April 7, 1992

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RELEASE NO. 92-21

**Langley’s Wilhite Named Assistant Chief, Advanced Vehicles Division**

Dr. Alan W. Wilhite has been named assistant chief of the Advanced Vehicles Division at NASA’s Langley Research Center. In this position, he assists the chief in directing multidisciplinary advanced aerodynamics studies to assess the benefits of discipline research advances and to identify potential new research thrusts. He also serves as the Langley focal point for the High-Speed Research Program.

Before assuming his new position, Wilhite was head of the Vehicle Analysis Branch, Space Systems Division. He began his Langley career in 1973 as an aerospace engineer in the Vehicle Analysis Branch of the Space Systems Division. He led the division team for the analysis and design of initial government concepts of the National Aero-Space Plane (NASP).

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In 1987, he was selected director of base technology for NASP. In this position, he was responsible for the development of high-risk and high-payoff technologies. Wilhite became head of the Vehicle Analysis Branch in 1990, with responsibility for an aggressive national research program to identify key technologies for advanced space vehicle systems.

He received a bachelor of science degree in aerospace engineering in 1973 from North Carolina State University, a master's of science in 1976 from George Washington University and his doctorate in aerospace engineering in 1983 from North Carolina State University.

He received a NASA Exceptional Engineering Medal in 1992, a Langley Outstanding Leadership Award as NASP base technology director in 1988; and three special achievement awards for the development and application of a computer-aided system for advanced aerospace vehicle design. He is the author of 25 papers on aerodynamics, propulsion, trajectory/performance, multidisciplinary design, optimization and system studies. Wilhite is an expert in aerospace vehicle design with emphasis in aerodynamics and the application of aerodynamic theory to vehicle design.

He and his wife, Pat, live in Denbigh and have two sons.

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