



Operation Comet Pre-Mission Vocabulary



CLC Terms

Mission Commander – the person who is in charge of the astronauts onboard a space vehicle

Flight Director – the person who supervises a space mission from Mission Control

Simulator – an artificial environment created to resemble an actual place

Task Cards – a step-by-step set of written instructions for performing a job

Airlock – a device that permits the passage of people and objects between areas while minimizing the change of pressure and loss of air

Communication (COM) – means of sending or receiving information

Navigation (NAV) – the science of getting ships, aircraft, or spacecraft from place to place, especially related to the method of determining position, course, and distance traveled

Medical (MED) – relating to the science of medicine, or to the treatment of illness and injuries

Robotics (BOT) – a branch of engineering that involves the conception, design, manufacture, and operation of robots that can assist humans in a variety of ways

Rover (ROV) – a remotely operated vehicle that is an unmanned tool for exploring distant locations



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Geology (GEO) – the science that deals with the history of the earth and its life, especially as recorded in rocks

Biology (BIO) – the branch of science that deals with living organisms and their vital processes

Life Support (LS) – the components of a spacecraft that address the core needs of human life, including air, water, and oxygen supply

Space Weather (SW or WX) – the variable conditions on the sun and in space that can influence the performance of the technology we use on Earth

Comet Mission Terms

Comet – a combination of frozen dust, rock, and ice found within the solar system

Nucleus: solid, frozen core of a comet

Coma: visible part of a comet surrounding the nucleus, containing evaporated gases

Tail: part of a comet pointed away from the sun; can be a gas tail or a dust tail

Long-Period Comet – a comet that takes over 200 years to orbit the sun

Docking – joining with a space station or another spacecraft while in space

Trajectory – the path followed by a projectile flying or another body moving through space

Descent – an action of moving downward, dropping, or falling



Operation Comet Pre-Mission Vocabulary



Altitude – the vertical elevation of an object above a surface (such as sea level or land) of a planet or natural satellite

Velocity – the speed of something in a given direction

Satellite – an artificial body placed in orbit around the Moon, Earth, or another planet in order to collect information for communication

Orbit – the path followed by an object around another object

Crater – a basin resulting from the collision of an object with a planetary surface

Deploy – to bring into action and make useable

Atmosphere – the envelope of gases surrounding the earth or another planet

Impact – the action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another

Radiation – energy that moves from one place to another as a wave or stream of high-energy particles



Operation Comet Pre-Mission Vocabulary



Job Specific Terms

Communication (COM)

Space debris / space junk – artificial material that is orbiting the Earth but is no longer functional, such as a satellite or rocket stage

Navigation (NAV)

Triangulation – a scientific method of determining the location of an object

Throttle – a device controlling the flow of fuel or power to an engine

Space debris – artificial material that is orbiting the Earth but is no longer functional, such as an old satellite or rocket stage

Medical (MED)

Nutrients – substances that promote growth, provide energy, and maintain life

Treatment – something that healthcare providers do for their patients to control a health problem, lessen its symptoms, or clear it up

Wellness – the optimal state of health

Deficiency – a lack or shortage of something

Robotics (BOT)

Programming – the act of providing instructions to a computer to perform a set of actions without direct human control

Parent command – in programming, the event that triggers the nested tasks

Nested task – in programming, the event that occurs if the parent command is true

Calibration – the act or process of configuring an instrument to provide a result for a sample



Operation Comet Pre-Mission Vocabulary



Rover (ROV)

Rappel – descending to the ground from above, usually on a rope

Mission Critical parts – instruments that must be installed in order for the ROV to function, such as Communication Transmitter and Receiver, Camera, and Navigation Computer

Scientific Payload parts – instruments that the ROV does not need to function, but may be necessary depending on the mission objectives

Geology (GEO)

Physical properties – features of a substance that can be measured without changing the sample with chemicals

Texture – a physical property that can be easily be observed by looking closely; can be coarse-grained, fine-grained, or glassy

Hardness – a physical property that is measured using the Mohs scale and determined using a scratch test

Magnetism – a physical property that indicates whether or not a material is magnetic

Mass – measure of how much matter is in an object

Volume – measure of how much space an object takes up

Density – the amount of mass in a particular space, calculated by dividing the mass of something by its volume

Displacement – the change in position of an object; method to measure volume



Operation Comet Pre-Mission Vocabulary



Biology (BIO)

Microgravity – an environment in which there is little to no gravitational force applied to objects or humans

Bone density – a measure of how thick and compacted bones are

Regimen – a prescribed course of medical treatment

Preventative – a course of action designed to keep something negative (such as illness, harm, or accidents) from occurring

Microorganism – a microscopic organism, such as a bacterium, virus, or fungus

Life Support (LS)

Air pressure – the force exerted by air on a surface, usually measured in millibars

Thermostat – the controls used to regulate a heating system

Configuration – the arrangement of different parts or components in a particular form or combination

Prototype – a sample or model of a new product

pH – a scale used to specify the acidity or basicity of a liquid

Space Weather (SW or WX)

AU – “astronomical unit;” a unit of length stating the mean distance between the center of the Earth and the center of the Sun

Solar wind – type of solar weather in which there is a spray of particles caused by the Sun’s core temperature being incredibly hot

Solar flare – type of solar weather in which an explosion occurs on the Sun during a solar storm and is full of radioactive energy