Panel Session IV - Exploration Transportation Systems

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The sense of exploration is intimately bound up with human resolve, and for a nation to believe that it is still committed to forward motion is to ensure its continuance.

James A. Michener

The Spirit of Exploration
Space Initiatives Fuel Technological Advancement

Achieving Our Exploration Vision

...By Taking Advantage of STS Infrastructure

ETS Derived From STS Benefits

Today

Tomorrow (2008)


Heavy Lift Carrier

Medium Lift Carrier

Current STS

160 klb Cargo LEO (6.5m x 25m)

200 klb Cargo LEO (6.5m x 25m)

225 klb Cargo LEO (5.5m x 30m)

Safety

- Human-rated systems
- Maximizes use of demonstrated and mature systems
- Maintains focus for STS

Schedule

- Existing infrastructure, workforce, and assets enable earlier start with higher confidence
- Nearly everything currently in production
- Allows demonstration/flight capability with STS

Cost

- Low ETS added cost with ongoing STS
- Leverage SLEP safety investments to ETS application
- Mature/well understood infrastructure

Growth

- Increased performance through 5th segment, longer ET
- Multiple missions/common hardware
- Large body of knowledge and experience for future spiral development needs
The first step is...
Our Safe Return to Flight