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Skunk Works Mailing List

Re: Australian Scramjet Research

From: Larry Smith
Date: Thu, 16 Sep 1999 11:35:00 -0700
Subject: Re: Australian Scramjet Research

>><http://www.spacer.com/>
>>Look for the article entitled:
>>"Australia Developing Scramjets".

David responds:

>Tell me Larry, is it the fact that they'll be collecting real-world data on
>the thermodynamics of scramjet combustion and its net thrust whilst HyShot
>is in flight, then comparing those with T4 and CFD data that makes this
>programme a world's first ?

Not really a world first in terms of flying one, but I would say that it could be considered a world first to have that kind of infrastructure AND BELIEF in the concept in one place, and not be directly associated with a specific government program. Although HyShot is one specific program, to fly a design that was proven successful in the T4 shock tunnel, the concept of having an established tradition and belief in scramjet (fostered by Professor Stalker who has been into scramjet for a long time), a number of students willing to study it (look at the number of grad. students), the CFD capability (they've been into scramjet for some time), plus the T4 shock tunnel to further test a paper design. Given the example of actually

flying HyShot, if they used that technique in the future (developing their own sounding rocket program would be a big win), they could be the only place around that would be able to explore ideas in CFD, shock tunnel, and real flight experiments. Plus I believe that if you just fly, you discover 'stuff', you never would have from just a theoretical program.

>Has anyone tested a free flying scramjet before ? Seem to recall the USSR >did - not sure about the US or anyone else.

Yes, the Russians flew one in November 1991, and November 1992 (associated with the French as well). There was also supposedly a flight paid for by NASA in east Kazakhstan in March or so of this year as a preliminary proof of concept flight for X-43 (NOT of the X-43 design however - the Russian design was flown - CFD was to be verified which could then be extrapolated to X-43 CFD).

There was also an aborted Marquardt attempt back in the late 60's, that few know about.

Larry

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