

American resupply missions to the space station progressing

October 2 2012, by Rachel Kraft

(Phys.org)—Orbital Sciences Corporation Monday rolled the first stage of its Antares rocket to the launch pad of the nation's newest spaceport - the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport at Wallops Island, Va. - while in Florida, Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) moves ahead with preparations for an Oct. 7 launch to the International Space Station for NASA's first Commercial Resupply Services (CRS) mission. These developments mark progress in returning space station resupply missions to American soil.

With rollout of the Antares rocket, Orbital continues toward a series of tests at the [launch pad](#) that will lead to a planned flight test later this year. The company also will fly a demonstration mission to the space station to test both the Antares rocket and Cygnus cargo spacecraft in the coming months. The milestones will be completed prior to beginning formal cargo delivery missions to the space station under NASA's CRS agreement.

Sunday, SpaceX conducted a successful static fire test of its Falcon 9 rocket. The test was part of a full dress rehearsal in preparation for the first of 12 contracted flights by the company to resupply the space station following a successful demonstration mission in May. The Oct. 7 launch is scheduled for 8:35 p.m. EDT from [Space Launch Complex 40](#) at [Cape Canaveral Air Force Station](#) in Florida.

"Today's rollout of Orbital's Antares test vehicle and the upcoming [SpaceX](#) mission are significant milestones in our effort to return space

station resupply activities to the United States and insource the jobs associated with this important work," said NASA Associate Administrator for Communications David Weaver. "NASA's commercial space program is helping to ensure American companies launch our astronauts and their supplies from U.S. soil."

More information:

For more information about the International Space Station, research in low Earth orbit, NASA's commercial space programs and the future of American spaceflight, visit: www.nasa.gov/exploration

For more information about Orbital, visit: www.orbital.com

For more information about SpaceX, visit: www.spacex.com

Provided by NASA

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