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LAUNCH PAD

NASA Sets New Launch Dates For Space Shuttle, LRO And LCROSS

by Staff Writers

Cape Canaveral FL (SPX) Jun 16, 2009

NASA managers have scheduled the next launch attempt of space shuttle Endeavour's STS-127 mission for 5:40 a.m. EDT on Wednesday, June 17. The launch will take place at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.



Launching with LRO is LCROSS, a partner mission that will search for water ice on the moon by sending the spent upper-stage Centaur rocket, about the size of a sports utility vehicle, to impact part of a polar crater in permanent shadows. LCROSS will fly into the plume of dust left by the impact and measure the properties before also colliding with the lunar surface.

As a result, the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, or LRO, and Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite, or LCROSS, are set to lift off together aboard an Atlas V rocket on Thursday, June 18. There are three launch opportunities from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida: 5:12 p.m., 5:22 p.m. and 5:32 p.m.

NASA managers postponed Endeavour's planned June 13 liftoff because of a leak associated with the gaseous hydrogen venting system outside the shuttle's external fuel tank. The system is used to carry excess hydrogen safely away from the launch pad.

The LRO and LCROSS launch was moved to June 18 to accommodate Endeavour's June 17 liftoff. If Thursday's liftoff of LRO and LCROSS is postponed 24 hours, the launch times Friday are 6:41 p.m., 6:51 p.m. and 7:01 p.m. Saturday's opportunities are 8:08 p.m., 8:18 p.m. and 8:28 p.m.

Endeavour's 16-day STS-127 mission to the International Space Station will feature five spacewalks and complete construction of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Kibo laboratory. [Astronauts](#) will attach a platform to the outside of the Japanese module that will allow experiments to be exposed to space.

LRO is scheduled for a one-year exploration mission at a polar orbit of about 31 miles, or 50 kilometers, the closest any [spacecraft](#) has orbited the moon. The primary objective of LRO is to conduct investigations to prepare for future explorations of the moon.

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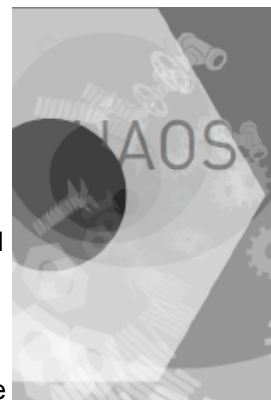
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LAUNCH PAD

ILS Announces 9 New Proton Missions

Le Bourget, France (SPX) Jun 16, 2009

ILS International Launch Services has secured six firm launch orders and three mission assignments in the first half of 2009. ILS has also witnessed a significant trend where customers have moved from other launch providers to ILS [Proton](#) in order to meet their critical business requirements. "The six new orders we have received over the past six months are from repeat as well as new custom ... read more



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