

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office Work Instruction

Responding to Congressional Correspondence

Original Approved by: s/_____

Ed Heffernan
Associate Administrator
Office of Legislative Affairs

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to document the process for responding to written inquiries from Members of Congress.

2. Scope and Applicability

- 2.1 This OWI covers the process by which the NASA Headquarters Office of Legislative Affairs (Code L) ensures that written correspondence from Members of Congress receive written responses which are well prepared and reflect NASA policy. The scope of this OWI applies to all correspondence from Congress, regardless of to whom it is addressed, with the exceptions noted in NPG 1450.4, Handling Congressional Correspondence and Information Concerning Congressional Activities. It does not include requests for materials resulting from attendance of NASA officials at Congressional hearings (See HOWI1311-L004, "Post Hearing Activities").

3. Definitions

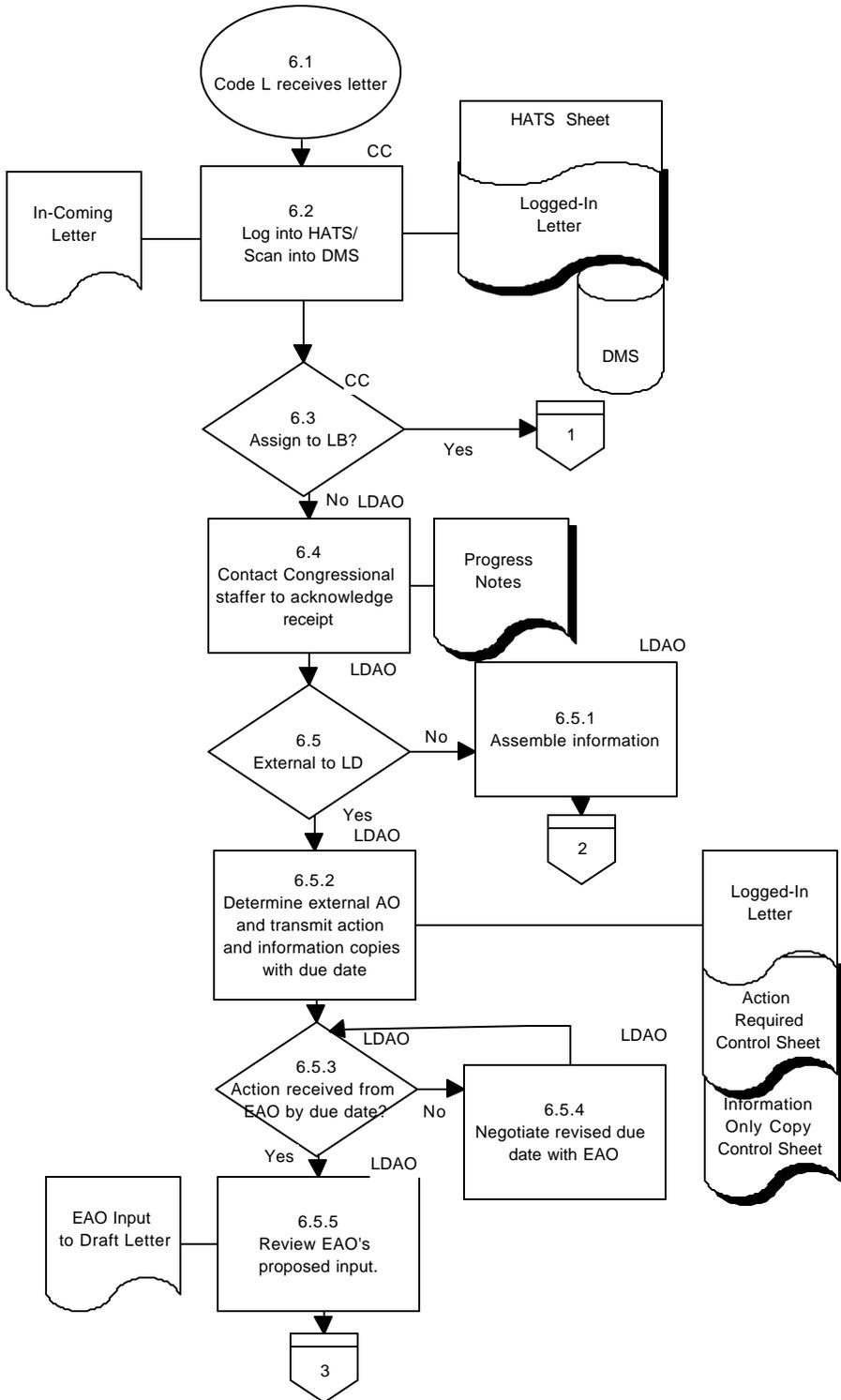
- 3.1 AA: Associate Administrator (Office of Legislative Affairs)
- 3.2 ADS: Action Document Summary (NHQ Form 117)
- 3.3 AO: Action Officer
- 3.4 Case File: File which includes all documents pertinent to a case. These are not necessarily all quality records for purposes of this OWI.
- 3.5 CC: Correspondence Clerk (Position Description is Program Support Assistant)
- 3.6 Code B: Office of the Comptroller
- 3.7 Code CIC: Headquarters Correspondence Management Office
- 3.8 Code L: NASA Office of Legislative Affairs
- 3.9 Code LB: Liaison Division
- 3.10 Code LD: Congressional Inquiries Division
- 3.11 Code LD Log: Log kept by Code LD secretary in which she records when a letter is sent to the AA for signature and when response is mailed out (Appendix D)
- 3.12 DMS: Document Management System (Code L)
- 3.13 EAO: External Action Officer (outside of the Office of Legislative Affairs)
- 3.14 ECC: Electronic Carbon Copy (Electronic mail version of correspondence)
- 3.15 E-mail: Electronic Mail
- 3.16 HATS: Headquarters Action Tracking System
- 3.17 LBAO: Action Officer from the Liaison Division (Position Description is Legislative Affairs Specialist)
- 3.18 LBDD: Division Director, Liaison Division

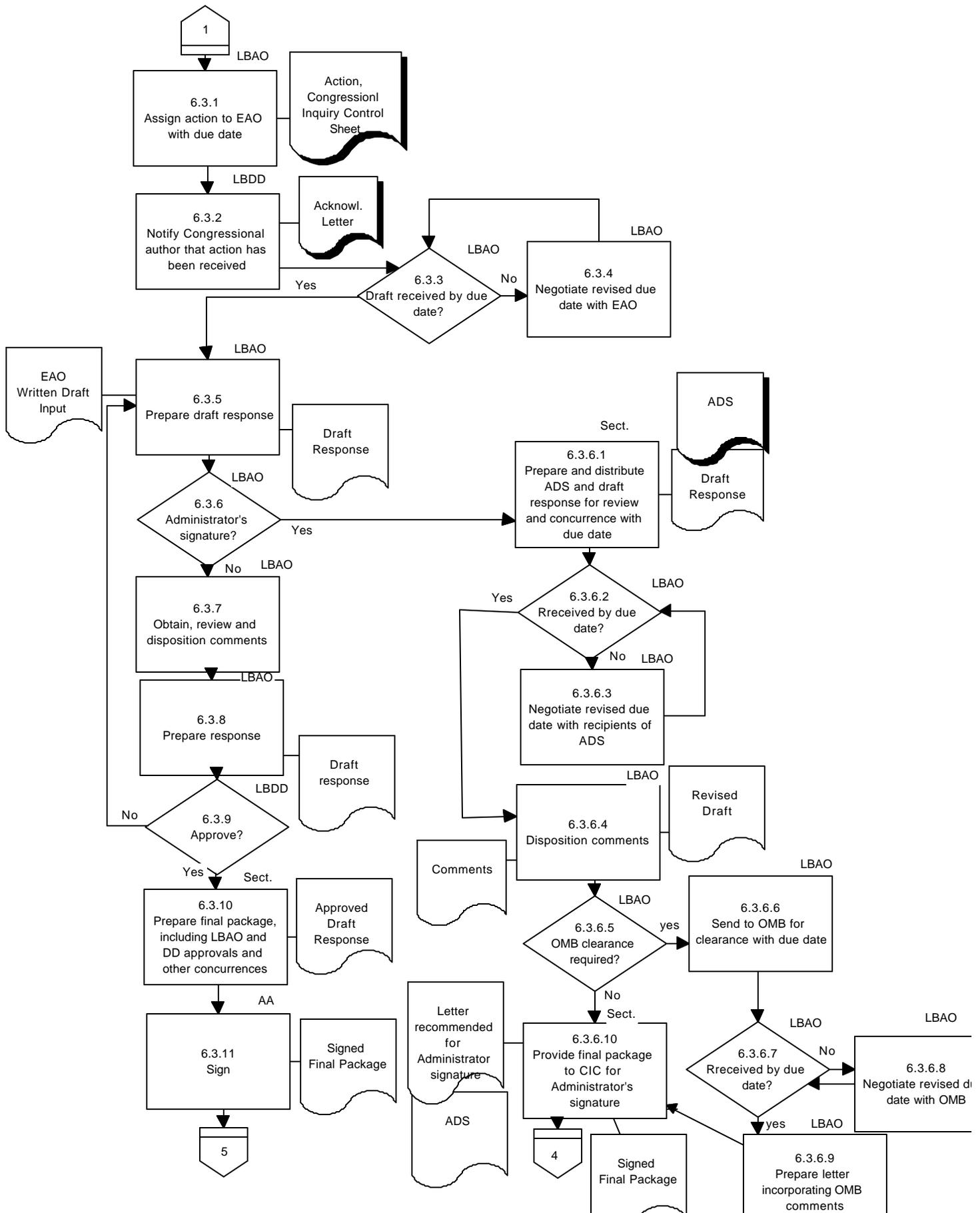
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- 3.19 LDAO: Action Officer from the Congressional Inquiries Division (Position Description is Legislative Affairs Specialist or Legislative Affairs Officer)
 - 3.20 Lead Sect: Lead Secretary for the Office of Legislative Affairs
 - 3.21 OMB: Office of Management and Budget
 - 3.22 Progress Notes: Sheet on which Code LD Legislative Affairs Specialist writes notes pertaining to action status and events. These notes are retained with the case file throughout the case activities and are filed with the case upon case closure. See Appendix D.
 - 3.23 QA/QC: Quality Assurance/Quality Control
 - 3.24 Sect.: Secretary in the Office of Legislative Affairs (any Division)
 - 3.25 Yellow Copy: Copy of correspondence on which Code L employees initial approval (remains in case file).

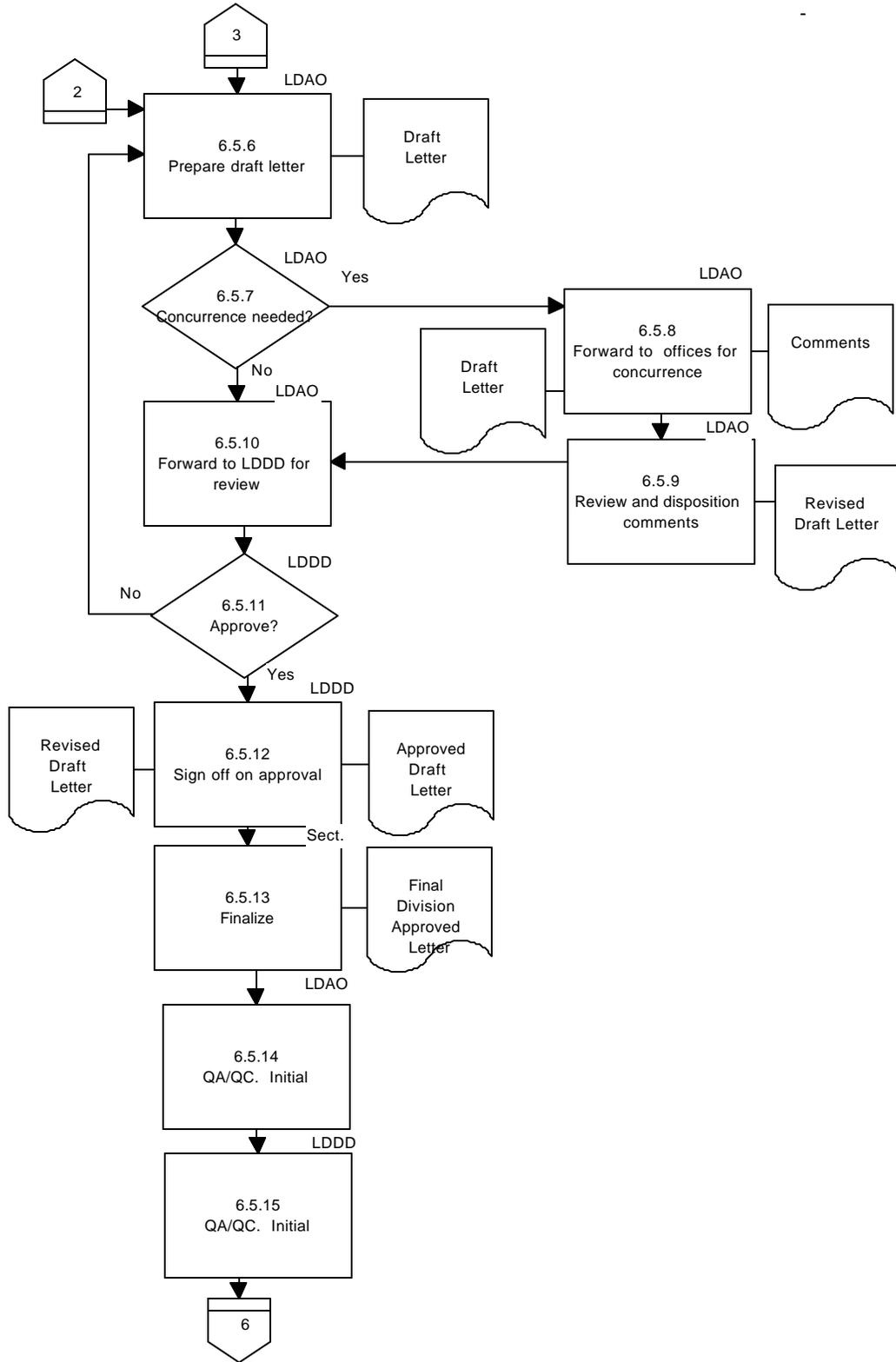
4. References

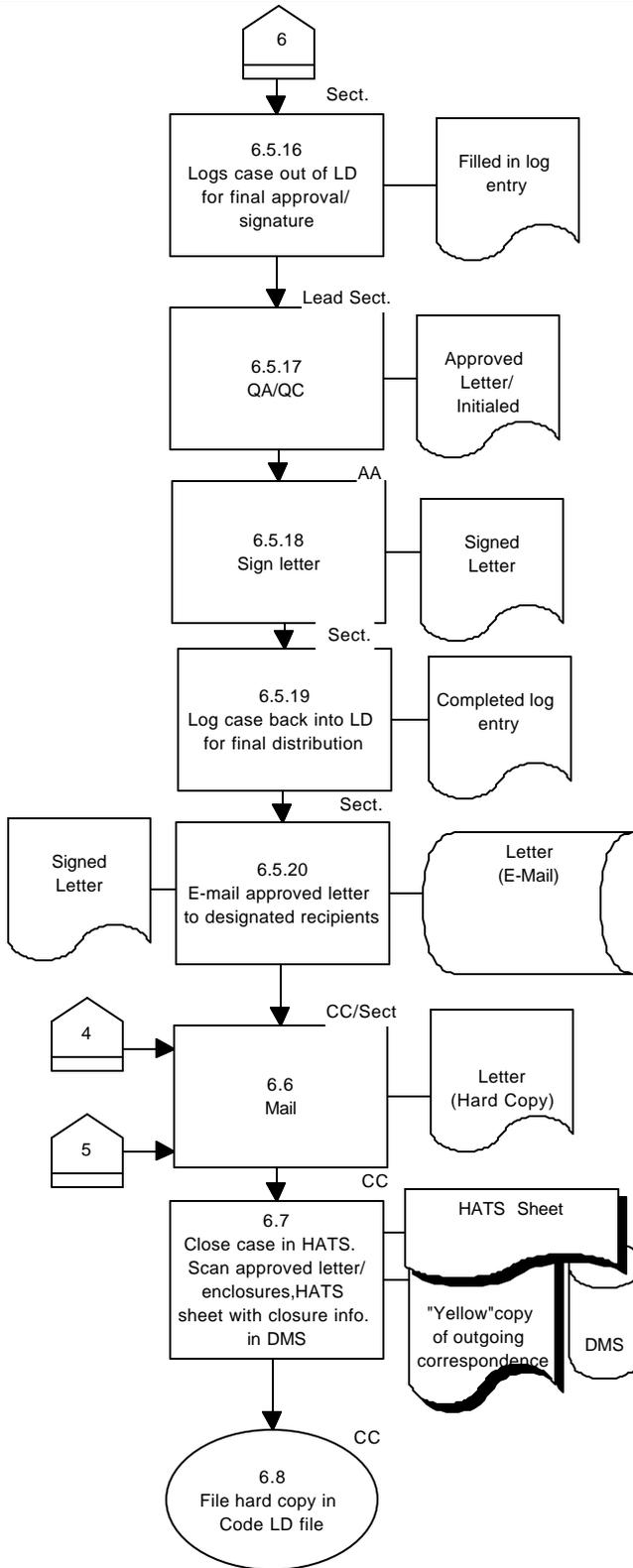
- 4.1 NPG 1450.4, Handling Congressional Correspondence and Information Concerning Congressional Activities

5. Flowchart









6. Procedure

<u>Step</u>	<u>Actionee</u>	<u>Action</u>
6.1		Written correspondence from Congress received in Code LD. NPG 1450.4 describes Procedures and Guidelines for the delivery of Congressional correspondence to the Office of Legislative Affairs Congressional Inquiries Division.
6.2	CC	CC logs correspondence into HATS and determines Code L action office and action officer. Decisions based on subject matter of the correspondence and memos from the Deputy Associate Administrator for Legislative Affairs and Congressional Inquiries Division Director establishing assignments (See Appendices A and B). Establishes action due date of three calendar weeks from the date logged in unless author of correspondence requests an earlier due date. CC scans incoming correspondence and HATS action sheet into the Code L DMS.
6.3	CC	By the nature of the correspondence and its author(s) CC determines whether the action should be assigned to personnel in Code LB or LD. If the Correspondence comes from a Congressional Committee and/or relates to significant issues of NASA policy, it is assigned to Code LB. All other correspondence is assigned to Code LD. The CC uses judgement and experience to make this determination. If assigned to LB, go to 6.3.1; if assigned to LD, go to 6.4.
6.3.1	LBAO	LBAO reviews content of letter and determines the EAO. Determination of the EAO is based on the subject matter of the correspondence and the NASA HQ Code that is responsible for that subject. Using Action Sheet, LBAO provides incoming correspondence to the EAO with an assigned due date based on any date specified in the incoming correspondence and/or based on judgement and requests draft response (Appendix C).
6.3.2	LBDD	Sends letter to Congressional author acknowledging receipt of incoming correspondence.
6.3.3	LBAO	Did the LBAO receive the draft from the EAO by the due date? If not, go to 6.3.4; if yes, go to 6.3.5
6.3.4	LBAO	LBAO consults with EAO to settle on revised date for receipt of draft response from EAO. LBAO will escalate issue to supervisor if unable to resolve with EAO. Go to Step 6.3.3
6.3.5	LBAO	Based on input from the EAO, LBAO prepares a response to the correspondence.
6.3.6	LBAO	LBAO recommends whether NASA Administrator should sign the outgoing correspondence. This determination is based upon expressed desire of the Administrator and/or other management officials; nature of the correspondence; Member(s) who wrote; any

- other factors judged to require the Administrator as the signatory. Go to Step 6.3.6.1 if Administrator's signature is required and go to Step 6.3.7 if not required.
- 6.3.6.1 Sect. If determined that Administrator is signatory, prepares ADS and distributes with copy of incoming letter and draft response for review and concurrence. The LBAO determines who should concur based on the subject matter of the correspondence and the NASA Headquarters Codes who are responsible for that subject matter.
- 6.3.6.2 LBAO Was signed off ADS received by due date? If yes, go to 6.3.6.4; if no, go to 6.3.6.3
- 6.3.6.3 LBAO LBAO contacts organizations which have not responded to the ADS and negotiates revised due date. LBAO will escalate issue to supervisor if unable to resolve with ADS contacts. Go to Step 6.3.6.2.
- 6.3.6.4 LBAO LBAO reviews ADS for concurrence and comments. LBAO notifies provider of comments that are rejected and/or require negotiations. Negotiations that come to an impasse are referred to supervisor. Upon disposition of comments/concurrence, LBAO prepares a revised draft of the response.
- 6.3.6.5 LBAO The LBAO determines whether draft response requires clearance by OMB. This determination is based on the subject matter, policy implications, sensitivity of the issue, need for Administration approval and other factors judged by the LBAO, through experience, consultation and knowledge, to suggest a need for OMB clearance. If OMB clearance is needed, go to Step 6.3.6.6; if not needed go to Step 6.3.6.10
- 6.3.6.6 LBAO If it is determined that the draft response needs to be sent to OMB, the LBAO will provide OMB with a copy of the incoming letter and the draft response and will specify a due date for clearance based on leadtime required to complete action by date due.
- 6.3.6.7 LBAO Determines if OMB clearance received by due date. If no, go to 6.3.6.8; if yes go to 6.3.6.9
- 6.3.6.8 LBAO Negotiates revised due date with OMB; issues will be escalated to supervisor if not resolvable between LBAO and OMB representative. Go to Step 6.3.6.7.
- 6.3.6.9 LBAO Should OMB have any comments on the proposed draft, the LBAO will notify the EAO, Code B and any other offices whom the LBAO determines should be notified of the comments. Any disagreements between OMB and NASA will be resolved via negotiations. LBAO will then prepare the letter recommended for signature.
- 6.3.6.10 Secretary Provides the recommended letter and ADS to Code CIC for obtaining the Administrator's signature. Notes date of OMB approval on the ADS.(Go to Step 6.6)
- 6.3.7 LBAO If it is determined that Administrator's signature is not required, LBAO obtains necessary concurrence. Determination of who should be asked to concur is based on the LBAO's judgement and factors

- in subject matter, sensitivity, specific nature of any issues (i.e., legal issues so the lawyers would see or budget issues so the comptroller would see). If LBAO determines that OMB should review for Administration concurrence, see Step 6.3.6.6 through Step 6.3.6.9 for process flow. The LBAO reviews comments. LBAO notifies providers of comments that are either rejected or require further negotiation. Any issues that cannot be resolved by LBAO will be escalated to supervisor.
- 6.3.8 LBAO Prepare response, incorporating comments.
- 6.3.9 LBDD The draft response is provided to the Division Director for approval. If the LBDD does not approve, return to Step 6.3.5.
- 6.3.10 Sect. Prepares package for submission to AA for signature. Package includes incoming letter, proposed response, comments received and their disposition, the approval of the LBAO and LBDD (via initials on yellow copy of letter) and other parties requested to concur.
- 6.3.11 AA Response provided to AA for signature. Go to Step 6.6
- 6.4 LDAO For cases assigned to Code LD, the LDAO telephones the Congressional staffer to acknowledge that correspondence has been received and notes such on the Progress Notes (Appendix D). LDAO uses Progress Notes to document case status as case progresses.
- 6.5 LDAO The LDAO determines if he/she has information available to respond to inquiry without need to ask for additional input. This is based on the subject matter of the inquiry; complexity of inquiry; whether we have answered same issues in the past; response information readily available such as brochures, pictures. If no additional input is required, go to Step 6.5.1; if additional input required go to Step 6.5.2.
- 6.5.1 LDAO If LDAO determines can answer, assembles necessary information. Then go to Step 6.5.6.
- 6.5.2 LDAO If LDAO determines input needed from other sources, determines EAO and information copy recipients and transmits action/info to the individuals using the LD action and information transmittal sheets. (See Appendices E and F). Determination of who receives action is based on subject matter of the incoming correspondence; determination of who receives information only copies of the correspondence is based on subject matter and LDAO's judgement and experience regarding those who might be called upon by the EAO and /or LDAO for assistance/concurrence as response is being prepared. Establishes due date for the action draft response. Standard is two weeks unless standard due date requires adjustment per the judgement of the LDAO.
- 6.5.3 LDAO Determines whether draft response received from EAO by the due date. If received by due date, go to Step 6.5.5; if not received by due date, go to Step 6.5.4.

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| 6.5.4 | LDAO | If draft response not received from EAO by due date, negotiates revised due date with EAO. Any issues that cannot be resolved are escalated to the supervisor. Go to Step 6.5.3. |
| 6.5.5 | LDAO | Upon receipt of draft response from EAO, LDAO reviews proposed input and clarifies any questions/issue with the EAO. |
| 6.5.6 | LDAO | Prepares draft response to the correspondence. |
| 6.5.7 | LDAO | Determines whether concurrences are needed. This is based on the subject matter of the incoming correspondence and the proposed answer, sensitivity of subject, need for review of any policy issues (such as legal and/or budget), confirmation/clarification of the correctness of the proposed answer. If concurrences needed, go to Step 6.5.8; if not needed go to Step 6.5.10. |
| 6.5.8 | LDAO | If concurrences are needed, forwards to office(s). Determination of concurring office(s) is based on subject matter and other items as described in 6.5.7 |
| 6.5.9 | LDAO | Reviews any comments received. Editing/typographical comments are incorporated as appropriate. Other comments are discussed and negotiated among the LDAO, EAO, and provider(s) of the comments. Issues that cannot be resolved via negotiation are escalated to the supervisor. LDAO prepares update of the draft response. Concurrences/ comments are retained in the case file. |
| 6.5.10 | LDAO | Provides draft letter to LDDD for review and approval. |
| 6.5.11 | LDDD | If LDDD does not approve, go to Step 6.5.6. |
| 6.5.12 | LDDD | LDDD edits as needed and indicates approval by initialing and dating the draft response. |
| 6.5.13 | Sect. | Prepares final package including incoming and response letters, any enclosures and copies, concurrences, comments received, HATS sheet, Action and Information Control Sheets, progress notes, E-mails generated during preparation of response and any other material generated during the course of response preparation. This is the case file. |
| 6.5.14 | LDAO | Performs QA/QC on final package and indicates approval via initials and date on the yellow copy. If corrections are required, returns to secretary to make. |
| 6.5.15 | LDDD | Performs QA/QC on final package and indicates approval via initials and date on the yellow copy. If corrections are required, returns to secretary to make. |
| 6.5.16 | Sect. | Makes entry in Code LD Log Book (Appendix G) noting incoming date of case and date sent to Lead Secretary. |
| 6.5.17 | Lead Sect. | Performs QA/QC on final package and indicates approval via initials and date on the yellow copy. If changes are required, returns to secretary. |
| 6.5.18 | AA | Lead Secretary provides to AA for signature. If any changes are required, AA returns case file to LD secretary. |
| 6.5.19 | Sect. | AA returns signed letter to LD secretary who completes LD log by filling in date letter sent to author of incoming letter. |

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| 6.5.20 | Sect. | Electronically mails the final approved response to correspondence to EAO, recipients of information copies, those who concurred and any others whom the LDAO determines should receive a copy of the final letter. LDAO determination of who should receive ECC is based on judgement, experience, ensuring that involved individuals are kept apprised of what is finally sent to author of incoming letter and LDAO determination of who has need to receive copies. |
| 6.6 | CC/Sect. | Author of incoming letter receives a signed, mailed, hard copy response of the reply. Also receiving hard copy would be anyone else, as determined by the LDAO, LBAO, LBDD or LDDD who has a need to receive such a copy. Examples of that would be when the LDAO is able to answer a letter with material available but wants to ensure that the subject matter office is aware of the incoming letter and the response. Also occurs when someone is mentioned in a letter as a contact point and want to ensure person(s) is aware of mention and receives copies of both the incoming and outgoing correspondence. |
| 6.7 | CC | Closes case in HATS; scans final package into DMS (file copy of signed response letter (i.e., "yellow" copy) plus enclosures plus updated HATS Control Sheet with closure date on it)). |
| 6.8 | CC | Files case file in Code LD Office files. |

7. Quality Records

Record Identification	Owner	Location	Record Media: Electronic or Hard Copy	Schedule Number and Item Number (NPG 1441.1)	Retention/ Disposition
Logged-in Letter	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Progress Notes	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Action Required Control Sheet	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Information Only Copy Control Sheet	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Action, Congressional Inquiry Control Sheet	LB	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Acknowledgement Letter	LB	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Action Document Summary (NHQ Form 117)	LB	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
Headquarters Action Tracking System (HATS) Sheet	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).
"Yellow" copy of outgoing correspondence	LD	Code LD Files	Hard Copy	Schedule 1, Item 27(A)	Retain for 4 years and then to Federal Records Center(FRC).

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Memo from Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Legislative Affairs dated July 27, 1999; Subject: Revised Congressional Liaison Assignments (Code L Shared Drive)

Appendix B: Memo from Director, Congressional Inquiries Division, NASA Office of Legislative Affairs dated January 4, 1999; Subject: Congressional Inquiries Division Assignments (Code L Shared Drive)

Appendix C: Code LB Transmittal Sheet, "Action, Congressional Inquiry" (Code L Shared Drive)

Appendix D: Progress Notes (Code LD Shared Drive)

Appendix E: Transmittal Sheet, "Congressional Inquiry: Action Required" (Code LD Shared Drive)

Appendix F: Transmittal Sheet, "Congressional Inquiry: Information Only Copy" (Code LD Shared Drive)

Appendix G: Code LD's Incoming and Outgoing Log Book (Year) (Code LD Shared Drive)

NOTE: Code L and LD Shared Drives requires password access to the Code L server; Appendices are available to individuals outside of Code L by request.

Appendix A



July 27, 1999

Reply to Am of L:MDK

TO: Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices
Directors, NASA Field Installations
Director, Jet Propulsion Laboratory

FROM: L/Deputy Associate Administrator for Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT: Revised Congressional Liaison Assignments

As a result of staffing changes within the Office of Legislative Affairs, we are combining the former Legislation Division into the Congressional Liaison Division and modifying Congressional liaison assignments for our staff with various NASA program and staff offices. Those assignments are listed below. We look forward to working with you during the balance of the 106th Congress.

AE/Chief Engineer	Paul Eckert
AF/Chief Technologist	Paul Eckert
AO/Chief Information Officer	Paul Eckert
AS/Chief Scientist	Barbara Cherry
B/Comptroller	Margaret Kieffer
C/Headquarters Operations	Karl Stehmer
E/Equal Opportunity Programs	Barbara Cherry
F/Human Resources & Education	Barbara Cherry
G/General Counsel	Karl Stehmer
H/Procurement	Karl Stehmer
I/External Relations	Barbara Bernstein
J/Management Systems & Facilities	Margaret Kieffer
K/Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization	Karl Stehmer
M/Space Flight (Space Station)	Barbara Bernstein
M/Space Flight (Shuttle, Space Comm, ELV)	Lon Forehand
Q/Safety & Mission Assurance	Lon Forehand
R/Aeronautics & Space Transportation Technology	Paul Eckert
S/Space Science	Barbara Cherry
U/Life&Microgravity Sciences	Lon Forehand
Y/Mission to Planet Earth	Margaret Kieffer
Z/Policy & Plans	Paul Eckert

Mary D Kerwin

NASA Headquarters
Washington, DC **20546-0001**

Appendix B



L:HR

January 4, 1999

TO: Legislative Code Contacts

FROM: LD/Helen Rothman, Director, Congressional Inquiries Division, Office of
Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT: Code Assignments in Inquiries Division

NASA Headquarters Code assignments for the staff of the Congressional Inquiries Division, Office of Legislative Affairs (Code LD) are listed below. We appreciate the cooperation and assistance we receive from all our Code Contacts and look forward to continuing these close associations.

Mark Kleinsorge: Headquarter Codes A, B, G, H, I, K, M, Q, R, W, Y
Phone: 202-358-1914

Kathleen Maxwell: Headquarter Codes C, E, F, J, P (Except astronauts), S, U, Z,
Publications Library
Phone: 202-358-0797

Helen Rothman: Astronaut requests
Phone: 202-358-1943

Joan Massey: Request for NASA Visitor Centers Tours
Phone: 202-358-1916

Terri Gonzalez: Launch pass requests
Phone: 202-358-1949

Helen Rothman

***** **ACTION** *****

CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

Appendix C

DATE:

ACTION OFFICE(S):

FROM:

SUBJECT: .

DUE DATE:

INSTRUCTIONS:

NOTES:

E X P E D I T E

**T H E A T T A C H E D
R E Q U I R E S
S P E C I A L H A N D L I N G**

December 10, 1999

APPENDIX E



CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY *ACTION REQUIRED*

Office of Legislative Affairs
NASA Headquarters
Code LD
Fax #: 202-358-4343
Phone #: 202-358-1943

DATE:

TO:

FROM:

Helen Rothman: 202-358-1943/Helen.Rothman@hq.nasa.gov

Mark Kleinsorge: 202-358-1914/Mark.Kleinsorge@hq.nasa.gov

Kathleen Maxwell: 202-358-0797/Kathleen.Maxwell@hq.nasa.gov

Action Number/Member:

Response Due Date:

Information Copies Sent To:

INSTRUCTIONS:

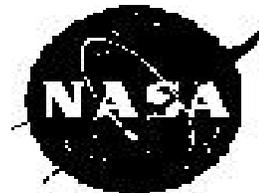
Please prepare a draft reply to the attached Congressional inquiry and send it via electronic mail or send a copy of your reply on a diskette.

If you need clarification of this assignment – or additional time to prepare a reply, please contact the respective Legislative Affairs Specialist.

NOTE:

June 10, 1999

Appendix F



CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY
INFORMATION ONLY COPY

Office of Legislative Affairs
NASA Headquarters
Code LD
Fax #: 202-358-4343
Phone #: 202-358-1943

DATE:

TO:

FROM:

Helen Rothman: 202-358-1943/Helen.Rothman@hq.nasa.gov

Mark Kleinsorge: 202-358-1914/Mark.Kleinsorge@hq.nasa.gov

Kathleen Maxwell: 202-358-0797/Kathleen.Maxwell@hq.nasa.gov

Action Number/Member:

This action was assigned to:

The draft reply due date is:

NSTRUCTIONS:

No action is required from your office at this time. If you have any questions, please contact the respective Legislative Affairs Specialist.

NOTE:

June 1, 1999

Appendix G
LD's INCOMING & OUTGOING
LOG BOOK (CALENDER YEAR)

Control #	Cong./Sen. Name	Incoming Date	Lead Sec't.	Outgoing Date

January 1, 1999