

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

SOLAR SYSTEM WORKING GROUP

Recommendation on the Austrian participation in

NASA's Magnetospheric Multiscale (MMS) mission

At the 122nd meeting of the Solar System Working Group (SSWG) held on 5 October 2006 at ESA Headquarters, Paris, the SSWG was requested to review and endorse an Austrian participation in hardware for NASA's MMS mission.

The SSWG took note of its previous recommendation (SOL(2002)12) which expressed the strong Europe-wide scientific interest in this mission. It was also noted that, although Cluster and Double Star were already providing multi-spacecraft observations of the Earth's magnetosphere, the different range of inter-spacecraft distances and improved time resolution to be investigated by MMS are a natural continuation of the ESA programme. Furthermore, the SSWG noted that several of MMS's scientific aims also figure prominently in ESA's Cosmic Vision 2015-2025 publication, thus documenting the interest of MMS to the European scientific community.

The SSWG noted that although the Austrian team is only proposing a small part of the instrument payload suite, items such as the ASPOC (a positive ion emitter to control spacecraft potential) are critical to the performance of the whole instrument complement. The instrumentation is expected to provide Austrian scientists with a significant scientific return.

The SSWG therefore endorses this proposal under the condition that funding of instrumentation does not adversely affect Austrian participation in projects for ESA's programme.