

Lockheed Martin's Orion Program Is 'Go For CDR'

PRNewswire
HOUSTON

With a unanimous vote by NASA's Constellation and Orion Project managers, the Lockheed Martin-led industry team building the Orion crew exploration vehicle successfully passed a significant milestone in the new spacecraft's development phase - the preliminary design review (PDR).

Successful completion of the PDR stage allows the team to enter Orion's critical design review (CDR) phase, a vital milestone that must be met before hardware manufacturing begins. During the review process, detailed components and subsystems of the vehicle design are assessed to ensure the overall system will meet all NASA requirements for safe and reliable flight.

"We were very pleased with the positive feedback we received from NASA leadership, particularly in regards to the tremendous progress we have made in crew and vehicle safety enhancements and our manufacturing preparedness," said Cleon Lacefield, Lockheed Martin vice president and Orion program manager. "As we move from PDR to CDR, we will continue to enhance the vehicle's safety and life support system designs to ensure we move forward to build the safest and most reliable spacecraft possible."

Other significant milestones the Orion program achieved this year included renovation and certification of the Operations & Checkout Facility at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, Orion ground test article fabrication at the Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans, final delivery of the launch abort system's abort and jettison motors, and a series of component and subsystem tests at facilities across the country.

The next major milestone will be the inaugural flight test for Orion's launch abort system, called Pad Abort 1, which will take place at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico early next year. Several flight tests are scheduled over the next few years, leading up to Orion's first crewed flight to the International Space Station in 2015.

As the prime contractor to NASA for the Orion Project, Lockheed Martin is responsible for designing and building this state-of-the-art spacecraft that will have more flexible space exploration capability than any previous human space flight vehicle. The Orion spacecraft will be the flagship of the Constellation Program's plan to return humans to the moon and prepare for future voyages to other destinations in our solar system.

The Lockheed Martin Orion Project office is based in Houston, Texas, near NASA's Johnson Space Center. The team includes major subcontractors Aerojet, Alliant Techsystems (ATK), Hamilton Sundstrand, Honeywell, Orbital Sciences Corporation and United Space Alliance; and a network of 60 minor subcontractors and small businesses in 22 states across the country.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 140,000 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.

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