

Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Atomic Energy Commission, these agencies agree that these activities require a joint effort and a joint organization to insure effective system development and to insure that the responsibilities of each agency are properly fulfilled. It is, therefore, the purpose of this agreement to establish such a joint organization and to define its functions.⁵⁸

Negotiations and preparations for the new division, which would include research and development on power systems and integration of the conversion system with the isotope source, continued through the spring of 1965. In June the new Space Nuclear Systems Division, headed by Finger, was established. In his first meeting with the JCAE, Finger stated that very large ranges in power were needed, but it was inconceivable that money would be available to develop a unique system for every particular mission. Therefore, he proposed:

It is...important I think that in the Commission program, we try to develop systems that bracket as broad a range of potential mission uses as possible, and parallel with this, continue to push the technology into more advanced areas in order to try to improve the performance and life capability of these systems.⁶⁰

In the fall, at the annual conference of the Atomic Industrial Forum, Finger described the new AEC-NASA organizational arrangements, which included the coordination of Space Nuclear Systems programs among and between the AEC and NASA, as well as the AEC's Space Electric Power Organization (Figures 1 and 2.) A new juncture had been reached. As the small, self-confident, and persevering RTG group prepared to launch their devices on vehicles to go to the Moon and beyond, they found the drama of space nuclear power filled with growing numbers of actors—both individuals and organizations.