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Space Shuttle Endeavour returned home today following a two-week mission that delivered more than 740 Boeing [NYSE: BA] flight hardware components to the International Space Station. The hardware, including the Starboard 5 (S5) truss element, will increase available power for space station systems.

"This was a very busy mission, and the Boeing Space Exploration team has worked very hard to support NASA and the United Space Alliance," said Brewster Shaw, vice president and general manager of Boeing Space Exploration.

The Boeing-built, two-ton, 11-foot-long (1.8-metric ton, 3.4-meter) S5 truss allows one quarter of the space station's power to be realized. Designed in Huntington Beach, Calif, and built in Tulsa, Okla., the S5 truss element is part of the space station's 11-segment integrated truss structure and the third starboard truss element to be delivered.

The S5 truss is a short spacer that connects the Starboard 4 and 6 solar arrays, maximizing available power onboard the space station. The girder-like structure is made mostly of aluminum and provides several extravehicular aids, robotic interfaces, an external storage platform and ammonia servicing hardware.

During the mission, NASA also used the Boeing-built Station-Shuttle Power Transfer System (SSPTS) for the first time to extend a shuttle mission. SSPTS allows the station to power shuttle orbiters using its solar arrays, enabling crew members to conduct additional science activities and unload added cargo.

NASA extended the STS-118 mission by three days and added a fourth spacewalk with the successful activation of the SSPTS. NASA cut the mission short, however, due to the threat of Hurricane Dean.

With the shuttle fleet retiring in 2010, the SPPTS will allow NASA to complete more work on the space station without scheduling additional missions. Boeing and NASA also modified Space Shuttle Discovery with the capability.

The two-week mission also saw the installation of a new Control Moment Gyroscope (CMG) as part of the orbiting outpost's attitude control system. As the prime contractor for the space station, Boeing is the integrator for the CMG. NASA will return the failed unit on a later shuttle mission. All four CMGs currently installed on the space station are functioning normally.

In addition to designing, developing and integrating the hardware, Boeing assisted NASA with critical mission analysis that concluded that a damaged shuttle tile would not need to be repaired. If a repair had been required, the SPPTS would have enabled the shuttle to remain docked to the station until it was ready to depart.

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