

**Charge to the
UNAVCO Facilities Committee
10/24/2001**

Background

The UNAVCO Facility is a critical component of effective community use of GPS technology for a wide range of Earth sciences research applications. The Facility must meet requirements as diverse as maintaining a GPS equipment pool, providing direct field engineer support to projects, and technology evaluation/development for new applications. The Facility has historically been managed indirectly by the community through grant and subcontract awards to host institutions such as the University of Colorado and University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR). The creation of UNAVCO, Inc. as an independent nonprofit corporation able to receive National Science Foundation (NSF) funds directly offers the opportunity to evaluate a wider range of options for administration and operation of the Facility. The possibility of a leadership role for UNAVCO, Inc. in managing the Plate Boundary Observatory (PBO) also motivates more direct control of UNAVCO resources including funds, equipment and staff.

Responsibilities of the Facilities Committee

The Committee is charged to evaluate and document an appropriate range of options for administration and operation of the UNAVCO Facility to be presented to the UNAVCO, Inc. Board of Directors for consideration. The primary factors to be considered in developing and evaluating these options are: (1) UNAVCO control of resources and ability to prioritize activities of the Facility; (2) efficiency of operations; (3) cost-effectiveness of operations; (4) reporting relationship of Facility Manager to UNAVCO, Inc. management; and (5) maintenance of capability and staff retention during any transition required by change in operation of the Facility. The range of options to be considered should include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. UNAVCO, Inc. operation of an independent Facility. This option requires consideration of the following additional factors to those listed above: (1) ability to hire, fire and administer staff; (2) ability to find cost-effective benefits for staff including medical insurance; (3) ability to find appropriate and cost-effective office, laboratory, equipment handling, and computing/server space; (4) ability to manage funds to meet payroll and operational cost demands; and (5) ability to insure against potential liabilities to the corporation associated with the work of the Facility.
2. Continued operation and management of the Facility by UCAR. The primary additional factors to be addressed under this option are how funds would flow through a UNAVCO, Inc. grant to UCAR (e.g., subcontract from UNAVCO, Inc., separate funding via NSF, etc.) and UCAR's continued willingness to operate the Facility on behalf of UNAVCO, Inc. The effectiveness of the

reporting relationship of the UNAVCO Facility Manager to UNAVCO, Inc. management would be a critical factor in considering this option, along with community acceptance of the long-term viability of the option.

3. A community-wide, competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) for a single university-based institution to administer and operate the Facility. The Committee would need to be specific about the primary components of a Statement of Work to be included in an RFP and the process and timing for determination of the winning proposal, and pay special attention to the transition process for Facility capability and staff.
4. Other options as deemed appropriate for consideration.

Conduct of Business

The activities of the Committee including travel and meeting expenses will be supported through the Boulder Facility. Membership on the Committee will be as designated by the UNAVCO, Inc. Board of Directors. The Chair of the Committee will be the UNAVCO Scientific Director. The Committee is encouraged to seek outside consultation and expertise to the extent necessary to meet this charge.

Product to Be Delivered

The Committee will deliver a succinct but complete report to the Board of Directors addressing the issues identified above, including a recommendation on the preferred option(s) for administration and operation of the Facility no later than October 31, 2002.