



April 5, 2002

TO: All NASA Employees
FROM: Sean O'Keefe
SUBJECT: Safety

As we continue the important work to collaboratively refine our mission objectives for NASA and refine our focus, it is important to reinforce the commitment to our primary responsibility for all operations to emphasize safety.

While participating in all the events surrounding the just completed STS-109 mission, I couldn't help but be impressed by how safety permeates all that we do to assure zero mishaps. From the diligence at the Flight Readiness Review in mid-February to working through every potential risk obstacle, to the prudent caution by delaying the launch to March 1 to wait for optimum weather conditions, every conceivable measure was exercised to assure safety. After launch, the exhaustive efforts by Ron Dittmore and his experienced, professional team to weigh the risk surrounding the primary and secondary coolant system spoke volumes about the clear focus to the safety imperative. Each step in the mission performance was continually evaluated to guarantee a safe return on March 12. The attention to detail and constant reminder to safety mightily contributed to the stunning success of this important mission.

And the commitment doesn't stop with one mission. Observing the careful attention to detail as we prepare for the STS- 110 launch, we should all be proud of NASA's professional diligence evidenced by Mike Leinbach's thorough explanation of our efforts to correct the liquid hydrogen fueling challenges encountered yesterday. His calm, deliberate demeanor was indeed representative of our core value to safety evidenced in all that we do in following through on NASA's important work. When STS-110 does launch, we can all be confident it will be conducted under the safest possible conditions.

With these clear, recent incidents of the great care we exercise to the value and importance of safety, it is a good time to recommit ourselves to this continuous task. No activity is important enough to compromise your safety, or that of colleagues, or the public in anything we do. Continue to trust your instincts and experience. If something doesn't feel right, ask questions and never be reluctant to prompt a second look.

The Agency's safety legacy is paramount. Keep up the good work, but always remember that mission success starts and ends with safety for everything we do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean O'Keefe".