

NASA proposes \$17.6 billion budget

5 February 2008

U.S. space officials proposed spending \$17.6 billion next year with a focus on the International Space Station and space shuttle programs.

NASA Deputy Administrator Shana Dale said the budget includes \$5.78 billion for the space shuttle and space station programs, \$4.44 billion for science, \$3.5 billion for development of new manned spacecraft systems and \$447 million for aeronautics research, the agency said Monday in a news release.

NASA said it is making progress in developing the Orion spacecraft and Ares launch vehicles to replace the aging space shuttle fleet.

The NASA budget provides funding to spur development of commercial space transportation services to send cargo and crews to the space station after the shuttles retire in 2010. Without commercial providers, the United States will depend on Russian spacecraft, the agency said.

"With over \$2.6 billion in NASA funds available over the next five years to purchase cargo and crew services to support ISS operations, we would much rather be using this money to purchase cargo and crew services from American commercial companies than foreign entities," Dale said.

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