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To the Ad Astra Family

On August 25, 2017 hurricane Harvey, a category four storm, made land-fall over the city of Rockport on the south Texas coast. The storm meandered for a week over most of eastern Texas and western Louisiana, unleashing unprecedented devastation with flash flooding and high winds along its path. As the storm center arrived in Rockport, the moisture-laden counterclockwise circulation released torrential rains and high winds over the city of Houston and its surroundings, producing massive flash flooding conditions in the general area. In Houston alone, the extensive damage and human suffering caused by the hurricane has yet to be fully comprehended and its impact on the lives of so many will last a very long time. After many days of torrential rains, high winds and massive flooding, the storm, now downgraded to a tropical depression, has moved past the state of Louisiana to points northeast.

Against the backdrop of this crisis, the response by state and local authorities and the federal government has been swift, efficient and sustained. Volunteer, neighborhood and community organizations, businesses and churches have all stepped forward to help the people of Texas in this emergency. As of this writing, thousands remain displaced from their homes, many roads remain under water and rescue crews continue to move people from flooded areas to higher ground. In the Houston area, home to Ad Astra Rocket Company, the flooding has been extensive, though the rains have subsided. Schools remain closed and some roads are still closed to normal traffic. Emergency shelters have been set up to provide aid to thousands of displaced residents.

The impact of the storm on Ad Astra's Texas operations has, fortunately, been minimal. On the days prior to Harvey's arrival, Ad Astra activated its severe weather protocols and began powering down and securing critical equipment. All personnel were released at mid-day on Friday and a company-dedicated telephone line enabled the Ad Astra team to maintain close communication throughout the storm. These updates indicated that, fortunately, all our team members remained safe and alert throughout the crisis and none were materially affected by the inclement weather.

On Wednesday, August 29, the weather conditions had subsided to the point that an inspection of the laboratory could be attempted. Several team members arrived at Ad Astra and found only small pockets of water seepage through the rear access doors to the building and minor roof leaks that damaged some of the carpeting in the general office areas. These are now being repaired. All equipment was found in good working order. The VX-200SS VASIMR® engine remained safely housed within the vacuum chamber and still under vacuum. The superconducting magnet, de-energized prior to the storm, remained at cryogenic temperatures and ready for power up.

As of this writing and, while some of our personnel are still unable to reach the company due to road, airport and/or child-care provider closures, all Ad Astra Team members and their families are doing well and are safe. Ad Astra has resumed normal operations and we look forward to resuming our rocket tests in a few days.

We are fortunate to have fared so well in this storm and stand in solidarity with those less-fortunate who have lost so much. The outpouring of volunteerism and citizen action throughout the affected communities has been high and many of our employees have also joined in this effort. We are thankful for all your messages of support.

Franklin R. Chang Díaz
CEO