

Two more spacewalks for Thomas Pesquet

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ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet during his first spacewalk, on Friday 13 January 2017. Together with NASA astronaut Shane Kimbrough, he spent five hours and 58 minutes outside the Space Station to complete a battery upgrade to the outpost's power system. Thomas commented on this picture: "The requisite space selfie! Nice reflection of Earth in the helmet. Unbelievable feeling to be your own space vehicle...". Credit: European Space Agency

ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet will make two more spacewalks under NASA's plans to maintain the International Space Station during his mission.

Though intended for the end of March and April, the dates may change because the sorties require equipment yet to be launched on a Cygnus supply vessel.

The first will see Thomas and NASA astronaut Shane Kimbrough head outside to install a new computer, work on the electrical power distribution system, and disconnect a docking adapter to allow its move to a new location.

They will spend most of the spacewalk working separately, with Thomas inspecting the Station's radiator and spending most of his time maintaining the Dextre multipurpose robotic hand.

The next day, ground control will use the Station's robotic arm to move the disconnected adapter to an upwards-pointing port on the European-built Node-2 that connects the Kibo, Destiny and Columbus laboratory modules.

Shane will return outside with NASA astronaut Peggy Whitson to reconnect the adapter at its new port and install protective covers, as well as installing an upgraded communications computer.

The third spacewalk will see Thomas venturing out with Peggy. They will replace a power unit for external science facilities, install new antennas and cameras, and work on the AMS-02 antimatter hunter.



ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet during his first spacewalk, on Friday 13 January 2017. Together with NASA astronaut Shane Kimbrough, he spent five hours and 58 minutes outside the Space Station to complete a battery upgrade to the outpost's power system. Thomas commented on this picture: "Today was a great day: we got the work done outside. Unbelievable team effort... and fantastic pictures from Oleg Novitsky. Here I am just hanging out the hatch." Credit: Roscosmos–O. Novitsky

If Thomas performs these two sorties he will total three during his six-month mission, matching his French colleague Philippe Perrin for a single mission.

The three spacewalks impose a heavy workload on the hundreds of people working on the ground as well as for the astronauts in space

because they must be carefully choreographed and prepared in detail.

Assigning another two to Thomas is a testament to the training received by ESA astronauts at the agency's centre in Cologne and partner sites around the world.



ESA astronaut Thomas Pesquet during his first spacewalk, on Friday 13 January 2017. Together with NASA astronaut Shane Kimbrough, he spent five hours and 58 minutes outside the Space Station to complete a battery upgrade to the outpost's power system. Thomas commented on this picture: "This is what a spacewalk is: 400 km of void under your feet" . Credit: ESA/NASA

Provided by European Space Agency

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