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00:00:01,360 --> 00:00:05,360

NARRATOR: Training for a mission is as important for astronauts as the integrity of the

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00:00:05,360 --> 00:00:08,930

spacesuits they wear to venture into the vacuum of space.

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00:00:08,930 --> 00:00:12,630

One preflight training program called the Crew Equipment Interface Test, or CEIT,

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00:00:12,630 --> 00:00:19,190

is held at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida, prior to every mission.

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00:00:19,190 --> 00:00:26,070

DAVE ANDREWS: CEIT is a test we do every flow and it basically gives the opportunity for the flight crew to

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00:00:26,070 --> 00:00:33,420

come down to see their actual vehicle they're going to fly in and for the first-time fliers it might

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00:00:33,420 --> 00:00:40,110

be the first time they've seen the actual shuttle they're going to fly in, or just the shuttle in itself.

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00:00:40,110 --> 00:00:44,360

NARRATOR: For two days the crew has a chance to get hands-on training with the actual tools,

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00:00:44,360 --> 00:00:48,120

equipment and hardware they'll be using in while in orbit.

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00:00:48,120 --> 00:00:54,920

DAVE ANDREWS: It's a good training exercise both for the crew, and for the in-flight maintenance folks that

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00:00:54,920 --> 00:01:00,960

come down here for CEIT as well, and they verify their on-orbit procedures as well.

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00:01:00,960 --> 00:01:04,210

NARRATOR: Even as the Space Shuttle Program comes to a close,

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00:01:04,210 --> 00:01:09,050

CEIT remains a mainstay and an essential part of flight preparation,

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00:01:09,050 --> 00:01:14,640

but every flight requires a specific training that focuses on the mission's objectives.

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00:01:14,640 --> 00:01:19,010

DAVE ANDREWS: In essence CEIT has been the same. Obviously every mission has been different;

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00:01:19,010 --> 00:01:22,170

the vehicle has been configured differently over all the years.

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00:01:22,170 --> 00:01:28,720

And so every CEIT is a little unique in that it incorporates the latest changes to the orbiter.

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00:01:28,720 --> 00:01:32,270

NARRATOR: The crew, often dressed in clean room gear known as bunny suits,

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00:01:32,270 --> 00:01:38,910

has a chance to climb into the vehicle and touch the actual dials, levers and switches they'll be using in flight.

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00:01:38,910 --> 00:01:43,500

Astronauts from other space agencies also travel to Kennedy for their training.

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00:01:43,500 --> 00:01:48,560

DAVE ANDREWS: There are times when the astronauts have come down here to KSC for the first time,

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00:01:48,560 --> 00:01:55,320

especially when there's people that are flying in from abroad like from Canada or Japan or some of our partner

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00:01:55,320 --> 00:01:59,160

so they come down here. It's an all brand new experience for them.

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00:01:59,160 --> 00:02:05,230

A lot of times when they come down here they want to look at everything, touch everything,

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00:02:05,230 --> 00:02:12,190

be involved with everything so they really get a feeling what it is to be in and around a space shuttle.

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00:02:12,190 --> 00:02:18,080

NARRATOR: From cable routing and tool stowage, to tile inspection and practicing in-flight maintenance tasks

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00:02:18,080 --> 00:02:22,320

CEIT makes the crew members better prepared to carry out their mission.

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00:02:22,320 --> 00:02:26,050

DAVE ANDREWS: Well, one of the unique things of working with this group is we do meet the astronauts

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00:02:26,050 --> 00:02:30,970

and occasionally we get to know them on a personal level.

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00:02:30,970 --> 00:02:39,910

When the shuttle goes off we're with them and we say 'Godspeed' and hope to see them back there on the back

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00:02:39,910 --> 00:02:46,780

Every mission you get that lump in our throat because it's more than just an expendable vehicle,

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00:02:46,780 --> 00:02:51,860

we got the astronauts on board, which makes it pretty unique.

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00:02:51,860 --> 00:02:56,540

NARRATOR: Every shuttle crew may be familiar with the vehicle and its equipment, thanks to mock-ups,

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00:02:56,540 --> 00:03:02,490

virtual reality tools and other hardware training instruments at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston,

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00:03:02,490 --> 00:03:07,750

but there is no substitute for training with the actual vehicle that will carry them into orbit.

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00:03:07,750 --> 00:03:12,670

DAVE ANDREWS: We try to do everything here on the ground to make everything , I'll say perfect,

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00:03:12,670 --> 00:03:18,650

or as close to perfect as we can get it so there's no issues on orbit for the crew to have to go work.