



countdown

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Crews assigned to 2009, 2010 missions



◆ Shuttle Update:

NASA announced Friday the crew assignments for space shuttle missions STS-130 and STS-131.

Targeted for launch in December 2009, the STS-130 mission will deliver a third connecting module to the International Space Station and the seven-window Cupola to be used as a control room for robotics. The crew comprises Commander George Zamka, Pilot Terry Virts Jr., and Mission Specialists Robert Behnken, Nicholas Patrick, Kathryn Hire and Stephen Robinson.

The STS-131 mission, targeted for launch in February 2010, will deliver research and science experiment equipment, a new sleeping area and supplies to the station in a logistics module carried in the shuttle's payload bay. The crew comprises Commander Alan Poindexter, Pilot James P. Dutton Jr., and Mission Specialists Rick Mastracchio, Clayton Anderson, Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger, Stephanie Wilson and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Naoko Yamazaki.

◆ **ELV Update:** Stacking of the Delta II rocket for the Feb. 4 NOAA-N Prime launch at Space Launch Complex 2 began last week. The first stage was installed into the launcher Dec. 2. The three solid rocket boosters were attached around the base of the first stage Dec. 3. The second stage was hoisted atop the first stage Dec. 5. Also last week, the payload fairing that will encapsulate NOAA-N Prime was installed into the clean room within the mobile service tower.

Stacking under way for NOAA-N Prime Delta II rocket

Flight antenna installations were planned for Dec. 6. Instrument inspections and cleaning are scheduled this week.

■ **Endeavour Return:** The ferry flight tail cone was successfully attached onto Endeavour Saturday. Work Sunday involved hoisting the landing gear, configuring the body flap and flight controls, and aft closeouts. Endeavour was expected to be attached to the top of its shuttle carrier aircraft Monday evening. The decision was made to begin the ferry flight at sunrise on Wednesday. Arrival at Kennedy Space Center will be Thursday or Friday depending on weather associated with a slowly advancing cold front. Departure on Wednesday is planned for 9:29 a.m. EST.

■ **PM Challenge 2009 Registration Now Open!** Registration is now open for the NASA PM Challenge 2009, Feb. 24-25. Register today at: <http://pmchallenge.gsfc.nasa.gov/registration2009.htm>.

■ **NASA News Update:** A multiuse materials science laboratory arrived Dec. 4 at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla., to begin the first leg of its journey to the International Space Station. The research rack traveled from NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., to Kennedy for final flight preparations.

The Materials Science Research Rack, or MSRR, will allow for study of a variety of materials including metals, ceramics, semiconductor crystals and glasses onboard the orbiting laboratory. It is scheduled to fly aboard space shuttle Atlantis on mission STS-128, targeted for

launch in July 2009. After arriving at the station, the rack will be housed in the U.S. Destiny laboratory.

The research rack is a highly automated facility and contains two furnace inserts in which sample cartridges will be processed up to temperatures of 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit. The MSRR is about the size of a large refrigerator, measuring 6 feet high, 3.5 feet wide and 40 inches deep, and weighing about 1 ton. The rack will be installed in the Leonardo logistics module for transport to the station.

■ **Systems Engineers...What Good Are They?** Dr. Wiley Larson, director of the Stevens Space System Engineering School of Systems and Enterprises at Stevens Institute of Technology, will offer a spirited and insightful talk on the values of systems engineering and the characteristics and capabilities "good" systems engineers possess. The session is scheduled at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday in the O&C Bldg./Conference Room 4268. Bring your lunch and hear what Dr. Larson and Stevens Institute of Technology have to offer.

■ **Traffic Reminder** — NASA Causeway west-bound traffic is restricted to one lane of traffic between H Avenue and E Avenue through Saturday at 7 a.m.

Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday for NASA KSC employees. Deadlines are 9 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. E-mail news to anita.l.barrett@nasa.gov. For questions or information, e-mail or call 867-2815. You can also find PDF editions of *Countdown* on the Web at: http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown_toc.html.