Lockheed Martin Establishes Altair Program Office In Texas To Pursue NASA's Lunar Lander Project

PRNewswire
DENVER

Lockheed Martin announced it has located its Altair program office in Houston, Texas, in its bid to provide support for the next-generation human lunar lander system for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The company submitted its proposal to NASA last month for the Altair Conceptual Design Contract and the agency is expected to award several contracts for the first phase of the program later this spring.

The Altair lunar lander is a key element of NASA's Constellation Program, which encompasses the spacecraft, launch vehicles, infrastructure and support systems that will be needed to return human explorers to the moon and establish a lunar outpost for much longer duration missions than ever achieved in previous decades under the Apollo program. The experience, capabilities and technologies developed and utilized for Altair missions also will enable human exploration to extend beyond the moon to other destinations in the solar system.

"We recognize that locating key expertise and program management support in Houston adjacent to NASA's Johnson Space Center, where the Constellation Program and Altair Project offices are located, allows us to provide responsive and comprehensive support to NASA on the Altair Conceptual Design Contract," said Brian Duffy, vice president and program manager of the Altair Lunar Lander program for Lockheed Martin. "Utilizing the existing facilities and our experienced human space flight team in the Houston area provides significant synergy that we are bringing to bear for NASA's next-generation lunar missions."

Duffy, a four-time Shuttle astronaut and commander of two of the missions, executed four rendezvous maneuvers with other spacecraft and docked with the International Space Station. He also participated in the development and testing of displays, flight crew procedures, and computer software to be used on Shuttle flights, all of which have given him unique and valuable expertise that will be useful in assisting NASA in designing the elements of a new generation of Altair lunar spacecraft and successful lunar missions in the future.

As currently envisioned, NASA's Altair, standing over two stories high, will be able to transport and house as many as four astronauts onto the lunar surface and is comprised of two primary elements. The descent stage will house the majority of the fuel, power supplies, and breathing oxygen for the crew. The ascent stage will house the astronauts, life-support equipment, and fuel for the ascent stage motor and steering rockets. Once on the surface, the crew will be able to stay on the moon for up to six months at a time, with the Orion crew exploration vehicle orbiting above and awaiting the crew's return for the trip back to Earth. The first crewed flight is scheduled for 2020.

Lockheed Martin is the prime contractor to NASA for the Orion crew exploration vehicle, which is scheduled to make its first crewed flight in 2015. The Orion spacecraft will be a complex, state-of-the-art spacecraft with the most capability, flexibility and adaptability of any previous space flight vehicle.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 146,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2008 sales of $42.7 billion.

Media Contact: Joan Underwood, Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company
Office 303-971-7398; Mobile 303-594-7073
email, joan.b.underwood@lmco.com

For additional information, visit our website:
http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

First Call Analyst:
FCMN Contact:

SOURCE: Lockheed Martin

Web Site: http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

https://news.lockheedmartin.com/2009-03-17-Lockheed-Martin-Establishes-Altair-Program-Office-in-Texas-to-Pursue-NASAs-Lunar-Lander-Project