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EUROPA II: ELDO TAKES ACTION

The next Europa II development launch, that of F.12,
has been postponed until March 1973 while further testing
and verification are carried out. The decision to delay the
launch was taken at a recent Eldo council meeting follow-
ing presentation of a preliminary report from a commis-sion set up after the F.ll failure last November to review the entire Europa II project.
The report points out that no definite statement on the failure nor on remedial action is possible before the com-mission submits its final report in May. It was able to say that it had found the individual stages to be, in general, satisfactorily designed and manufactured. It considers, however, that "it is apparent that improvements are necessary in the vehicle as regards both definition and integration."
The report confirms the effect of restricted Eldo con-trol in the past and, as a result, immediate moves are to be taken to amend the situation. It was decided at the meeting to reorganise the Eldo Secretariat internally and to alter radically the relation of the secretariat with industry.
The reorganisation is intended to reduce the number of separate services and increase the authority of project managers, pending an overall structure reform in April. All Europa II technical services have been brought under M G. Chauvallon of France, including the responsibilities of Brig Abate of the UK, who is leaving Eldo later this year but who was project manager for the test programme. M I. Sillard, also of France, has been given responsibility for Europa III, the definition phase of which is to be completed by the end of this month. Herr A. Spaeth of Germany takes control of technical studies, including those on post-Apollo.
It was also decided to set up a launch team, giving Eldo direct supervision and control of industrial launch teams for vehicle integration and check-out.
Most significant, however, is the resolution to obtain unquestioned authority over the work of manufacturers. It was therefore resolved to take immediate control of contracts now in force under member states, giving the secretariat complete authority over the prime contractors for the four stages. Responsibility of prime-contractor for the German-built third stage was to be given to Asat alone. Eldo believes that these moves will themselves over-come the major defficiencies of the organisation. Although this is something of a "stable door" action, it is thought that redefinition of some of the systems and integration methods may improve the situation and it is for this reason that the F.12 launch has been postponed until 1973.

APOLLO 17 DESTINATION

The final Apollo Moon-landing mission, Apollo 17, is to visit an area between the Taurus Mountains and the nearby Littrow Crater. The site lies just beyond the south-east edge of the Sea of Serenity in the upper right-hand area of the front side of the Moon (lunar co-ordinates 20°N, 30°E).
In announcing the selection, Nasa said that Taurus-Littrow is expected to yield ash produced by volcanic activity in the latter part of the lunar volcanic period. The adjacent mountains may provide material which is older than and of different composition from that obtained by the Apollo 14 and 15 missions. The seas are believed to have filled with lava about 3,700 million years ago, or about 800 million years after the estimated date of the origin of the Moon. This period also represents a gap in Man's knowledge of the Moon, which it is hoped that Apollo 17 will fill.
Launch date is December 6, 1972. The launch is scheduled for 9.38 p.m. local time (0238 GMT, Decem-

The flight model of the Skylab airlock module which has recently completed mating with the multiple-docking adapter is shown below
in the McDonnell Douglas clean room. during final check-out. The module, 17ft long, 10.5ft in diameter'and weighing 49,0001b, provides
a pressurised passageway between the MDA and the Skylab workshop

ber 7). As a result the mission will be the first to be launched after dark. Mission commander is Capt Eugene Cernan, with Dr Harrison Schmitt as lunar-module pilot and Cdr Ronald Evans as command-module pilot.

APOLLO 15 SUB-SATELLITE FAILURE

An apparent failure of an electronics component aboard the Apollo 15 particles and fields sub-satellite has cut off transmission of a major portion of data from two of the three scientific experiments. The $1-6 million satellite, ejected into Moon orbit from the Apollo 15 service module on August 4, 1971, was to have had a design life-time of one year.
Nasa has announced that the failure occurred on Feb-ruary 3 after only six months' operation and that engineers have been unable to restore the two crucial paths which handle the magnetometer and particles experiments' data. A second sub-satellite is to be placed in lunar orbit by Apollo 16.

CESAR TO DEVELOP COS-B

The Cesar consortium has been awarded a £9 million (DM75 million) contract by Esro to build the Cos-B scienti-fic satellite. The contract, effective since January 1, calls for the 6181b satellite to be ready for launch on September 1, 1974. The satellite will carry five experiments to study cosmic rays. The British Aircraft Corporation is to build £2 million-worth of subsystems. Other participants include Casa (Spain), ETCA (Belgium), Aerospatiale (France) and Selenia (Italy).

JAPANESE SPACE BUDGET

The Japanese space budget for financial year 1972 of Y24,080 million represents an increase of 55 per cent over the Y15,451 million total for 1971. The budget was incor-rectly reported in Flight for February 3 as treble a 1971 figure of Y8,630 million.