

Pence misses launch but treated to new SpaceX crew capsule

December 18 2018, by Marcia Dunn



SpaceX employees gather for a group photo in front of the Dragon capsule at a SpaceX hangar in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018. The capsule is being readied for a January test flight, minus a crew. (AP Photo/Marcia Dunn)

Vice President Mike Pence missed seeing a SpaceX rocket soar Tuesday. But he still got to view the company's new crew capsule, designed to carry astronauts to the International Space Station as soon as

next year.

Pence joined members of the Air Force to witness the launch of the most powerful GPS satellite ever built, but a last-minute abort kept the Falcon rocket grounded. SpaceX will try again Wednesday.

Pence later toured a SpaceX hangar and admired the sleek, white Dragon capsule being readied for a January [test flight](#), minus a crew. The next capsule, still in California, will carry astronauts.

The [vice president](#) called the spacecraft "very cool"—and not what he expected. He said the interior—shown on a TV monitor near the capsule—reminds him of the movie "The Martian."

More than 100 SpaceX workers crowded around Pence to shake his hand. The vice president joined in group photos, with the Dragon as a backdrop. Alongside the [capsule](#) was a brand new Falcon booster that will send it into space, as well as a less glamorous recycled booster that's already launched twice.

Pence complimented a worker wearing a sweatshirt showing SpaceX chief Elon Musk's red Tesla convertible flying through space, with Earth in the background. SpaceX launched the car on a test flight of its Heavy rocket last February. "Get me one of those sweatshirts," Pence joked. "I love that sweatshirt."



SpaceX's Dragon capsule, right, sits in a SpaceX hangar in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018. The capsule is being readied for a January test flight, minus a crew. (AP Photo/Marcia Dunn)

Pence told the crowd: "We're going back to the moon and then Mars. Stay tuned."

As soon as Pence left, one employee shouted out, "Back to work!" and they did.



A Falcon 9 SpaceX rocket, stands ready at space launch complex 40, shortly before the launch was scrubbed because of a technical issue at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018. The payload on the rocket is the U.S. Air Force's first Global Positioning System III space vehicle and the system will augment 31 current operational GPS satellites. (AP Photo/John Raoux)

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