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STENNIS ANNOUNCES NEW ROCKET ENGINE TESTING OPPORTUNITY

BAY ST. LOUIS, Miss. – NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center unveiled a initiative today, charting the future for the nation's premier rocket engine testing facility.

Stennis Director Gene Goldman announced plans for the center to test Aerojet AJ26 rocket engines for Orbital Sciences Corp. as part of a NASA partnership with the companies.

"We're excited about this program and the opportunity to collaborate with two of the world's leading space technology companies," Goldman said. "This also helps pave the way to the future for Stennis. Testing the AJ26 engine not only supplies a service for the Taurus II program, it also provides Stennis a unique opportunity will help sustain the skills and capabilities we need for future test projects."

The AJ26 testing is part of NASA's new direction for space exploration. Under the 2011 fiscal year proposed budget, NASA will end its Constellation Program effort to return to the moon and possibly travel beyond. Instead, it will work closer with commercial interests to develop space travel capabilities.

The Aerojet AJ26 is a prime example of that new direction and of the immediate future of Stennis, which completed engine testing for remaining space shuttle flights last July. The AJ26 is the first new engine in years to be tested at Stennis and representative of the commercial work the facility now is pursuing. The center also provides RS-68 rocket engine testing for Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne.

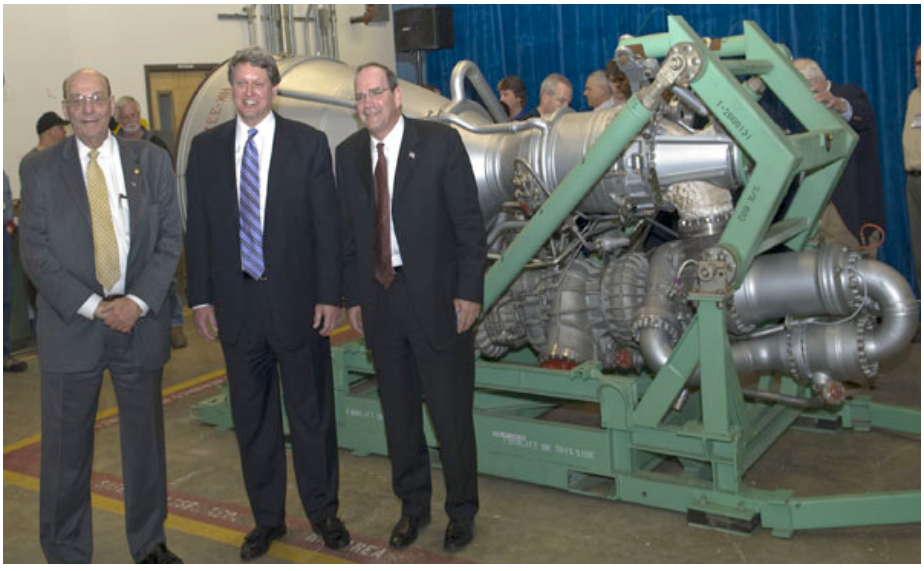
Stennis operators have been modifying their E-1 Test Stand since last April in order to test the AJ26 engines. Work has included construction of a 27-foot-deep flame deflector trench, which was toured by media during the Feb. 24 press conference.

Orbital is working in partnership with NASA under the agency's Commercial Orbital Transportations Services (COTS) joint research and development project. The company Orbital is under contract with NASA through the Commercial Resupply Services program to provide eight cargo missions to the ISS through 2015. The AJ26 Aerojet engines will power Orbital's Taurus® II space launch vehicle for the supply missions.

"Our team is very excited to begin the ground testing of the AJ26 engine here at Stennis, one of the great rocket engine testing facilities in the world," Orbital President and Chief Operating Officer J.R. Thompson added. "We have worked with the NASA's Stennis staff and our Aerojet counterparts to develop and install facility upgrades to accommodate our particular needs, and we are pleased with the results. As currently envisioned, each AJ26 engine that will be used aboard out Taurus® II rocket will come through the Stennis facility for prelaunch testing, prior to being integrated with the rocket."

Orbital develops and manufactures small- and medium-class rockets and space systems for commercial, military and civil government customers. More information about the company can be found at http://www.orbital.com

Aerojet, a unit of the Gencorp Corp., is a world-recognized aerospace and defense leader principally serving the missile and space propulsion, defense and armaments markets. Additional information about Aerojet and GenCorp can be obtained by visiting the companies' Web sites at http://www.Aerojet.com and http://www.GenCorp.com.



NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center Director Gene Goldman (center) stands in front of a "pathfinder" rocket engine with Orbital Sciences Corp. President and Chief Operating Officer J.R. Thompson (left) and Aerojet President Scott Seymour during a Feb. 24 news briefing at the south Mississippi facility. The leaders appeared together to announce a partnership for testing Aerojet AJ26 rocket engines at Stennis. The engines will be used to power Orbital's Taurus® II space vehicles to provide commercial cargo transportation missions to the International Space Station for NASA.

For information about Stennis, visit: http://www.nasa.gov/centers/stennis/

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