

1985 Jan post flight inspection SIC
Seals: primary seals, 2 joints
RB reported this to supervisors
briefed MSFC (NASA)
Feb presentations to higher levels
low temp. suggested as cause
NASA: soften position
April launch still planned
March tests: low temp. is cause
MT mgt: too sensitive to release

1985 June: more post flight inspections
primary seal erosion

RB: secondary seal could also
erode/be compromised

July: more presentations to NASA
test results presented; cold temp.
did affect sealing.

RB: concerned, not being
taken seriously

tries to get seal erosion team
formed

July 31

RB: memo to VP Eng, MT: possible
consequences; loss of flight, launch pad, facilities

July/Aug: Team formed officially



meetings, reports

Sept

NAASA: do not express critical negativity

MTang: contact local vendors

RFB concerned: lack of mgt. support
for team,

writes several reports, and responses

1986 Jan 24: meeting: do not discuss under SSF
NAASA: unhappy

MT: mgt. decision, much discussion
recommended through NAASA system

1986 Jan 28

RB noted in log: disagreed

rocket exploded (73 sec. after launch)

Jan 31

failure investigation team formed.

Feb 13

Pres. Commission hearing scheduled
for next day

closed session RB, VP Space Booster, Eng.

RB gave documents to Commission member

RB isolated

1986 Jan 28 explosion

Jan 31 failure investigation team formed

tension RB/eng - MT mgt.

Feb Pres. Commission

tension

RB in disfavor with MT mgt.

RB isolated, seal coordinator
for redesign effort

July 21

RB → sick leave

1985 July 31. RB memo → VP Eng, MT

1986 Feb. RB documents → Pres. Comm.



RB Sick, eng. opinion not valued

RB - MT relationship probably destroyed.

Rocket exploded

re-design effort questionable direction

+
experience to share with others = eng., govt,
precedent for eng. firms public

lessons: choose carefully the way you express
views, opinions

What should RB have done?

less

resign (after memo)

no memo at all,
keep quiet

time?

more

{ better thought out strategy for
getting msg. to MT mgt.
generate base of support among eng.
next level more slowly

go to astronauts

go to Congress

resign, then
go public (media)

nothing,
no memos,
keep quiet

Resign
without
writing
a memo

Resign
after
memo

write
memo
& stay

better strategy
for convincing
NT mgt., other
eng.

base of support
among other
eng.

maybe OK,
probably not

OK,
but not
enough

+
(-)

go to NASA

(+)

go to astronauts

+/-

go to Congress

?

go to public

very high
risks for prof. ^{RB}

NO

(no)

RB OK.
public endangered.