAFT

The Apollo Range Instrumentation Aircraft (ARIA) are a group of eight EC-135A, four engine jet aircraft which are used to supplement land and ship stations in support of Apollo and other programs. Operating in conjunction with the NASCOM network, ARIA provides two-way voice relay between the spacecraft and MCC, receives and records telemetry (TLM) signals from the spacecraft, and transfers this TLM data to a ground station for relay to MCC. The aircraft have no capability for command, tracking, or real time remoting of TLM data.

These functions are performed by 7' steerable antenna,

VHF, S-Band, HF/SSB receivers and transmitters, and recording

and playback equipment. It can automatically track a target

in P-Band or S-Band.

The ARIA is capable of receiving and recording nine links of TLM data in the P and S-Bands.

Transfer of TLM data to a ground station for relay to MCC may be accomplished **if** there is a MSFN station within range.

Low power (0.5 watt) data transfer UHF and VHF transmitters with blade type antennas on the bottom of the aircraft are provided for this p'urpose. The aircraft must be within approximately 175 miles of the station to effect a transfer.

THE GSFC NETWORK TEST AND TRAINING FACILITY

A new engineering and training center (NTTF) has been established at the Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md., incorporating elements of engineering laboratories and training equipments to which the Apollo-unique equipment has been added. The facility is associated with programs of both the Apollo manned space flight and STADAN (Space Tracking and Data Acquisition) networks. Selected personnel are trained in class-room theory and actual remote site equipment for future duty at one of the worldwide sites and MCC-H Training equipment includes:

Unified S-Band (Apollo Unique)

Apollo operations (Apollo Unique)

communications

Telemetry

Teletype communications center

The Center's function forms an important foundation for NASA projects activity and network integrity. If the facility operates below normal efficiency, all stations ultimately suffer. Concentrated effort is therefore sustained toward maintaining competent staffing and a high order of instructional personnel.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Ascension (USB Site) ACN AEM APCU Entry Module **AFETR** Air Force Eastern Test Range A/GAir to Ground AGS Abort Guidance System Apollo Guidance Simulator AGS ALDS Apollo Launch Data System Apollo Launch Trajectory Data Subsystem **ALTDS** AM Amplitude Modulation ANG Antigua (USB Site) ANT Antigua (C-Band Site) AOS Acquisition of Signal APCU Apollo Process Control Unit A REG A Register ARIA Apollo Range, Instrumentation Aircraft ASC Ascension (C-Band Site) **ASCA** Apollo Simulation Control Area Apollo Simulation, Checkout and Training System AS CATS Automatic Send/Receive ASR **A**SRS Apollo Simulated Remote Site AVP Address Verification Pulse **BAPB** Biomedical Analog Fatch Board BDA Bermuda Biomedical Data Analysis and Display System BMDADS CACC Communications and Configuration Console Computer Address Matrix CAM CAP Command Analysis Pattern Countdown and Status Transmission System CASTS Communication, Command and Telemetry System **CCATS** CCC Command Computer Controller CCIA Console Computer Interface Adapter CCMU Computer Controller Multiplexer Unit Computer Display Control Interface Subsystem **CDCIS** Central Data Processor CDPCDSC. Command Distribution Switching Center CEF' Computer Execute Function CIM Computer Input Multiplexer Command Load Acceptance Message CLAM Command Load Controller CLC CLT Communications Line Terminal C/M Communication Multiplexer Command Module Computer CMC Control Monitor and Control Console CMCC CMD Command CMDR Command Recovery Central Processor CP CPCommunications Processor

Central Processing Unit

CPU

Acronyms and Abbreviations (Cont)

PDSDD Plotting Displays Subchannel Data Distribution Phase Modulation PM PR Plotting Register Radio Frequency rf Rose Knot Victor RKV R/R Recorder/Reproducer Remote Site RS RSCC Remote Site Command Computer Remote Site Data Processor **RSDP** Remote Site Telemetry Computer **RSTC** Real Time Accumulators RTA Real Time Computer Complex RTCC Real Time Data Link **RTDL** RTDR Real Time Data Router SALDS Simulated Apollo Launch Data System S/B Switch Board S/C Space Craft SCS Standard Communications Subsystem scu System Configuration Unit SDD Subchannel Data Distributor SLV Saturn Launch Vehicle SMCSystem Monitor Console SMCVG Simulated Memory Character Vector Generator SMK Summary Message Keyboard Start of Message SOM Select Source and Computer Recommendation SSCR System Selector Extension Unit SSEU Slow Speed Interface Adapter SSIA Staff Support Room SSR TDDF Telemetry Data Distribution Frame TDP Tracking Data Processor Telemetry Synchronizer and Serial to Parallel Converter **TESAC** TICC Telemetry Instrumentation Controllers Console TIP Telemetry Input Processor TLMTelemetry Telemetry Output Buffer TOB TTY Teletype TUT Telemetry User Table Universal Command System ucs Updata Buffer UDB UHF Ultra High Frequency Unified S-Band USB VAL Validated Voltage Controlled Oscillator vco V/D Voice/Data VER Verification **VHF** Very High Frequency WB Wide Band WWV-L US Bureau Standards Time Station (Boulder, Colorado)

Acronyms and Abbreviations (Cont)

GSSC Ground Support Simulation Computer Grand Turk Island GTI HF/SSB High Frequency/Single Side Band Huntsville Operation Support Center HOSC HS High Speed **HSA** High Speed Adapter High Speed Data HSD Honeysuckle Creek (USB Station Canberra) HSK **HSP** High Speed Printer High Speed Printer Buffer **HSPB** HSTL High Speed Telemetry Link Identification I/D Input/Output I/O ΙP Impact Predictor IRIG Interrange Instrumentation Group IU Instrument Unit KSC Kennedy Space Center KSC/CIF Kennedy Space Center/Central Instrumentation Facilities Kilowatt Radio Frequency **KWRF** LADC Logic & Data Converter LGC Lunar Guidance Computer LIEF Launch Information Exchange Facility $\mathbf{L}\mathbf{M}$ Lunar Module LOS Loss of Signal LS Low Speed Least'Significant Bit LSB Launch Vehicle Digital Computer LVDC Message Acceptance Pulse MPA MCC Mission Control Center Memory Character Vector Generator MCVG Multichannel Demultiplexer and Distributor **MDD MED** Manual Entry Device MILA (USB Site) MIL Merrit Island MILA MLAMultiplexer Line Adapter Mission Operational Computer MOC Mission Operations Control Room **MOCR** MSB. Most Significant Hit Marshall Space Flight Center MSFC Manned Spaceflight Network MS FN Manual Select Keyboard MSK MSS Most Significant Syllable Magnetic Tape Unit MTU NASCOM NASA Communications Non Validated NONVAL Push Button Indicator PBI **PBT** Polynomial Buffer Terminal Phase Control Keyboard **PCK** Pulse Code Modulation RM

Pulse Duration Modulation

 \mathbf{PM}

Acronyms and Abbreviations (Cont)

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PDSDD
           Plotting Displays Subchannel Data Distribution
PM
           Phase Modulation
PR
           Plotting Register
           Radio Frequency
r f
           Rose Knot Victor
RKV
R/R
           Recorder/Reproducer
RS
           Remote Site
           Remote Site Command Computer
RSCC
RSDP
           Remote Site Data Processor
           Remote Site Telemetry Computer
RSTC
           Real Time Accumulators
RTA
           Real Time Computer Complex
RTCC
           Real Time Data Link
RTDL
           Real Time Data Router
RTDR
SALDS
           Simulated Apollo Launch Data System
S/B
           Switch Board
S/C
           Space Craft
           Standard Communications Subsystem
SCS
scu
           System Configuration Unit
SDD
           Subchannel Data Distributor
SLV
           Saturn Launch Vehicle
SMC
           System Monitor Console
SMCVG
           Simulated Memory Character Vector Generator
           Summary Message Keyboard
SVK
SOM
           Start of Message.
           Select Source and Computer Recommendation
SSCR
           System Selector Extension Unit
SSEU
SSIA
            Slow Speed Interface Adapter
SSR
            Staff Support Room
TDDF
           Telemetry Data Distribution Frame
TDP
            Tracking Data Processor
            Telemetry' Synchronizer and Serial to Parallel Converter
 TESAC
            Telemetry Instrumentation Controllers Console
TICC
TIP
            Telemetry Input Processor
 TLM
            Telemetry
 TOB
            Telemetry Output Buffer
 TTY
            Teletype
            Telemetry User Table
 TUT
            Universal Command System
 ucs
            Updata Buffer
 UDB
 UHF
            Ultra High Frequency
            Unified S-Band
 USB
            Validated
 VAL
 VCO
            Voltage Controlled Oscillator
 V/D
            Voice/Data
 VER
            Verification
 VHF
            Very High Frequency
 WB
            Wide Band
            US Bureau Standards Time Station (Boulder, Colorado)
 WWV-L
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