

FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



BATTERY TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT GETS JUMP START

■(WASHINGTON) The development of advanced battery technology is about to get another boost from the Department of Energy and the Big Three automakers. Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary signed a \$106 million four-year cooperative agreement with the United States Advanced Battery Consortium (USABC). The agreement — in its second phase — continues research and development for a long-term battery that could make electric cars competitive with conventional vehicles that use gasoline and help improve air quality nationwide.

Goals of the partnership include:

- conducting safety, durability, and in-vehicle verification tests for mid-term batteries (development stage for batteries);
- developing manufacturing processes for mid-term batteries that focus on further cost reductions; and,
- taking long-term technologies through feasibility prove-out.

—U.S. DEPT. OF ENERGY
10/29/96

APPLICATIONS FOR 1997 SCIENCE RESEARCH GRANTS REQUESTED

■(WASHINGTON) The Environmental Protection Agency is requesting applications for its first round of 1997 research grants. The grants program is designed to promote a more comprehensive integration of research engaging the nation's best scientists in the areas of human and ecological risk, and includes the following topics: exploratory research; ecosystem indicators; complex exposures and human variability in risk assessment; endocrine disruptors; ambient air quality; health effects of particulate matter; drinking water and contaminated sediments.

Application due dates vary by topic from Jan. 15 - Feb. 15, 1997.

Application information is available by calling the EPA Grants and Fellowship Hotline at 1-800-490-9194.

—ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
10/29/96

"If I am a great man, then a good many of the great men of history are frauds."

Bonar Law

FAA SELECTS HUGHES FOR WAAS CONTRACT

■(WASHINGTON) The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has signed a comprehensive contract for the development and implementation of the Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) with Hughes Information Technology Systems, Fullerton, CA.

The \$483.5 million contract with Hughes will lead to improvements in the accuracy, availability and integrity of the basic signal from the Global Positioning System satellites orbiting the Earth.

WAAS will be the first planned augmentation to GPS for aviation purposes. When operational, WAAS will allow aircraft to use GPS for all phases of flight from en route down to Category 1 precision approaches. It also will provide very important information about the status of the entire GPS satellite constellation and will be able to detect and ignore any corrupt or inaccurate signals.

For users of the U. S. aviation system, WAAS will mean more direct routing of aircraft, saving time, fuel and money. It will become the primary means of navigation in U.S. airspace, allowing the FAA to decommission much of the older, expensive-to-maintain equipment based on an earlier generation of technology. WAAS also will make precision approach capability available at nearly all airports in the nation.

—FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
10/31/96

FCC PROPOSES RULES FOR LICENSING OF "LITTLE LEOS"

■(WASHINGTON) Tuesday, the Federal Communications Commission issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that takes the next step toward licensing systems in the second processing round for the non-voice, non-geostationary mobile satellite ("Little LEO") service.

In this Notice, the Commission proposes technical rules that may make it possible to license at least one and up to three additional satellite systems in this round. Originally, it was thought that it would be possible to license only one additional system.

The Little LEO satellite service uses constellations of low-Earth orbiting satellites to provide low-cost data services to potential customers anywhere in the world. Ultimately, Little LEO systems may be used to provide a number of diverse services, including emergency location services in remote areas, en-

vironmental data collection, vehicle tracking and monitoring, and time-sensitive business and personal data.

This Notice proposes and seeks comments on the licensing of one to three applicants to provide service in certain spectrum blocks, limiting participation in the second processing round to "new" applicants, and holding an auction if there are mutually exclusive applicants.

The Commission expects to issue a final order on licensing rules in early 1997 and proceed to licensing immediately thereafter. Comments to this Notice are due November 29, 1996; Reply comments are due December 16, 1996.

—FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
10/31/96

CAROL W. GREIDER NAMED TO NATIONAL BIOETHICS ADVISORY COMMISSION

■(WASHINGTON) President Clinton this week announced his intention to appoint Carol W. Greider, Ph.D. of Huntington, New York, to the National Bioethics Advisory Commission.

Established by Presidential Executive Order on Oct. 3, 1995, the National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) will provide guidance to federal agencies on the ethical conduct of current and future human biological and behavioral research.

Dr. Greider presently serves as senior staff scientist at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York. Dr. Greider is an internationally known expert in molecular biology whose research focuses on the structure and function of telomeres, chromosomal components whose role in aging and cancer is just beginning to become clear.

—THE WHITE HOUSE
10/31/96

TRANSPORTATION

AMERICAN, SABRE CHARGED WITH VIOLATIONS OF CRS RULES

■(WASHINGTON) The Department of Transportation's Aviation Enforcement Office on Monday charged American Airlines and Sabre, its affiliated computer reservation system (CRS), with violations of regulations prohibiting bias in CRS displays and the law prohibiting unfair or deceptive prac-

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