

# DoD supports Atlantis shuttle mission (Forwarded)

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Public Affairs  
North American Aerospace Defense Command  
Peterson AFB, Colorado

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## DoD supports Atlantis shuttle mission

U.S. Northern Command is the focal point for military emergency support to the Space Shuttle. Support includes astronaut rescue and recovery and orbiter recovery. USNORTHCOM, established in 2002 and fully operational Sept. 11, 2003, coordinates U.S. military support for the Department of Defense efforts to assist the Space Shuttle astronauts in the event of an emergency. All information on DoD units and the North American Aerospace Defense Command contained in this release is subject to change.

## Launch Facts

STS-115 will be the 116th Shuttle mission and the 27th flight for Atlantis. Launch will occur at Launch Pad 39B – Kennedy Space Center, Fla. This mission will take Shuttle Commander Brent Jett and five crew members to the International Space Station to install new solar arrays and other construction.

Launch Window: NASA announced August 27–September 7 as the launch window for the Space Shuttle Atlantis mission.

Launch Slip Opportunities: 24- or 48-hour scrub possible.

Landing: Duration of the STS-115 mission is 11 days after launch.

## NORAD Launch Support

Six F-16s from the U.S. Air Force, enforcing FAA established Temporary Flight Restriction with center point being NASA Kennedy Space Center Launch Pad 39B.

## Launch Contingency Support

USNORTHCOM provides a variety of support throughout launch, on-orbit and landing. In cooperation with NASA, U.S. Strategic Command and the DoD

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Manned Space Flight Support Office (DDMS), USNORTHCOM has developed plans to locate and retrieve the astronauts if they have a pad or launch emergency, are forced to bail out of the shuttle, or have to return for landing. Numerous Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard aircraft and Coast Guard ships are pre-positioned or on standby to quickly launch to conduct search and rescue operations.

For STS-115, the following DoD and DHS assets are supporting the mission:

- \* 20 U.S. Air Force/Air National Guard Pararescue personnel (308th Rescue Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga.; 103rd Rescue Squadron, Gabreski, N.Y.)
- \* 4 HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters (301st Rescue Squadron, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.)
- \* 1 U.S. Air Force Reserve/Air National Guard HC-130 Hercules aircraft (39th Rescue Squadron [Air Force Reserve Command], Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.; and 1 Air National Guard HC-130 Hercules aircraft (102nd Rescue Squadron, Francis S. Gabreski Airport, N.Y.)
- \* 1 KC-130 Hercules (Marine Corps Air Group 49, Stewart Air National Guard Base, N.Y.)
- \* 6 Army HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters (Fort Irwin, Calif.)
- \* 5 Air Force UH-1 Huey and OH-58 Kiowa helicopters (White Sands Missile Range, N.M.)

The U.S. Navy's Fleet Area Control and Surveillance Center at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., and Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Center and Naval Air Station Norfolk, Va., and the U.S. Air Force's Rescue Coordination Center will also be in direct support to the USNORTHCOM commander.

### Launch Abort Sites (LAS) and East Coast Launch Abort Landing Sites (ECALS)

Additionally, U.S. military units at the following Shuttle Launch Abort Sites are on alert to support an emergency landing during the launch phase for STS-115. These facilities lie near the intended flight path for STS-115:

- \* Atlantic City International Airport, N.J.
- \* Oceana Naval Air Station, Va.
- \* Dover Air Force Base, Del.
- \* Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass.
- \* F. S. Gabreski Airport, N.Y.
- \* Pease Air National Guard Base, N.H.
- \* Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

### DoD Augmented/Emergency Landing Sites

If the shuttle experiences an on-orbit emergency and has to land immediately, NASA has established several civilian and military landing sites around the world. U.S. military personnel at the following locations are prepared to support an emergency landing of the shuttle:

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Augmented Sites: While the Primary Landing Site is Kennedy Space Center, Fla., alternate DoD Augmented Landing Sites: Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands Space Harbor, N.M., can be quickly readied to support a shuttle landing with an on-scene commander, fire/crash/rescue forces, and medical evacuation capabilities.

Emergency Landing Sites: These locations are strategically located around the world in the flight path of STS-115. They have runways long enough for the shuttle and have compatible navigation aids. The following Emergency Landing Sites are located within the United States:

- \* Atlantic City International Airport, N.J. (ECALS)
- \* Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C. (ECALS)
- \* Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.
- \* McDill Air Force Base, Fla.
- \* China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, Calif.
- \* Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho
- \* Dover Air Force Base, Del. (ECALS)
- \* Oceana Naval Air Station, Va. (ECALS)
- \* Dyess Air Force Base, Texas
- \* Otis Air National Guard Base, Mass. (ECALS)
- \* Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D.
- \* Pease Air National Guard Base, N.H. (ECALS)
- \* Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska
- \* Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.
- \* F.S. Gabreski Airport, N.Y. (ECALS)

The emergency recovery sites have only the minimum number of people needed to assist the astronauts and will respond to a shuttle landing as they would for any large aircraft emergency landing.

### Alternate Landing Sites

The shuttle is expected to return to Kennedy Space Center on or about 13 days after launch and DoD support will be provided from Patrick AFB, Fla., Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., Kennedy Space Center, Fla. and USNORTHCOM Headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. However, alternate landing sites at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., and Holloman Air Force Base/White Sands Space Harbor, N.M., can be quickly readied to support a shuttle landing.

### Additional USNORTHCOM Support

Joint Task Force-115 serves as the operational level focal point for situational understanding and crisis response to space shuttle mission contingencies. Additionally, JTF-115 will work in concert with Deputy DoD Manager (DDoD Mgr), DDMS, Joint Forces Land Component Commander, Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander, Joint Forces Air Component Commander and the U.S. Coast Guard, as necessary, to execute USNORTHCOM's role supporting U.S. Strategic Command's mission of Defense Support for Manned

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Space Flight Operations. JTF-115 consists of:

- \* 7 Standing Joint Force Headquarters-North personnel
- \* 1 301st Rescue Squadron Liaison Officer (Air Operations)
- \* 1 Air Force North Liaison Officer
- \* 1 Army North Defense Coordinating Officer Liaison Officer
- \* 1 U.S. Navy Search and Rescue Liaison Officer
- \* 1 2nd Fleet Liaison Officer
- \* 1 U.S. Coast Guard Liaison Officer
- \* 1 Flight Surgeon Liaison Officer

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### Public Affairs

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PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command provide support to NASA and the shuttle program's mission with distinctly different but important missions.

NORAD — the bi-national command responsible for air defense of North American airspace — is ensuring airspace safety and security for the STS-115 launch and landing and providing irregular air patrols to enforce the FAA's Temporary Flight Restriction zones over the space shuttle and along its flight path. NORAD support will consist of U.S. Air Force F-16 fighter planes and U.S. Coast Guard helicopters enforcing the TFR.

The FAA's Notice to Airmen can be viewed by linking to the FAA's Web site at

[http://tfr.faa.gov/save\\_pages/detail\\_6\\_1433.html](http://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_6_1433.html)

NORAD is also prepared to respond to any shuttle emergency by securing the airspace over necessary Launch Abort Sites should emergency landing be required.

The safety and security of North American airspace remains NORAD's prime mission. The command retains a robust air defense posture to maintain air sovereignty over the continental United States, Alaska and Canada. Since Sept. 11, 2001, NORAD fighters have scrambled or diverted more than 2,100 times in response to air events, and NORAD aircraft have flown more than 42,000 missions in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

U.S. Northern Command is the lead U.S. Department of Defense organization responsible for military incident support to the space shuttle. Support includes astronaut rescue and recovery and orbiter recovery. USNORTHCOM, established in 2002 and fully operational Sept. 11, 2003, coordinates U.S.

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military for the Department of Defense efforts to assist the space shuttle astronauts in the event of an emergency. USNORTHCOM will command and control DoD forces in the event of an emergency mainly through Joint Task Force-115 under the authority of U.S. Navy Capt. Mike Tillotson.

JTF-115 is made up of operations, information command and control specialists, and support personnel who understand, focus and employ DoD's unique capabilities. The JTF works with NASA, DoD installations, the U.S. military services and other U.S. government agencies such as the Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard to accomplish the mission. More than 400 DoD personnel are ready to support the second Return to Flight mission, with 14 members of JTF-115 on location in Florida monitoring and providing command and control of DoD forces.

The mission of USNORTHCOM is homeland defense and civil support. The command conducts operations to deter, prevent, defeat and mitigate threats and aggression aimed at the United States, its territories and interests within the assigned area of responsibility and, as directed by the President or Secretary of Defense, provide military assistance to civil authorities including consequence management operations.