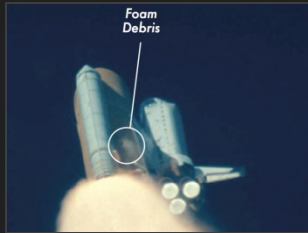


Safety Moment - Stop Work Authority



Foam debris.

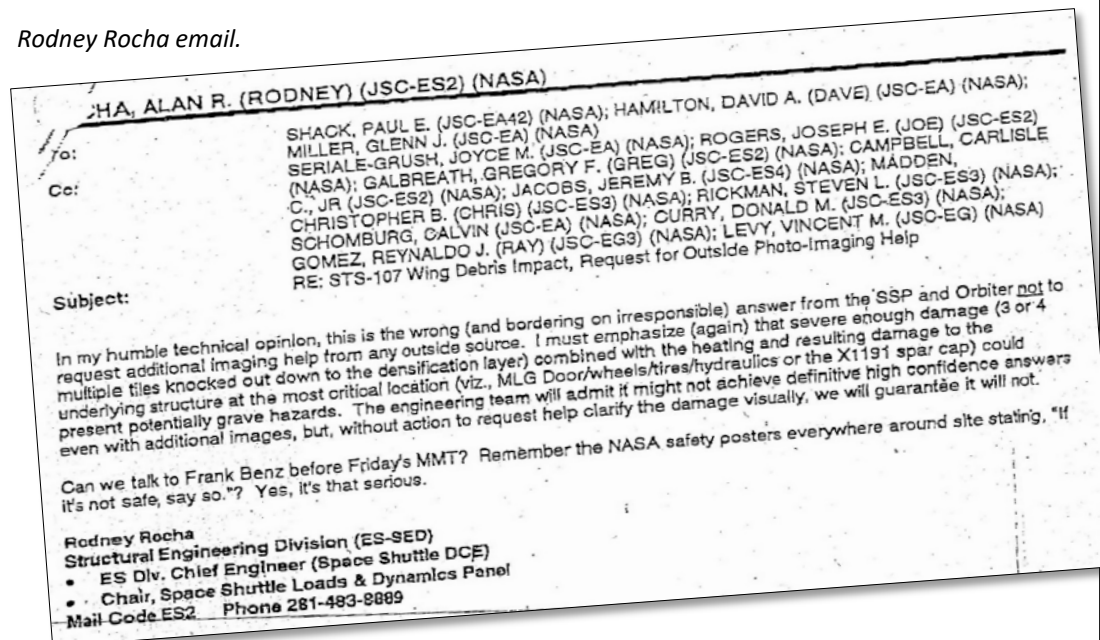
After reviewing the film footage from the launch of the Space Shuttle Columbia in 2003, engineers noted a piece of foam from the external fuel tank had broken off and impacted the leading edge of the shuttle wing.



Damage from a simulation of the foam hitting the wing at 525 mph.

Most felt it was essentially harmless, comparing it to a Styrofoam cooler blowing out of a pickup ahead of you and striking your windshield, and that nothing untoward would happen.

Rodney Rocha email.



- NASA engineer Rodney Rocha felt otherwise. He advocated, albeit unsuccessfully, to have earth-based or space-based telescopes try to obtain images and assess the potential damage.
- Although he referenced NASA safety posters that said: **"If it's not safe, say so."** ...unfortunately, NASA management did not **"Stop Work"**.
- The crew of STS-107 died upon reentry.

