

PREFACE

The 6th Spacecraft Charging Conference was held during 26 – 29 October 1998 at the Air Force Research Laboratory, Hanscom AFB, MA, USA. This was the 6th in a series of topical conferences spanning a period of more than 20 years. Over the years, the scope of the conference has slowly broadened to include other areas of spacecraft-plasma interactions such as Electro-dynamic Tethers and environmental issues with electric propulsion, and the control of low voltage spacecraft potentials. It is remarkable that although the basic physics of spacecraft charging is now well understood, new vulnerabilities continue to appear with advancing designs, and interest in the subject seems to be as strong as it was 24 years ago when the first conference was held at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Oct 31 1978. Attendance at the previous conferences was always representative of government, industry, and academia both foreign and domestic (U.S.). This conference was notable in that it was also co-sponsored by the European Space Agency Technology Centre, ESTEC. The lead sponsor was the Space Vehicles Directorate of AFRL with additional sponsorship from NASA-SEE (Space and Environmental Effects) at NASA-Marshall Space Flight Center, and NASA-Glenn Research Center.

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