

upmass and downmass capabilities to utilize the ISS research capacity, as available. The Administrator may allocate additional capacity to the ISS national laboratory should such capacity be in excess of NASA research requirements.

(2) Additional research capabilities

If any NASA research plan is determined to require research capacity onboard the ISS beyond the percentage allocated under paragraph (1), such research plan shall be prepared in the form of a requested research opportunity to be submitted to the process established under this section for the consideration of proposed research within the capacity allocated to the ISS national laboratory. A proposal for such a research plan may include the establishment of partnerships with non-NASA institutions eligible to propose research to be conducted within the ISS national laboratory capacity. Until at least September 30, 2030, the official or employee designated under subsection (b) may grant an exception to this requirement in the case of a proposed experiment considered essential for purposes of preparing for exploration beyond low-Earth orbit, as determined by joint agreement between the organization with which the Administrator enters into a cooperative agreement under subsection (a) and the official or employee designated under subsection (b).

(3) Research priorities and enhanced capacity

The organization with which the Administrator enters into the cooperative agreement shall consider recommendations of the National Academies Decadal Survey on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space in establishing research priorities and in developing proposed enhancements of research capacity and opportunities for the ISS national laboratory.

(4) Responsibility for research payload

NASA shall retain its roles and responsibilities in providing research payload physical, analytical, and operations integration during pre-flight, post-flight, transportation, and orbital phases essential to ensure safe and effective flight readiness and vehicle integration of research activities approved and prioritized by the organization with which the Administrator enters into the cooperative agreement and the official or employee designated under subsection (b).

(Pub. L. 111-267, title V, §504, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2825; Pub. L. 114-90, title I, §114(b)(3), Nov. 25, 2015, 129 Stat. 716; Pub. L. 117-167, div. B, title VII, §10815(c), Aug. 9, 2022, 136 Stat. 1738.)

Editorial Notes

CODIFICATION

In subsec. (c)(3), “section 70906 of title 51” substituted for “section 602 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008 (42 U.S.C. 17752)” on authority of Pub. L. 111-314, §5(e), Dec. 18, 2010, 124 Stat. 3443, which Act enacted Title 51, National and Commercial Space Programs.

AMENDMENTS

2022—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 117-167, §10815(c)(1), substituted “The ISS” for “As soon as practicable after

October 11, 2010, but not later than October 1, 2011, ISS” and “September 30, 2030” for “September 30, 2024”.

Subsec. (d)(2). Pub. L. 117-167, §10815(c)(2), substituted “September 30, 2030” for “September 30, 2024”.

2015—Subsec. (d)(1), (2). Pub. L. 114-90 substituted “at least September 30, 2024” for “September 30, 2020”.

**SUBCHAPTER V—SPACE SHUTTLE
RETIREMENT AND TRANSITION**

§ 18361. Sense of Congress on the Space Shuttle program

(a) Findings

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Space Shuttle program represents a national asset consisting of critical skills and capabilities, including the ability to lift large payloads into space and return them to Earth.

(2) The Space Shuttle has carried more than 355 people from 16 nations into space.

(3) The Space Shuttle has projected the best of American values around the world, and Space Shuttle crews have sparked the imagination and dreams of the world’s youth and young at heart.

(b) Sense of Congress

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is essential that the retirement of the Space Shuttle and the transition to new human space flight capabilities be done in a manner that builds upon the legacy of this national asset; and

(2) it is imperative for the United States to retain the skills and the industrial capability to provide a follow-on Space Launch System that is primarily designed for missions beyond near-Earth space, while offering some potential for supplanting shuttle delivery capabilities to low-Earth orbit, particularly in support of ISS requirements, if necessary.

(Pub. L. 111-267, title VI, §601, Oct. 11, 2010, 124 Stat. 2828.)

§ 18362. Retirement of Space Shuttle orbiters and transition of Space Shuttle program

(a) In general

The Administrator shall retire the Space Shuttle orbiters pursuant to a schedule established by the Administrator and in a manner consistent with provisions of this chapter regarding potential requirements for contingency utilization of Space Shuttle orbiters for ISS requirements.

(b) Utilization of workforce and assets in follow-on Space Launch System

(1) Utilization of vehicle assets

In carrying out subsection (a), the Administrator shall, to the maximum extent practicable, utilize workforce, assets, and infrastructure of the Space Shuttle program in efforts relating to the initiation of a follow-on Space Launch System developed pursuant to section 18322 of this title.

(2) Other assets

With respect to the workforce, assets, and infrastructure not utilized as described in paragraph (1), the Administrator shall work closely with other departments and agencies