

Space detector prepares to scour universe for secrets (Update)

August 25 2010



The European Organisation for Nuclear Research's (CERN) Alpha Magnetics Spectrometer (AMS), is loaded onto a US Air Force C-5 Galaxy cargo plane at Geneva's international airport. The huge physics detector that will scour outer space for clues to the origins of the universe began the first stage of its voyage to the International Space Station at Geneva airport.

A huge physics detector that will scour outer space for clues to the origins of the universe began the first stage of its voyage to the International Space Station at Geneva airport on Wednesday.

The European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN) loaded the [Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer](#) (AMS) onto a giant C5 Galaxy US military transport plane, which will fly it to the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida on Thursday.

"The AMS left the research centre on Tuesday and was loaded onto an aircraft specially sent by the US air force on Wednesday," CERN spokesman James Gillies told AFP.

The AMS detector is due to reach the space station on the last US Space Shuttle mission towards the end of February 2011, he added.

The AMS is meant to complement attempts by the world's biggest atom smasher at CERN, the Large Hadron Collider, to unravel some of the secrets of the creation of the universe and add to its scientific data.

The detector's main target is the search for [dark matter](#) and antimatter, two of the mysterious missing links in human knowledge of the universe and life on earth.

The AMS "must notably find where antimatter came from", Gillies explained, by searching for stars in far flung galaxies that scientists believe to be entirely made of [antimatter](#).

Under the theoretical standard laws of physics, for every type of ordinary particle -- matter -- a corresponding "antiparticle" exists.

Despite the huge precautions and scientific precision surrounding the experiment, loading was delayed on Wednesday because of trouble squeezing the container into the aircraft.

The top of the container was eventually removed and covered with plastic to fit into the plane, [CERN](#) said.

(c) 2010 AFP

Citation: Space detector prepares to scour universe for secrets (Update) (2010, August 25) retrieved 25 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2010-08-space-detector-scour-universe-secrets.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.