

INST 154

Apollo at 50

Discussion Questions

Session 10: Launch Operations

1. In June of 1967 the General Accounting Office claimed that NASA could have saved \$55 million by assembling Saturn V rockets on the launch pad rather than assembling them using the Vehicle Assembly Building and a mobile launcher as they actually did. How should NASA have replied to the GAO claim? Should they have agreed? Disagreed? On what basis?
2. NASA had a couple of thousand employees at the Kennedy Space Center, but NASA contractors had ten times that number of people working there. What were the advantages to NASA of using a large contractor workforce to assemble, test and launch the Apollo missions? What were the disadvantages?
3. What would have turned out differently if NASA had chosen to put the launch site for Apollo on Cumberland Island in Georgia? Would they have used the mobile launch concept there? Would we have landed on the Moon by 1969? Would it have cost more? Or less?