

HSFS Overview

Putting our Extensive Naval Experience to Work in Ensuring Astronauts and Equipment are Safe

ManTech supports the U.S. Strategic Command's Human Space Flight Support (HSFS) program and NASA's Commercial Crew program and Orion requirements. In August 2019, this was put under U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM).

As a trusted and expert partner in many space and naval domain operations, ManTech has been on the launch side of space operations for many years, working side-by-side with the Air Force and other commercial contractors, providing safety and mission assurance checks for all space launches. Now we are excited to be part of the recovery operations as well, working to ensure the integrity of what goes up, with equal attention to what comes down.

ManTech has assembled a highly specialized team responsible for ensuring that all systems are go when astronauts return to Earth. We provide support services such as planning, coordination, procedural development, command and control communication, testing and evaluation at Patrick Air Force Base in Florida.

Pilots, pararescuemen, divers and specialists trained in survival, evasion, resistance and escape comprise the extraordinary teams. "When it comes to these missions, there are no second chances," says Jim Boguslawski, ManTech Program Manager. "One of the most important assets ManTech brings is the extensive experience of our team members in many different disciplines, particularly naval skills. We represent more than 85 years of skills and capabilities in diving, boat and amphibious operations."

"We work with NASA and two commercial providers – Boeing and SpaceX – to make sure that we're at the ready, no matter when and no matter where, to respond to and rescue astronauts and recover equipment."

James "Jim" Boguslawski
Division Program Manager





ManTech provides support to crew rescue training exercises conducted off the coast of Cape Canaveral near NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida. These training exercises help the program in understanding the improvements that are needed to ensure readiness and safety as we return to human spaceflight launches with the Commercial Crew Program.

Full mission profile training exercises are conducted by the DoD Human Space Flight Support (HSFS) Office Rescue Division. These exercises, the culmination of nearly two weeks of training, include locating a mockup spacecraft using a portable Search and Rescue Satellite Aided Tracking (SARSAT) beacon like those used on boats and aircraft. Next, pararescue forces are airdropped with their specialized watercraft, rescue equipment and medical supplies. The team rehearses assisted egress, extracting team members acting as astronauts, from the capsule and providing immediate medical treatment.

"Our crew members have an essential job to do on the International Space Station. It is our responsibility to safely get the crew to and from the orbiting laboratory," said Kathy Lueders, Program Manager, NASA's Commercial Crew Program. "I think about our work with the Human Space Flight Support Office as insurance. I hope we never need their services, but it is essential that they are prepared if we ever need to call them in."

The HSFS rescue division coordinates contingency support for the nation's human spaceflight program. This integrated team has supported all NASA human spaceflight missions throughout the last 60 years. HSFS will be on standby for commercial crew missions. In the unlikely event of an emergency during ascent, free flight or landing, the HSFS teams will quickly and safely rescue our astronauts. The HSFS office also will support all Orion/SLS launches and landings. These DoD teams undergo countless hours of training to prepare for a variety of scenarios. It is standard practice to conduct these exercises, and was regularly done during the Space Shuttle Program.

As the U.S. returns to human spaceflight missions, ManTech has big plans during the next few years as the lead in contingency rescue support plans for the Commercial Crew Program. Giving the members the latitude to train, prepare and assimilate with customer counterparts is imperative to mission success, Jim offers. "We don't view ourselves as a separate contract unit. We are a very specialized, well-integrated group that is part of this incredible Human Space Flight Support Office team."

Our work is tremendously exciting and rewarding as we strive to ensure the advantage the United States holds in space continues so that services for the military, commercial companies and all global citizens are not disrupted.

LEARN MORE

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