Boeing Supports Addition of Newest Space Station Portal

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] is playing a significant role in the current 14-day Space Shuttle Discovery mission, which will deliver the European Space Agency's Harmony module to the International Space Station.

Boeing has worked with Thales Alenia Space in Torino, Italy, for more than 10 years to assemble and prepare the Harmony module for launch. Formerly known as Node 2, Harmony will act as an internal connecting port and passageway for future international science labs and cargo spacecraft. Thales Alenia Space built the utility node, while Boeing provided many of the subsystem components essential to supporting life on the station.

"This is a challenging assignment, and it will take another total team effort to ensure the success of one of NASA's most complex assembly missions," said Brewster Shaw, vice president and general manager of Boeing Space Exploration. "I'm proud of the pre-planning by our entire Space Exploration team as we work toward bringing the station one step closer to completion."

Harmony measures 23.6-feet long by 14.5-feet wide and weighs 31,500 pounds. The module adds 2,666 cubic feet of living space and several much needed storage racks. The Boeing subsystem components include lights, fans, power switches and converters, racks, air diffusers, smoke detectors, hatches and common berthing mechanisms, which help mate arriving pressurized elements to the existing on-orbit platform.

Harmony will be the first permanent pressurized module added to the station since the Russian Pirs Docking Compartment was added in September 2001. It joins three other named U.S. modules on the station, including the Boeing-built Destiny laboratory. Harmony will allow the distribution of resources from the station's truss to the Destiny lab and, in the future, to the European Space Agency's Columbus research laboratory and the Japanese Kibo experiment module.

During the mission, astronauts also will relocate the Boeing-built Port 6 truss and solar arrays to their permanent location on the far left of the station's (Port 5) truss structure. The solar arrays will provide the extra power needed to support future station growth as well as additional research activities.

The STS-120 mission marks the second time the Boeing-engineered Station-Shuttle Power Transfer System (SSPTS) will be used to allow the shuttle to remain docked on orbit for a longer period. The first use of the SSPTS occurred during STS-118 in August.

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