

At the 40th annual Space Symposium, organized by the Space Foundation in Colorado Springs, Janet Petro, acting NASA Administrator, described this stage in the agency’s history as “strange times.”

Speaking on April 8, 2025, she noted that during her short tenure, NASA has faced staff reductions, budget cuts, and the conclusion of several key programs. Petro, who took over the agency in January after Bill Nelson’s departure, admitted she was shocked by her appointment, initially thinking it was a joke. Her main task now is to support key projects like the Artemis lunar program and partnerships with private companies for Moon landings. However, she is eagerly anticipating the confirmation of Jared Isaacman, a billionaire and private astronaut, as the permanent NASA head, believing it will accelerate the agency’s progress.

Despite the challenges, Petro emphasized that the agency continues to move forward, though under unusual circumstances.