

Hurricanes Delay NASA's Spring 2005 Space Shuttle Launch

October 2 2004



[NASA](#) is working to determine how **four hurricanes** that affected several centers this year will impact efforts to return the Space [Shuttle](#) to flight. The agency has been working toward a launch-planning window that opens in March 2005.

Top officials in NASA's human space flight program met today. They determined the **March-April window is no longer achievable**. The Space Flight Leadership Council met in an executive session at NASA's Johnson Space Center, Houston. The council directed the Space Shuttle Program to assess how it would meet Return to Flight milestones for the next available launch window, which opens **May 14, 2005**. The Shuttle program will present its analysis at a late October leadership council meeting.

"More than a year ago, we set out a specific plan for Return to Flight with specific milestones. Right now, those milestones are pointing us toward a new launch window," said William Readdy, NASA's associate administrator for Space Operations. "I am proud of our Shuttle team for taking good care of our orbiters during this terrible storm season. I am pleased they are taking the time to make a careful assessment of the hurricanes' impact. Their thoroughness will help us make the right decision," he said.

During this year's Atlantic hurricane season, four storms affected four NASA facilities in the southeastern United States. Thankfully, no workers were injured and no spacecraft or hardware damaged. However, Hurricanes Charley, Frances, and Jeanne closed down NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla., for approximately nine days and damaged several facilities. Hurricane Ivan caused shorter closures at NASA's Stennis Space Center, Miss.; Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Ala.; and the Michoud Assembly Facility, New Orleans. Many NASA workers and contractors are still coping with damage to their homes and other impacts on their families.

NASA's Space Flight Leadership Council is co-chaired by Readdy and Walter Cantrell, deputy chief engineer for the Independent Technical Authority. The council also includes the directors for NASA's four space operations centers; Chief Officer for Safety and Mission Assurance Bryan O'Connor; and Deputy Associate Administrator for International Space Station and Space Shuttle Programs, Michael Kostelnik.

Source: NASA

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