

## Boeing Launches Orbital Space Plane Design

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Boeing [NYSE: BA] engineers are designing the Orbital Space Plane (OSP) for NASA utilizing nearly 50 years of expertise in producing spacecraft.

Boeing is one of three contractor teams developing proposals for the program which includes the spacecraft, ground operations and all supporting technologies needed to conduct missions to and from the International Space Station.

Boeing was awarded a \$45 million contract modification on the NASA Space Launch Initiative program for work on the space plane. The modification extends the current contract through July 2004.

The Orbital Space Plane will be a multipurpose spacecraft that can perform crew rescue vehicle and crew transfer vehicle missions for the space station. It will be compatible with current expendable rockets and future reusable launch vehicles and will seat four to six people.

"Our experience from Mercury to Gemini, from Apollo to the space shuttle, gives us significant knowledge base and proficiency to build upon," said Volker Roth, program manager for Boeing on this program in Huntsville, Ala. "We are drawing on the best of industry for this team."

OSP also draws upon research conducted with the X-37 built by Phantom Works, the research and development unit of Boeing. The X-37 serves as a test bed for 40 airframe, propulsion and operational technologies designed to make space transportation more affordable.

Under the Space Launch Initiative, Boeing will determine a technical and program approach for a future Orbital Space Plane. The concept definition phase is scheduled to last 16 months and includes a series of systems engineering trade studies. The results will be more specific definitions and solutions based on requirements set by NASA. This includes program elements, estimated life cycle cost for various alternatives and vehicle design recommendations.

"Space is a challenging environment," added Roth. "The Orbital Space Plane will be designed to provide safe, reliable and affordable access to space for humans."

NASA is expected to proceed with full-scale development of the OSP before the end of 2004. In addition to this contract effort, Boeing is preparing to compete for the next phase of the OSP in 2004.

Boeing Phantom Works will manage the Orbital Space Plane Phase A Program from facilities in Huntsville, Ala., and will employ about 120 persons in Houston, Huntington Beach, Calif., and the Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

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