

SPACE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS SYMPOSIUM (D2)
Future Space Transportation Systems Verification and In-Flight Experimentation (6)

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THE IXV PROGRAMME STATUS AND PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

The European ambition to return autonomously from LEO (Low Earth Orbit) is the cornerstone enabling a wide range of space applications, ranging from space planes to robotic servicing of space infrastructure, and the ESA IXV (Intermediate eXperimental Vehicle) is the concrete step of the European efforts in this direction.

Today, following the successful completion of all IXV design phases, and the placement of all contracts for the manufacturing, assembly, integration and testing of the flight and ground segments, the IXV industrial activities are heading to a launch campaign in mid-2014.

Meanwhile, with the objective to timely prepare the future by building on the results achieved so far, the Agency has successfully elaborated effective future application objectives, consolidated by the detailed feasibility study performed also with the support of the ESTEC Concurrent Design Facility, derived directly from the IXV development.

The 63rd IAC presentation and article will provide the up-to-date status of the IXV industrial activities, including technical and programmatic achievements and challenges, and the consolidated future application objectives, including the definition of the IXV evolutions in terms of system features and mission parameters.