

NASA plans 2014 test-flight of deep-space capsule

November 8 2011



NASA said Tuesday it will launch in 2014 an unmanned test flight of its Orion deep space capsule, made by Lockheed Martin to someday carry astronauts to the moon, an asteroid or Mars.

NASA said Tuesday it will launch in 2014 an unmanned test flight of its Orion deep space capsule, made by Lockheed Martin to someday carry astronauts to the moon, an asteroid or Mars.

The test launch from Cape Canaveral, Florida aims to send the capsule into orbit, where it will circle the Earth twice, then attempt to make an intact re-entry into Earth's atmosphere before plunging into the ocean.

The US space agency said in a statement it hopes the data will help "influence design decisions" and "reduce the cost and schedule risks of exploration missions."

There was no specific date set for the launch other than the year, 2014.

"The entry part of the test will produce data needed to develop a spacecraft capable of surviving speeds greater than 20,000 miles per hour (32,000 kilometers) and safely return astronauts from beyond [Earth orbit](#)," said Bill Gerstenmaier, NASA associate administrator for [human exploration](#) and operations.

"This test is very important to the detailed design process in terms of the data we expect to receive."

NASA announced earlier this year that the designs for the Orion space capsule, which was initially part of the Constellation program to take astronauts back to the Moon, would be used for the next deep space capsule.

Constellation was cancelled by President [Barack Obama](#) for being behind schedule and over budget. Obama has instead set goals of reaching an asteroid by 2025 and Mars a decade after that.

[Lockheed Martin](#) Corporation began work on the space capsule in 2006. The 23-ton capsule is being designed to carry four astronauts at a time into deep space.

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: NASA plans 2014 test-flight of deep-space capsule (2011, November 8) retrieved 1 February 2023 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-11-nasa-test-flight-deep-space-capsule.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.