

RAL

DESIGN & DISCOVERY

Open Days July 1990

RUTHERFORD APPLETON LABORATORY

SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH COUNCIL



RAL and the BNSC

BNSC

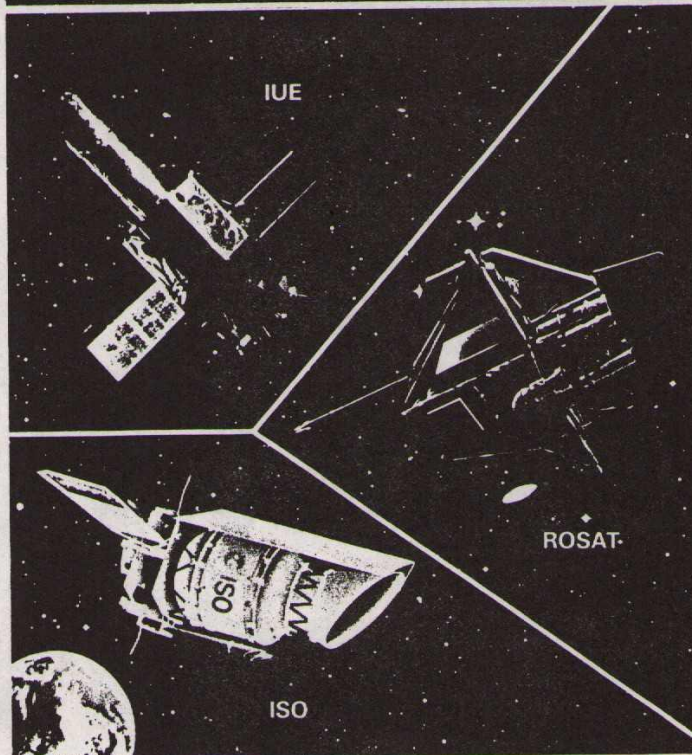
The Rutherford Appleton Laboratory is a national centre of expertise in space science and technology and as such plays an important role in implementing the projects of the British National Space Centre.

The British National Space Centre (BNSC) was formed at the end of 1985. Its role is to implement the UK's civil space programmes and projects and to advise Government on new programme proposals.

BNSC acts as a focus for the civil space interests of the Department of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department of Education and Science (through the Science and Engineering Research Council and the Natural Environment Research Council).



BNSC - the British National Space Centre. Focus for the UK's national and international civil space interests. Britain takes part in many advanced space science projects: the International Ultraviolet Explorer (IUE); ROSAT (a joint x-ray astronomy project led by West Germany, due for launch 1990), and ISO, the Infra-red Space Observatory, due for launch by ESA in 1993, are good examples



BNSC has a central staff operating from a London headquarters (currently situated in Millbank Tower, Westminster). These staff provide overall co-ordination of the programmes of the national partners, advice to Government on space matters, and provide a single point of contact internationally.

The SERC funds activities in Space Science and Earth Observation in universities and establishments, and the peer review process for these activities is carried out by BNSC on behalf of SERC through the Centre's Space Science Programme Board and Earth Observation Programme Board.

Projects and programmes are managed and implemented through various technical centres in the UK, and through industry. The Rutherford Appleton Laboratory is one of the two largest of these technical centres (the other being RAE, Farnborough).

RAL provides and operates a number of central facilities for university groups. These include design facilities including modern computer-aided systems; test facilities including clean rooms, vacuum tanks, vibration simulators and precision workshops; a satellite control centre; the Starlink and Geophysical Data Facility, providing data processing facilities to all Higher Educational Institutes; and data gateways and links to numerous international agencies and centres such as the European Space Agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the European Space Information System, the Hubble Space Telescope Institute and many others.

Staff at RAL are experienced in many aspects of space, including project management, systems design, electronic, electrical and mechanical engineering, optics, cryogenics, data processing, satellite orbits, mission control and analysis, programming, data archiving, quality assurance, and many other aspects. This "stock" of skills is extensively used in the UK space programme.

For further information contact Professor J E Harries, Ext 6558.

