

## Former astronaut criticizes NASA's current course

May 15 2012, by Jason Major

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Story Musgrave, 76, railed against the administration's current direction -- or lack thereof.

Former NASA astronaut Story Musgrave is neither happy nor excited about the current state of the space administration or about the commercial COTS (Commercial Orbital Transportation Services) program. He's not happy, and he's not afraid to say so.

“The whole thing is chaos and a cop out. The whole thing is a Washington failure,” Musgrave bluntly stated to Examiner.com’s Charles Atkeison in an [interview](#) this past weekend.

Musgrave was a [NASA](#) astronaut for over 30 years and was a crew member on six shuttle missions. He performed the first shuttle spacewalk on Challenger’s first flight, was a pilot on an astronomy mission, was the lead spacewalker on the Hubble repair mission and on his last flight he operated an electronic chip manufacturing satellite on Columbia.

He has 7 graduate degrees in math, computers, chemistry, medicine, physiology, literature and psychology. He has been awarded 20 honorary doctorates and was a part-time trauma surgeon during his 30 year astronaut career.

And, according to Atkeison, Musgrave “feels the space agency has no true goals or focus today.”

“We’re not going anywhere... there is no where, there is no what, and there is no when,” the former astronaut told Atkeison. “There is no Mars program, none. There is also no Moon program. There is no asteroid program... there’s no what we’re gonna do and no when we’re gonna do it.”

Neither does Musgrave put much faith in the value of the COTS program... which includes the upcoming launch of SpaceX’s Dragon capsule.

This isn’t the first time Musgrave has spoken out against NASA’s direction, either; in June of 2011 Musgrave lambasted the administration for its failure to have a “next step” after phasing out the shuttle program.

“Why are we so poor in our vision and so poor in our project management that we come to a point where it’s reasonable to phase out the current program and we have no idea what the next one is?” Musgrave [said in 2011](#). “Washington has to stop doing that.”

Story Musgrave, now 76, currently operates a palm farm in Orlando, FL, a production company in Sydney and a sculpture company in Burbank, CA. He is also a landscape architect, a design professor and a concept artist with Disney Imagineering. It’s clear that Musgrave is a man who knows what vision is — and isn’t. Still, he’s always honored to have had the opportunity to be a part of NASA.

“I’m massively privileged to be part of the space program, and I never forget to say that,” said Musgrave last year.

**More information:** Read the full story by Charles Atkeison on Examiner.com [here](#).

Source: [Universe Today](#)

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