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FAA Safety Approval Announcement

June 2011



Space shuttle Atlantis is set to liftoff on the final flight of the shuttle program, STS-135, a 12-day mission to the International Space Station. Launch is currently targeted for July 8.

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A Message from the PI
by Dr. Al Koller

On June 10, 2011, the SpaceTEC program received formal safety approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Office of Commercial Space Transportation for the SpaceTEC Certified Aerospace Technician™ process, the first such approval of this

kind. Based at Brevard Community College on Florida's Space Coast, SpaceTEC is the National Science Foundation's National Resource Center for Aerospace Technical Education. Since 2004 SpaceTEC has offered the nation's only performance-based, industry-endorsed certification for aerospace technicians in the United States. The FAA gave safety approval for the Core Certification as well as the three concentrations of the SpaceTEC program: Aerospace Vehicle Processing, Aerospace Manufacturing, and Composites. The approval for a four areas is valid for five years.

This is a significant milestone for the aerospace industry, education, and the technical workforce, culminating hundreds of hours of work and years of effort by SpaceTEC's partners, and validating the investment made during that time by the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education Program. The approval by the FAA is an important step for commercial space transportation, which will now have an industry-recognized means of credentialing their technical workforce. With increasing competition in the job market, obtaining nationally recognized professional certifications has also become a focus for new graduates and transitioning aerospace workers.

"I am proud of this achievement for ourselves, our partners, and our stakeholders because it represents the successful accomplishment of what has been the major goal of our program since its inception in 2002, to truly champion the U.S. technical workforce of the future through education and credentialing," said Dr. Al Koller, SpaceTEC's Principal Investigator and Managing Director.

"The FAA approval will broaden our abilities to support the emerging commercial space industry and enrich our value to educational and credentialing activities. It will allow the SpaceTEC program to initiate expansion of its National Aerospace Technology Advisory Committee and begin work in related areas of certification immediately."



Space shuttle Atlantis, attached to its external fuel tank and solid rocket boosters atop a mobile launcher platform, slowly inches out of the Vehicle Assembly Building for the final time. "Rollout," as it's called, to Launch Pad 39A at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.



Pictured are NASA astronauts Chris Ferguson (center right), commander; Doug Hurley (center left), pilot; Rex Walheim and Sandy Magnus, both mission specialists.





About SpaceTEC

SpaceTEC, the National Resource Center for Aerospace Technical Education, provides the only national performance-based certifications for aerospace technicians in the United States today.

In the face of increasing competition in the job market, obtaining nationally recognized professional certifications has become a focus for many new graduates and transitioning aerospace workers.

In response to this need, SpaceTEC has expanded the availability of readiness course materials and increased the use of both the core certification exam and exams covering advanced concentrations.

To learn more about SpaceTEC activities or to begin your certification work, contact us:

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