

Search

WORLDWIDE AEROSPACE DATABASE: Go Now

Search Sponsored by: LOCKHEED MARTIN

Get 5 Free Issues Of Aerospace Daily And Defense Report Now!

AEROSPACE DAILY AND DEFENSE REPORT

LRO Arrives At Moon

Jun 24, 2009

Reader's Tools

- Print Article
- Email Article
- Save Article
- Make a Comment
- Email Alert
- SHARE



NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) entered orbit around the moon the morning of June 23 after a four-and-a-half day journey from Earth, marking the agency's first trip back to Earth's natural satellite in more than a decade.

Controllers at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., confirmed a successful lunar orbit insertion at 6:27 a.m. EDT. Launch took place on an Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on June 18.

The spacecraft will perform four engine burns over the next four days to put itself into its commissioning phase orbit, at which point its seven instruments will be checked out. Commissioning should be over by mid-August.

LRO is slated to orbit the moon at 31 miles (50 kilometers) for one year. High resolution imagery from LRO's camera will help identify landing sites for future explorers and characterize the moon's topography and composition, NASA says. The hydrogen concentrations at the moon's poles will be mapped in detail, pinpointing the locations of possible water ice, and a miniaturized radar system will image the poles and test communication capabilities.

Developed by NASA's Exploration Systems Mission Directorate, LRO joins India's Chandrayaan and China's Change'e lunar missions. The last NASA mission to the moon was Lunar Prospector, which launched in January 1998.

LRO launched with a companion satellite, the Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS), which performed a close swingby of the moon the morning of June 23 to put itself into an elongated polar Earth orbit and position itself to deliberately impact the lunar surface in October along with the spent Centaur upper stage of the mission's Atlas V rocket. Scientists will scan the impact plume with ground- and space-based cameras for signs of hydrogen and water ice.

More information on LRO can be found at <http://www.nasa.gov/lro>.

Artist's concept of LRO: NASA

FreeFlyer
Analysis Software for Spacecraft Mission Design

PROVIDING SPACE SITUATIONAL AWARENESS FOR DoD, NASA AND NOAA ASSETS.

a.i. solutions
The smarter. The better.™

DEFENSE INDUSTRY NEWS

- + Lockheed Snags DARPA Anti-Ship Missile Award
- + White House Talks Russia, Missile Defense
- + Nano-UAV Video

AW INTERACTIVE BLOGS FROM THE WEB

AVIATION WEEK Blogs

- Ares on Defense
- Things With Wings
- O&M MRO Blog
- Business Aviation Now
- On Space
- Inside Paris
- Le Bourget 2009

Recent Blog Posts View all Blogs

DARPA Gets a Boss
By: Graham Warwick
7/2/2009 12:40 PM CDT

Minehunter Maintenance
By: Nicholas Fiorenza
7/2/2009 11:13 AM CDT

Money's Too Tight To Mention
By: Douglas Barrie
7/2/2009 10:56 AM CDT

Recent Photos View all photo galleries

Heckuva Overhaul
In: Defense Showcase - Upload your photos!
By: Michael Bruno

Supersonic Raptor
In: Defense Showcase - Upload your photos!
By: Michael Bruno

Mind if I Look Inside?
In: Defense Showcase - Upload your photos!
By: Michael Bruno

Selected Videos View all video galleries

Article Comments

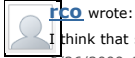
Gaetano Marano wrote:

just posted my suggestion #4 for the Human Space Flight Plans Committee and NASA: "put the spacecrafts and spaceflights SAFETY as FIRST concern" <http://ow.ly/f3vQ>

6/24/2009 11:33 PM CDT

[Recommend](#)

[Report Abuse](#)



rco wrote:
I think that should be an elongated polar Lunar orbit in the last paragraph.
6/26/2009 10:16 AM CDT

[Recommend](#)

[Report Abuse](#)



Shiva Shankar Rudraraju wrote:
NASA's Exploration Systems Mission directorate, LRO joins India's Chandrayaan and China's Change'e lunar missions" a small correction, China's Mission has ended recently, and the orbiter has crash landed on the lunar surface about a month back.

its DEMOCRACY all around the lunar orbit :)
6/29/2009 11:19 AM CDT

[Recommend](#)

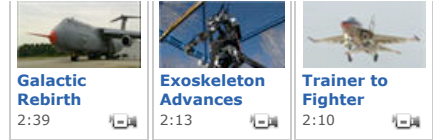
[Report Abuse](#)

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Advertisement

AVIATION WEEK Copyright 2009, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Sitemap](#)



WORLD AEROSPACE DATABASE

FEATURED COMPANIES **PRODUCT CATEGORIES**

- [+ Cargo Systems, Inc.](#)
- [+ Skurka Aerospace Inc.](#)
- [+ KAPCO](#)
- [+ Interturbine Logistik GmbH - Germany](#)
- [+ Tactair Fluid Controls Inc.](#)

[+ more](#)

[Subscribe!](#)