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History of French Contribution to Astronautics (3)

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DASSAULT AVIATION, DESIGNER OF SPACE PLANES

**Abstract**

Dassault Aviation began studying space planes in the mid-1960s with the Aerospace Transporter (Tas) project for Eurospace. Then, the Hermes spaceplane program allowed the company to acquire entirely new skills at the turn of the 1990s. Therefore, despite the abandonment of this ambitious project in 1992, the company continued to be a force of proposal in the field of reusable orbit return vehicles. We examine here the main orbital spaceplane concepts studied by Dassault Aviation, some of which led to advanced developments: X-2000, Launac and X-38. These projects have legitimized our position in the field of space planes.