

Boeing Astronaut Passes Starliner Torch to Veteran NASA Astronaut

- Barry “Butch” Wilmore will now command the Starliner Crew Flight Test

HOUSTON, Oct. 7, 2020 — NASA has chosen veteran astronaut Barry “Butch” Wilmore to serve as commander of Boeing’s [NYSE: BA] CST-100 Starliner for the Crew Flight Test. He replaces Boeing astronaut Chris Ferguson, who decided not to fly for personal reasons. Wilmore, who has already been training for a Starliner flight as a backup crew member, will join Nicole Mann and Mike Fincke for this first crewed mission of the Starliner spacecraft.

“I’m grateful to Chris for his exceptional leadership and insight into this very complex and most capable vehicle,” Wilmore said. “Having had the chance to train alongside and view this outstanding crew as backup has been instrumental in my preparation to assume this position. Stepping down was a difficult decision for Chris, but with his leadership and assistance to this point, this crew is positioned for success. We will move forward in the same professional and dedicated manner that Chris has forged.”

Ferguson will serve as the director of Mission Integration and Operations where he will focus on ensuring the Starliner spacecraft and training systems meet the needs of NASA’s astronauts, as well as supporting them throughout their training and mission. In this role, Ferguson will be one of the last people the crew sees before leaving Earth and one of the first they see upon their return.

“My personal thank you to Chris for his leadership; he is putting his family first, which Boeing fully supports,” said Leanne Caret, president and CEO, Boeing Defense, Space & Security. “We are fortunate he will continue to take an active role on the Starliner program and bring his depth and breadth of experience in human spaceflight to the program.”

Ferguson has been an integral part of the Starliner program since 2011 after retiring from NASA as a three-time space shuttle veteran.

“I have full confidence in the Starliner vehicle, the men and women building and testing it, and the NASA astronauts who will ultimately fly it,” Ferguson said. “The Boeing team has taken all lessons from our first uncrewed Orbital Flight Test to heart, and is making Starliner one of the safest new crewed spacecraft ever fielded. I will be here on the ground supporting Butch, Nicole and Mike while they prove it.”

Wilmore will begin training with his crewmates immediately in preparation for the 2021 flight to the International Space Station.

“Butch will be able to step in seamlessly, and his previous experience on both space shuttle and space station missions make him a valuable addition to this flight,” said Kathy Lueders, associate administrator of NASA’s Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate. “Chris has been a talented member of the crew for this mission. The NASA and Boeing Commercial Crew teams sincerely appreciate the invaluable work he has completed and will continue to lead in the development of Starliner, which will help ensure that the Starliner Crew Flight Test will be a success.”

The development of a safe, reliable and cost-effective solution for crew transportation services to and from the International Space Station remains a priority for Boeing, allowing the on-orbit research facility to continue to fulfill its promise as a world-class laboratory.

For more about Starliner, visit www.boeing.com/starliner. Follow us on Twitter: [@BoeingSpace](https://twitter.com/BoeingSpace).

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Contact

Rebecca Regan
Boeing Defense, Space & Security
Office: +1 321-360-3663
Mobile: +1 321-607-2297
rebecca.a.regan@boeing.com
