

No shuttle launch before Saturday

July 13 2005

NASA officials said Wednesday the launch of space shuttle Discovery, which was scrubbed Wednesday, will have to wait until at least Saturday.

The launch, scheduled for 3:51 p.m. EDT, was scrubbed about 1:30 p.m. when a fuel sensor malfunctioned.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration head Mike Griffin said the development was disappointing.

"All I can say is, shucks," Griffin told reporters at the Kennedy Space Center.

Deputy Manager Space Shuttle Wayne Hale Jr. said engineers inspecting the problematic fuel sensor needed "about 5 minutes to decide it was time to try another day."

Hale said no decision on rescheduling the launch would be made until after 12 p.m. Thursday. He said the shuttle would "not in any conceivable way be ready to launch before Saturday."

All seven astronauts were safely removed from the shuttle shortly after the scrub was announced.

For most of the Discovery's 13-day mission, the crew will inspect the shuttle and test repair procedures. The astronauts will also deliver some supplies to the International Space Station, including a replacement gyroscope, an external storage platform and an Italian cargo carrier

called Raffaello.

The mission will mark first shuttle flight since the break up of shuttle Columbia during re-entry 2 ½ years ago.

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