



Dawn mission status report

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The Dawn mission is the ninth spacecraft in the Discovery series, selected for study in January 2001. It is now being readied for launch in late June 2007 to rendezvous with and orbit the two largest minor planets 4 Vesta and 1 Ceres. Dawn is the first purely science mission to use ion propulsion as an enabling technology and the first to orbit two planetary bodies other than Earth. The spacecraft is now completely assembled and is scheduled to complete thermal vacuum testing in February. By the time of this presentation the spacecraft should have been delivered to the Eastern Test Range for final launch preparations. This paper gives an overview of the science objectives and payload, reports on the status of the mission, and describes orbital operations plans.