The Ares I program quickly is making its mark on the launch facilities at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Using a gigantic crane and other smaller ones, workers built and raised three lightning towers around Launch Pad 39B to protect the Ares I rocket from errant bolts of electricity.

Because the Ares I rocket is much taller than the space shuttle, the lightning towers had to reach 600 feet into the sky.

They dwarf the fixed service structure built for the space shuttle and are also slightly taller than the Vehicle Assembly Building a few miles away.

The towers are similar in design to structures that protect other rockets and launch pads such as those built for the Atlas V and Delta IV rockets.

Lightning towers have been built for launch pads throughout NASA's history.

The launch towers for the Saturn V and the space shuttle are topped with single, robust lightning rods.

Workers still have to string thin wires between the tops of the towers at Pad B to complete the protective network.

The Ares I-X flight test will be the first to launch with the new system in 2009.