

Personal Spaceflight Federation Congratulates COTS Winners

SpaceX and Rocketplane-Kistler awarded contracts totaling \$500 million

Los Angeles California - Tuesday, August 22nd, 2006 – The Personal Spaceflight Federation, comprised of private, public and non-profit organizations working to make commercial human spaceflight a reality, congratulated two of its members, SpaceX and Rocketplane-Kistler, on being selected by NASA as winners of the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) development and demonstration program to provide crew and cargo services to the International Space Station. Further, the Federation congratulated NASA on this innovative procurement effort.

The PSF, formed in early 2005 after Congress's passage of the Commercial Space Launch Amendments Act, is an industry association working to share best practices and expertise amongst its members in order to establish ever-higher levels of safety for the burgeoning industry and to promote its growth worldwide. PSF members include spaceship developers and operators, spaceports, space destinations, and space transportation agents.

SpaceX is developing a family of launch vehicles intended to reduce the cost and increase the reliability of access to space ultimately by a factor of ten. Founded in 2002 by Elon Musk, the co-founder of PayPal, SpaceX has design and manufacturing facilities located in Southern California, propulsion development and structural test facilities in Central Texas, and launch complexes at Vandenberg AFB and the Marshall Islands (Kwajalein Atoll). SpaceX plans to ferry cargo and crew to the International Space Station by means of its Dragon spacecraft and Falcon 9 launch vehicle.

Rocketplane-Kistler's K-1 launch system will provide low cost space access for satellites and research payloads. Coupled with the company's suborbital XP Spaceplane, RpK is positioned to provide a wide diversity of suborbital and orbital space transportation services. The K-1's hardware is 75% complete, and is scheduled for first flight in 2008. The XP Spaceplane is 50% complete, and scheduled for first flight in late 2008.

Personal Spaceflight Federation officials remarked on the increasing confidence being placed in the emerging commercial human spaceflight industry. "As state and now Federal governments join along with private individuals and investors to inject significant funding into this new industry, it is becoming increasingly clear that this will become a viable and thriving new business sector," said Alex Tai of Virgin Galactic, the Chairman of the PSF. "We would like to congratulate NASA for recognizing the potential this industry holds as a place to purchase badly needed services and to supplement future efforts. It is becoming more and more apparent that commercial human spaceflight will be a very real and substantial market in the years to come."

The PSF used the opportunity to make clear their strong stance on the purchase of commercial spaceflight services by NASA and military. "The PSF members believe that services available in the private sector are often available for a lower price or at a higher quality, if not both, and should absolutely be purchased in a free market environment," explained Jeff Greason, CEO of XCOR Aerospace and Vice-Chairman of the PSF.

The PSF also voiced strong support for Space Act Agreements and Other Transaction Authorities, procurement methods that allow NASA greater flexibility in its relationships with contractors, especially when dealing with small businesses. "NASA has taken a great step forward by stepping outside the traditional government cost-plus contracting regime. This has allowed NASA to get the benefits of working with small, entrepreneurial companies without forcing them to take on the level of bureaucracy necessary to deal with cost-plus contracts", elaborated Michael S. Kelly, President of the PSF. "This represents a significant advancement in the way government does business."