

NASA's Space Shuttle Endeavour Comes To Life

October 7 2005

Engineers cheered as electricity coursed through Space Shuttle Endeavour today for the first time in two years. The powering of Endeavour signaled the end of the orbiter's major modification period at NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

"Having three operational vehicles in the fleet affords the shuttle program great schedule flexibility, as we move toward flying safely and completing the international space station," said Space Shuttle Program Manager Wayne Hale.

Engineers and technicians spent 900,000 hours performing 124 modifications to the vehicle. These included recommended return to flight safety modifications, bonding more than 1,000 thermal protection system tiles and inspecting more than 150 miles of wiring. Eighty five of the modifications are complete and 39 are still underway.

Two of the more extensive modifications included the addition of the multi-functional electronic display system (glass cockpit), and the three-string global positioning system.

The glass cockpit is a new, full-color, flat-panel display system that improves interaction between the crew and orbiter. It provides easy-to-read graphics portraying key flight indicators like attitude display and mach speed. Endeavour was the last vehicle in the fleet to receive this system.

The three-string global positioning system will improve the shuttle's landing capability. It will allow Endeavour to make a landing at any runway long enough to handle the shuttle. The previous system only allowed for landings at military bases.

"When Endeavour was powered up, the team cheered at the completion of all of their hard work and accomplishments during the modification period," said Tassos Abadiotakis, Endeavour's vehicle manager. "The team worked tirelessly to ensure the vehicle progressed though the modification period on time and on budget."

Shuttle major modification periods are scheduled at regular intervals to enhance safety and performance, infuse new technology and allow thorough inspections of the airframe and wiring. This was the second of modification period performed entirely at Kennedy. Endeavour's previous modification was completed in March 1997.

Endeavour is beginning 10-12 months of launch processing and power-up testing for a future flight, possibly late next year.

Copyright 2005 by Space Daily, Distributed United Press International

Citation: NASA's Space Shuttle Endeavour Comes To Life (2005, October 7) retrieved 20 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-10-nasa-space-shuttle-endeavour-life.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.