The first commercial space station, Haven-1, is now undergoing assembly for launch

As Ars reported last week, NASA's plan to replace the International Space Station with commercial space stations is running into a time crunch.

The sprawling International Space Station is due to be decommissioned less than five years from now, and the US space agency has yet to formally publish rules and requirements for the follow-on stations being designed and developed by several different private companies.

Although there are expected to be multiple bidders in "phase two" of NASA's commercial space station program, there are at present four main contenders: Voyager Technologies, Axiom Space, Blue Origin, and Vast Space. At some point later this year, the space agency is expected to select one, or more likely two, of these companies for larger contracts that will support their efforts to build their stations.

To get a sense of the overall landscape as the competition heats up, Ars recently interviewed Voyager chief executive Dylan Taylor about his company's plans for a private station, Starlab. Today we are publishing an interview with Max Haot, the chief executive of Vast. The company is furthest along in terms of development, choosing to build a smaller, interim space station, Haven-1, capable of short-duration stays. Eventually, NASA wants facilities capable of continuous habitation, but it is not clear whether that will be a

requirement starting in 2030.

Until today, Haven-1 had a public launch date of mid-2026. However, as Haot explained in our interview, that launch date is no longer tenable.

***Ars**: You're slipping the launch of Haven-1 from the middle of this year to the first quarter of 2027. Why?*

Max Haot: This is obviously our first space station, and we're moving as safely and as fast as we can. That's the date right now that we are confident we will meet. We've been tracking that date, without slip, for quite a while. And that's still a year, probably two years or even more, ahead of anyone else. It will be building the world's first commercial space station from scratch, from an empty building and no team, in under four years.

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