

ATK, NASA Reach Space Shuttle "Return-to-flight" Milestone

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News Release

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ATK Reusable Solid Rocket Boosters Stacked for May Launch of Discovery

Minneapolis, January 26, 2005 – Alliant Techsystems (NYSE: ATK) and NASA have completed the stacking of the twin reusable solid rocket motors (RSRM) that will help launch the orbiter Discovery on its return-to-flight mission, currently scheduled for mid-May, 2005. This is a major milestone in the Space Shuttle's return-to-flight calendar. The RSRM stacking operation began in late November, 2004 at the Kennedy Space Center, Fla.

The next step in the process is to join the external tank to the complete booster stack. The orbiter Discovery will then be mated to the external tank/solid rocket booster assembly and the integrated launch vehicle will "roll out" to Pad 39B in preparation for the expected mid-May 2005 launch.

ATK's reusable solid rocket motor is the largest, most-powerful solid rocket motor ever flown. Each booster is 149 ft-long and 12-ft in diameter, producing over three million pounds of thrust at liftoff.

The boosters work with the space shuttle main engines for the first two minutes of the shuttle flight, providing over 70 percent of the thrust needed for the shuttle to escape the gravitational pull of the Earth.

At an altitude of approximately 30 miles and traveling at a speed of over 3,000 miles per hour, the spent boosters separate from the launch vehicle and parachute to the Atlantic Ocean. Once recovered, they are sent back to the ATK facilities in Utah and refurbished for use on future shuttle flights.

ATK is a \$2.4 billion advanced weapon and space systems company employing approximately 14,000 people in 23 states.

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Jacques :-)

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