

# NASA picks Boeing as Ares I contractor

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The U.S. space agency has selected The Boeing Co. as the prime contractor to produce, deliver and install avionics systems for the Ares I rocket.

The rocket will launch the Orion crew exploration vehicle into orbit. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration said the selection announced Wednesday is the final major contract award for the Ares I project.

The launch vehicle is a key component of the Constellation Program, which will send humans to the moon by 2020 to establish a lunar outpost. NASA said Boeing will also develop and acquire avionics hardware for the rocket and assemble, inspect and integrate the avionics system on the upper stage.

The contract, with a total estimated value of nearly \$800 million, runs through Dec. 16, 2016.

NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., manages the Ares Project for NASA's Constellation Program, based at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

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