

Branson pushes on with spaceship plan despite crash

November 4 2014

Space tourism venture Virgin Galactic on Tuesday said it was pressing ahead with plans to build a second model of the SpaceShipTwo which crashed in the Mojave Desert last week.

"While this has been a tragic setback, we are moving forward and will do so deliberately and with determination," the company founded by British billionaire Richard Branson said in a statement.

"We are continuing to build the second SpaceShipTwo ([serial number two](#)), which is currently about 65 percent complete and we will continue to advance our mission over the coming weeks and months."

It added: "We owe it to all of those who have risked and given so much to stay the course and deliver on the promise of creating the first commercial spaceline."

One pilot of the [spaceship](#), Michael Alsbury, was killed in the crash on Friday. The other, Pete Siebold, survived.

Branson has already stressed that he plans to press ahead with the programme, although he indicated that this would depend on the results of an investigation by the US National Transportation Safety Board.

The probe is expected to take about a year.

Investigators on Monday gave a precise timeline of the accident,

detailing when a slowing mechanism was wrongly deployed, but said they could not determine who activated it.

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