International Space Station Research Laboratory Passes NASA Review

The Boeing-built research laboratory, Destiny, which is designed to be the centerpiece of the International Space Station when it is launched early next year, has successfully passed an Acceptance Review Board at Kennedy Space Center (KSC).

Prior to turning over space station hardware to NASA, representatives from Boeing and the space agency review all the engineering and testing documents to ensure an element is ready for the next phase of pre-flight preparations. The board was held Aug. 30 and 31.

"The success of our customer's review signifies the tremendous engineering intellect and know-how of all the Boeing employees who were involved in this complex project from California to Texas to Alabama and Florida," said David Bethay, Boeing KSC cargo element manager for the U.S. lab. "We should all be very proud of this outstanding accomplishment and its historic significance for the nation's manned space program and Boeing."

The 28-foot, 16-ton, state-of-the-art research laboratory was built by Boeing at Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., and shipped to Kennedy Space Center in 1998. Astronauts will work inside the pressurized facility to conduct research in a variety of scientific disciplines. Scientists around the world will use the research results to enhance their studies in medicine, engineering, biotechnology, physics and materials science.

Packed inside Destiny are five systems racks that will provide life-sustaining functions on board, including electrical power, cooling water, air revitalization and temperature and humidity control. Each rack weighs about 1,200 pounds. Six additional systems rack will be flown to Destiny in February, 2001. Thirteen racks that will provide platforms for a variety of scientific experiments will follow on subsequent missions.

Over the next few months, leading up to a scheduled Jan. 18, 2001 launch date, Destiny will complete a series of tests and milestones including closing both hatches for the last time on Earth. Several astronaut crews, including the three members of the Expedition One team who will become the station's first inhabitants when they arrive in late October, will perform an equipment interface test.

Nearly ninety percent of the station's hardware has been manufactured and more than 280,000 pounds is at KSC undergoing final assembly and pre-flight testing. Sixteen nations are involved in this largest and most complex international project ever undertaken. When fully assembled in 2006, Destiny will be among a complement of six main research laboratories available to astronauts. The other labs are the U.S. built centrifuge accommodation module (CAM); the European Space Agency laboratory called Columbus; the Japanese experiment module called Kibo; and two Russian research modules.

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