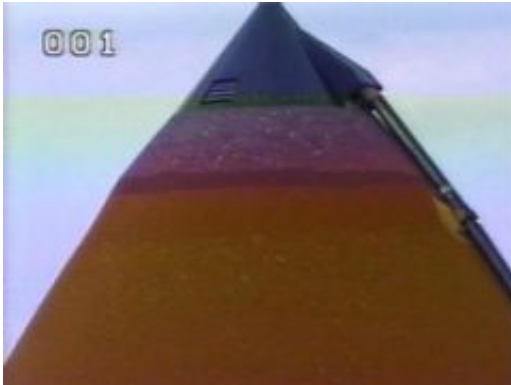


NASA may use a new shuttle fuel tank

April 5 2007



NASA said it will transport a new shuttle external fuel tank to the Kennedy Space Center in Florida this week.

The new tank is to arrive at the space center Friday and shuttle program managers are expected to meet early next week to decide whether to use the new tank for the STS-117 mission to the International Space Station instead of one under repair for hail damage.

Work continues to assess and repair the damaged tank, with foam repairs to its liquid hydrogen area -- located on the bottom of the external tank -- complete. The focus is currently on repairs to the liquid oxygen section.

During the STS-117's 11-day mission, the six-member crew will install a

new truss segment, retract a set of solar arrays and unfold a new set on the starboard side of the space station.

The crew is continuing training at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Johnson Space Center in Houston while awaiting a new launch date.

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