

Lockheed Martin Ships Out First Orion Spacecraft

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 10, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) Orion team shipped out the first Orion crew module spacecraft structure today from NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans, La. The spacecraft is headed to Lockheed Martin's Denver, Colo. facilities where it will undergo a series of rigorous tests to confirm Orion's ability to safely fly astronauts through all the harsh environments of deep space exploration missions.

Soon after the spacecraft arrives in Denver, it will be integrated with the [heat shield](#) and thermal protection backshell before undergoing environmental testing. This crew module will also go through a series of simulated landing scenarios at Langley's new Hydro Impact Basin. The Langley facility will be used to test, validate and certify water landings for all human-rated spacecraft for NASA.

"This is a significant milestone for the [Orion](#) project and puts us on the right path toward achieving the President's objective of Orion's first crewed mission by 2016," said Cleon Lacefield, Lockheed Martin vice president and Orion program manager. "Orion's upcoming performance tests will demonstrate how the spacecraft meets the challenges of deep-space mission environments such as ascent, launch abort, on-orbit operations, high-speed return trajectory, parachute deployment, and water landings in a variety of sea states."

Built to spaceflight specifications, this Orion ground test vehicle has already validated advanced production processes, equipment and tools required to manufacture the Orion crew module space flight hardware. Data collected from the testing and pathfinding operations will be incorporated to enhance design, requirements, tooling, processes, inspection and test that will ultimately result in a safe, reliable and affordable human-rated space exploration vehicle.

Orion has passed critical human-rating milestones, including Orion's flawless flight test of its [launch abort system](#) and the successful phase one [safety review](#) that validated Orion meets many of NASA's stringent requirements for safe human spaceflight.

Lockheed Martin is the prime contractor to NASA for the Orion crew exploration vehicle – the nation's next generation spacecraft that features advanced technologies for more complex and challenging human space exploration missions throughout our solar system. The Orion spacecraft will be comprised of a crew module for crew and cargo transport; a service module for propulsion, electrical power and fluids storage; a spacecraft adapter for securing it to a launch vehicle, and a launch abort system that will significantly improve crew safety.

Lockheed Martin leads the Orion industry team which includes major subcontractors as well as a nationwide network of minor subcontractors and small businesses. In addition, Lockheed Martin contracts with hundreds of small and disadvantaged business suppliers across the United States through an expansive supply chain network.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 132,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's 2010 sales from continuing operations were \$45.8 billion.

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For photos and video files for this release, go to:
<http://www.lockheedmartin.com/orion>

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