

SpaceX's Dragon, now with seating for seven

March 19 2012, By Nancy Atkinson



Inside the SpaceX Dragon capsule, testing out the seating arrangement for a crew of seven. Test crew included (from top left): NASA Crew Survival Engineering Team Lead Dustin Gohmert, NASA Astronaut Tony Antonelli, NASA Astronaut Lee Archambault, SpaceX Mission Operations Engineer Laura Crabtree, SpaceX Thermal Engineer Brenda Hernandez, NASA Astronaut Rex Walheim, and NASA Astronaut Tim Kopra. Credit: Roger Gilbertson / SpaceX

So much for the idea that space capsules are cramped and can only carry a limited crew. SpaceX revealed a prototype for their new crew cabin design, as they conducted a joint daylong review with NASA of the Dragon crew vehicle layout. In this configuration, the Dragon will be able to carry a crew of seven, the same number the space shuttle could carry. Using a Dragon engineering model equipped with seats and representations of crew systems, they were able to get assessments and feedback from engineers and four NASA astronauts on interior amenities such as lighting, environmental control and life support

systems, displays, cargo racks, and the all important seating system. The evaluators participated in human factors assessments which covered entering and exiting Dragon under both normal and contingency cases, as well as reach and visibility evaluations. . Photo: SpaceX which they say will work well for astronauts in both regular and emergency (that's 'off-nominal' in NASA-speak) scenarios.

See more images from the review, below, along with a video from the initial tests of the SuperDraco engines that will power the launch escape system.



SpaceX and NASA conducted a daylong review of the Dragon crew vehicle layout using the Dragon engineering model equipped with seats and representations of crew systems. Credit: SpaceX

Plus, as a heads-up, SpaceX CEO Elon Musk will be on the US television show “60 Minutes” on Sunday, March 18, 2012. You can see a preview [here](#), (which includes a touching scene of Musk talking about his heros) and check your local listings [here](#).

Even with all seven crewmembers in their seats, there is enough interior

space for three additional people to stand and assist the crew with their launch preparations — or for the CEO to kibitz with the crew.

The seven seats mount to strong, lightweight supporting structures attached to the pressure vessel walls. Each seat can hold an adult up to 1.95 meters tall (6 feet 5 inches) and weighing 113 kg (250 lbs), and has a liner that is custom-fit for each crewmember.

Source: [Universe Today](#)

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