Subject: NASA Air Quality Field Study Includes Low Flying Aircraft and Mobile Facilities

During the month of September 2013, NASA, and other collaborators in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) will be conducting an air quality field study employing instrumented aircraft and mobile facilities in the Houston area. These assets will be collecting measurements within the existing ground based air quality monitoring network of sites maintained by TCEQ and the City of Houston. Portions of the activity will be highly visible to the public and may raise questions. Specifically, the NASA P-3B aircraft will be ascending or descending over air quality sites in a spiral pattern between altitudes of 1,000 and 10,000 feet. They will also conduct low altitude flight at 1,000 feet over certain areas. Mobile facilities will be taking air measurements along roadways and in areas between monitoring sites to provide a more complete characterization of air quality in the area.

This NASA-sponsored field study is titled DISCOVER-AQ, and the aircraft will be based at Ellington Field. A media event is planned for 3 September at Ellington Field to provide information and raise awareness of the activity. This information sharing will prepare the community before possible encounters with the aircraft and mobile units in action. Additional information on the project is available on the web at: http://discover-aq.larc.nasa.gov/

The following pages provide photographs of the aircraft and mobile units. The mobile units will also be carrying a copy of this letter. In addition a basic map of the flight pattern is appended. More detailed information (e.g., specific flight lines, Google Earth overlays, etc.) is available on request.

Collaborating institutions for the DISCOVER-AQ field study include: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR); the University of Maryland in College Park and Baltimore County; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of California-Berkeley; Pennsylvania State University, State College; University of Innsbruck in Austria; Millersville University, Millersville, PA; Texas Air Quality Research Program (AQRP); the City of Houston; University of Houston; University of Texas at Austin; Rice University; Baylor University; Chalmers University of Sweden; Valparaiso University; Aerodyne Research, Inc.; Los Gatos Research, Inc. and Teledyne.

NASA point of contact
James Crawford
DISCOVER-AQ Principal Investigator
NASA Langley Research Center
James.H.Crawford@nasa.gov
757-864-7231 (work)
757-876-3011 (cell)

TCEQ point of contact:
Raj Nadkarni
Air Quality Division
Texas Commission for Environmental Quality
Raj.Nadkarni@tceq.texas.gov
512-239-1934 (work)
512-423-6862 (cell)

Enclosures:
1 – NASA P-3B aircraft and flight pattern and operations area
2 – Ground Vehicle descriptions and listed drivers
Enclosure 1
Enclosure - 2
Identification
Vehicle (A)
University of Houston
White, 4 doors, Chevy 3500 HD with camper has signage – “University of Houston Earth and Atmospheric Science Mobile Atmospheric Lab”
Texas Exempt Plate 114-3502
Vehicle (B)
University of Houston (Support Vehicle)
2013 Toyota Tundra Double Cab, white with green camper shell, magnetic signage will appear on the truck as University of Houston - UH
Texas Plates BVB-4102
Vehicle (C)
Aerodyne Research Inc.
White, 2 door, panel Van has signage “Aerodyne Mobile Laboratory” includes phone number
Massachusetts Plates J60379
Vehicle (D)
Aerodyne Research Inc. (Support Vehicle)
White 4 door Ford F250 truck does not have signage
Massachusetts Plates P92847
Drivers: Aerodyne – Cody Floerchinger, Berk Knighton, Ed Fortner, Paola Massoli, Xavier Cabral, and Scott Herndon
Vehicle (E)
NASA Langley Mobile Lab
White, 2 door, Panel Van has no signage
Federal Gov’t/NASA Plates NA001337
Vehicle (F)
Chalmers University of Sweden
2013 Toyota Tundra Double Cab, white with convertible camper shell, magnetic signage will appear on the truck as University of Houston - UH
Texas Plates CGY-5718
Drivers: Chalmers University of Sweden – Johan Mellqvist, John Johansson, Jerker Samuelson, Pontus Andersson, and Brian Offerle: University of Houston: - Barry Lefer and Angus Sun