March 29, 1994

TO: Distribution

FROM: Chief, Flight Operations and Support Division

SUBJECT: Information Concerning Illegal Narcotics Discovered Aboard N501EA.

At the request of several Langley senior staff members, a small team of Langley employees met this date to conduct "fact-finding" activities concerning the discovery of narcotics on the evening of March 25, 1994, aboard N501EA, an Eastern Air Lines Boeing 757 being inspected at Lockheed Aeromod in Greenville, S.C. for NASA-Langley. The team members included O.J. Cole, Jeremy Becker-Welts, Cam Martin, Calvin Chandler, and Harry Verstynen.

The following is a summary and chronology of information which was received second-hand by Langley employees from persons associated with the incident in Greenville. On advice of NASA counsel, this information is presented only as information and not as "facts". This distinction is highlighted because the Greenville County Sheriff's Department has opened an investigation into the incident and any independent "fact-finding" on the part of NASA-Langley could compromise the integrity of the criminal investigation process. A copy of a fax received from Mr. Dave Williams of Lockheed Aeromod this date is enclosed to provide further details of events that occurred at Greenville.

On Saturday morning, March 26, at approximately 9:20 A.M., Mr. Jeremy Becker-Welts received a call at home from Mr. Dave Williams of Lockheed Aeromod in Greenville, S.C. Mr. Williams requested Mr. Tony Trexler's home phone number and informed Mr B-W of the discovery of a quantity of a substance thought to be illegal narcotics aboard N501EA. Mr. B-W provided Mr. Trexler's home phone number and informed Mr. Williams that he would notify Mr. Jerry Hale (VP Maintenance and Engineering for EAL) of the incident. Mr. B-W called Mr. Jerry Hale approximately 10:00 A.M. and Mr. Hale agreed to contact Mr. Williams of Lockheed to coordinate any assistance that might be needed from Eastern.
Mr. Williams called Mr. Trexler and told him that a quantity of a suspicious substance had been discovered under a floor panel under one of the aft lavatories of 501EA. The quantity and identity of the substance was not known at that time. Mr. Williams indicated that the local sheriff's department was on site and that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) had been notified. Mr. Trexler was told that the interior of the aircraft had been placed off-limits by the sheriff's department, but that the exterior portion of the inspection was continuing normally.

Mr. Trexler called Harry Verstynen and Mr. Verstynen called Dr. Bob Wingate and Mr. Dave Caplan. No further communications occurred between Lockheed and NASA-Langley employees until Monday, March 28.

On Monday, March 28, Mr. Trexler was informed by Lockheed that the suspect substance had been determined to be cocaine and that the amount was approximately 5 kilograms. Later in the day on March 28, Mr. Williams called Mr. Trexler to tell him that the sheriff's department had released the interior of the aircraft to continue the inspection but that a deputy sheriff was assigned to the aircraft in case further narcotics were discovered.

As of this date, March 29, the inspection is continuing normally. All remaining floor panels have been pulled and no further narcotics discovered. The Greenville County Sheriff's Department has decided to open an investigation of the event, but there appears to be no connections being made between the incident and NASA-Langley at this time.

Regarding any NASA-Langley response to questions concerning this incident, the Public Affairs Officer of the Greenville County Sheriff's Department, Lt. Sam Simmons (803/467-5307), has requested that all requests for information be handled by his department. It is the recommendation of this team that Lt. Simmons' request be honored since this would put yet more distance between Langley and the incident.

Harry A. Verstynen

Distribution:
Jerry Creedon