

REMARKS BY
PATRICIA GRACE SMITH
ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE
TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
PRESENTATION OF FAA COMMERCIAL ASTRONAUT WINGS
TO SPACESHIPONE PILOT MIKE MELVILL
JUNE 21, 2004

Good afternoon. This flight of SpaceShipOne is a historic moment in which Mike Melvill has opened the frontier for commercial human spaceflight.

This is the first time a manned reusable launch vehicle on an FAA-licensed launch has reached 100 kilometers (62 miles). Like U.S. military and NASA astronauts, the FAA now has its own way to recognize those who reach space in the United States through private endeavors. DOT/FAA Commercial Astronaut Wings are awarded to pilots and flight crew on board an AST-licensed launch vehicle on a flight that exceeds 50 miles.

The flight today opens a new chapter in history making space access within the reach of ordinary citizens like you and me. It is a major step ushering in a new, low cost, era in space travel. Thanks to Burt Rutan and Scaled Composites and the capabilities they continue to demonstrate, space travel and space tourism, and lower cost access to space are a lot closer than they were just yesterday.

On behalf of Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration Marion Blakey, I am very pleased to present for the very first time these “FAA Commercial Astronaut Wings” to Mike Melvill in recognition of his accomplishment.

Burt, in recognition of the historic accomplishment, I would like to present you and the entire Scaled Composites team this plaque.