



**Dr. Dale Thomas,
Associate Director, Technical
Office of the Director,
NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center**



Dr. L. Dale Thomas is the associate director, technical, supporting the Office of the Center Director at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala.

Named to the position in March 2011, Dr. Thomas provides expert technical advice and assistance to Marshall Center Director Robert Lightfoot in support of the entire body of engineering, science and propulsion work conducted at the center. He performs special studies; advises and assists in policy review; manages and reports on centerwide metrics; and develops new technical benchmarking strategies. He works closely with senior managers in all these endeavors, ensuring Marshall programs and projects are timely, technically sound and serve the goals and requirements of the agency and the nation.

Dr. Thomas previously managed the Constellation Program from 2010 to 2011, and served as deputy manager from 2007 to 2010. He helped lead development of NASA's next generation of spaceflight systems. The Constellation Program provided the foundation for, and resolved challenges that will help the agency deliver, the Space Launch System, Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, and ground systems that will, in coming years, carry human explorers and science payloads on new missions into the solar system.

From 2006 to 2007, he was the chief of the Systems Engineering Division in the Marshall Center's Spacecraft & Vehicle Systems Department, where he led a team of more than 100 engineers who supported development of next-generation launch vehicles.

Dr. Thomas managed the Systems Engineering and Integration Office from 2004 to 2006, handling oversight of all programs and projects managed by Marshall's Space Transportation Programs & Projects Office. His responsibilities included ensuring consistent implementation of tools and engineering best practices for systems analysis, systems engineering and risk assessment.

From 2002 to 2004, he was director of the Systems Management Office, supervising project management and systems engineering activities for all center programs and projects. From 2001 to 2002, he served as manager of Marshall's Systems Engineering and Integration Office, leading overall systems engineering and integration for next-generation launch vehicle development.

Dr. Thomas was manager of the Marshall Center's Systems Engineering Office from 1999 to 2001, tasked with assuring sufficiency of system engineering in all center flight projects and programs. He served as chief of the Systems Test Division from 1998 to 1999, managing functional tests and checkout of launch vehicles, spacecraft and payloads developed by Marshall and its contractors. From 1996 to 1998, he was the technical assistant to the director of the Systems Engineering & Integration Laboratory, providing systems engineering and integration expertise.

From 1993 to 1996, Dr. Thomas managed the Vehicle Analysis & Integration Team in the Space Station Program Office at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. His duties included leadership of flight vehicle configuration and subsystems architectures, design integration, test and verification.

He was a project engineer at the Marshall Center from 1988 to 1993, managing selected disciplines in the detailed design and development activity for the International Space Station. He began his NASA career in 1983 as an aerospace engineer in Marshall's Systems Analysis & Integration Laboratory.

Dr. Thomas has received numerous honors and awards during his NASA career, including the NASA Outstanding Leadership Medal in 2000 for outstanding superior leadership in formulation of the Intelligent Synthesis Environment -- a program that enhanced the rapid creation of innovative, affordable products and missions -- and for leading the center's solicitation of the Intelligent Synthesis Environment proposals. He was awarded the NASA Exceptional Service Medal in 2007 for his outstanding commitment to systems engineering for current and future space vehicle and systems design, development and support.

In 2002, he received the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal for outstanding leadership, management and exemplary performance in support of the Space Launch Initiative's Second-Generation Reusable Launch Vehicle Program. In 1999, he was recognized with a Silver Snoopy Award -- the highest honor bestowed by the NASA Astronaut Corps -- for professionalism, dedication and outstanding support that greatly enhanced flight safety and mission success. He also was recognized as a distinguished engineering alumnus by the University of Alabama in Huntsville in 2002, for his outstanding contributions in industrial and systems engineering.

Dr. Thomas received a bachelor's degree in industrial and systems engineering in 1981 from the University of Alabama in Huntsville; and a master's degree in industrial engineering in 1983 from North Carolina State University in Raleigh. He earned a doctorate in systems engineering in 1988 from the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

A native of Albertville, Ala., Dr. Thomas and his family live in Huntsville.