

Michael A. Fitzgerald
Final

Architecture Note
#19
Published August 2018

Is the Space Elevator a Rope?

Michael A. Fitzgerald
July 2018

Michael A. Fitzgerald

Final

Personal Prolog

This is an Architecture Note. It is the opinion of ISEC's Chief Architect. It represents an effort to document ISEC's ongoing science and engineering discussions; and is one of many to be published over time. Most importantly, it is a sincere effort to be the diary, or the chronicle, of the multitude of our technical considerations as we progress; along the pathway developing the Space Elevator.

Michael A. Fitzgerald

ISEC is chasing a dream ... is it the right dream or are we pushing a rope?

Introduction

It was in the movie Titanic. Leonardo de Caprio was on the bow of the ship, leaning forward, screaming for all to hear; dreaming of the exciting adventures to come to him when he got to America. We all know how that turned out, but it certainly was of no fault to Leonardo's movie character. Other forces intervened. Most were simply less than competent, some were nefarious, some were misinformed. The outcome was at best ... sad.

ISEC needs to understand that we are not alone. We are going to encounter other players; and they might be misinformed, or less than competent, or nefarious, or simply not dreamers. What shall we do? We need to form our story (stories) and stick to it (them).

Recent wake up call.

In a recent effort to develop some collaborative activities to help promote our dream, I encountered a fellow space enthusiast and, hoping for a joint meeting on the bow – leaning forward in tandem; I found that he was not burdened with any enthusiasm for space elevators. Now, you and I KNOW that our dream will come true eventually; but collaborating with him? Dream elsewhere.

Michael A. Fitzgerald

Final

There was no point to trying to change his stance by updating him on all the wonderful progress and all the recent exciting news. I simply said ... "Thank you. We'll proceed". What he probably doesn't realize is I meant the "Thank You" part more than the "We'll proceed" part. He made no disparaging comments. He simply levied a much higher information standard than I was prepared to convey. THAT, was the wakeup call! He was a bit out touch regarding our recent progress --- but, heck, who isn't!

Our story and let's stick to it

ISEC is having a small conference in Seattle this month. Our theme is that the *Space Elevator Transportation System development is closer than you think*. That is our story. ISEC is going to review the seven positive statements of the preliminary Technology Readiness Assessment and make sure that development is ready for each of the segments of the Transportation System. ISEC is going to do that self-examination with thoroughness. That is our story and we are sticking to it.

Other stories and sticking to them

Another feature of our August conference is that ISEC is starting an Outreach effort over the next year or two (or whatever it takes). The key aspect of our outreach plan is to identify Outreach clients and make sure they have the sufficient information about Space Elevators. In other words, find out how high the Outreach client has set the information standard. Then assembled the information and get back to the Outreach client; relentlessly. We have started. That is our story and we are sticking to it.

Outreach topics / clients

1. Strategic Technology
2. Space Traffic Management
3. International Jurisdictions
4. Legal Structures
5. Interplanetary Space Operations.
6. And more.

Michael A. Fitzgerald

Final

These several topics are associated with different clients who have relatively unique information needs. ISEC's new job is to go beyond the technical Body of Knowledge that has driven us for years. It is time to gather knowledge so that we can join with others and collaborate.

In closing

Thanks John. More to come

Fitzer