

NASA selects Ares I upper state contractor

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has selected The Boeing Co. to provide design and construction support for the Ares I rocket upper stage.

Ares I will launch astronauts to the International Space Station and eventually help return humans to the moon.

Boeing was awarded a contract to provide support to a NASA-led design team and will be responsible for production of the Ares I upper stage. NASA said Boeing will also manufacture a ground test article, three flight test units and six production flight units to support NASA's flight manifest through 2016. Final assembly of the upper stage will take place at NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans.

NASA said the cost-plus-award-fee contract extends through 2016 with an estimated value of \$514.7 million.

Ares I is an in-line, two-stage rocket that will carry the crew exploration vehicle Orion into low Earth orbit. Orion will succeed the space shuttle as NASA's primary vehicle for human exploration during the next decade.

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