

Charles Bolden, NASA Administrator

Completion of COTS Press Briefing

NASA Headquarters

November 13, 2013

- Thank you, Trent. And thank you to today's briefing participants.
- I want to welcome all of you to this milestone moment in NASA's commitment to transition the transportation of both cargo and crew to the International Space Station and other future low Earth orbit destinations to commercial industry partners.
- A little more than two years after the end of the Space Shuttle Program, two American companies, SpaceX of Hawthorne, California and Orbital Sciences Corp. of Dulles, Va. have restored American capability to deliver and return experiments and supplies to the International Space Station (ISS), replacing our reliance on foreign providers.
- Their successes mark the conclusion of NASA's Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (or COTS) program, and clear the way for both companies to begin providing regular transportation services to the ISS.
- SpaceX completed its COTS development with a demonstration mission to the space station last year. Since then, the company has flown the first two of 12 contracted cargo resupply flights to the space station.

- Orbital Sciences ended its development phase in October of this year, with a successful demonstration mission to the space station. Orbital is poised to launch the first of its eight cargo resupply missions to the space station in December.
- These achievements are the result of strong, bipartisan leadership by the Obama and Bush Administrations as well as the extraordinary skill and dedication of the men and women of NASA and our partners in the private sector.
- Building on this public-private partnership model, President Obama has invested in an even more ambitious plan to have American companies transport our astronauts to the ISS on spacecraft launched from American soil, ending the outsourcing of this work overseas. It is now critically important to get full funding from Congress to keep us on track to begin these launches in 2017.
- Three companies: SpaceX, Boeing and Sierra Nevada are already hard at work developing the next generation spacecraft and rockets capable of transporting humans to and from low-Earth orbit from American soil.
- Next week, we will issue a final Request for Proposals for contracts designed to ensure commercial companies meet NASA's safety requirements for transporting NASA crews to the space station.
- So in many ways the completion of COTS is simply a passing of the torch of innovation to our partners in the Commercial Crew Program.

- Today, it is absolutely clear: America's best days in space exploration are ahead of us thanks to the grit and determination of those in government -- and the private sector—who dare to dream big dreams, and have the skills to turn them into reality.
- In a moment, you will hear details of our COTS successes from the key architects of the program. At this time I want to recognize all of them for bringing us to this historic turning point by presenting each of them with a NASA Group Achievement Award.
- First, to Alan Lindenmoyer, Manager of NASA's Commercial Crew and Cargo Program. The citation reads: "For outstanding contributions and innovative accomplishments in the area of human space exploration by facilitating the development of a new generation of American rockets and spacecraft, paving the way for 21st century commercial spaceflight."
- To Gwynne Shotwell, President of SpaceX and Frank Culbertson, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Orbital Sciences Advanced Programs Group: Their citations read: "For outstanding contributions and innovative accomplishments in the area of human space exploration by developing a new generation of American rockets and spacecraft, paving the way for 21st century commercial spaceflight."
- Congratulations and thank you all.
- And now back to Trent...