



***Ed Mango***  
***Commercial Crew Program Manager***

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Slate: What inspired you to work for NASA?

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Ed Mango: The No. 1 thing that inspired me to go work for NASA was watching the Apollo astronauts walk on t

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Apollo 11, I was only 8 years old and we were at my parents' house and we all got in front of the TV.

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I was probably the closest one to this black-and-white console TV staring at everything that was being said and

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And I watched them probably walk on the moon for a good hour before I fell asleep right there on the floor right

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Slate: What is the goal of NASA's Commercial Crew Program?

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Ed Mango: One of the best experiences of watching the Apollo 11 mission was when they planted the America

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And it clearly said that America is capable of great things. And now there's an American flag sitting on the U.S.

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lab of the ISS that was left there by the last shuttle mission.

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I believe the Commercial Crew Program and our vehicles are going to go up to the International Space Station

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can go and retrieve that flag and bring it back to the surface of the planet and show that we are still capable of

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Slate: What was it like supporting the shuttle program early in your career?

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Ed Mango: For a 22-year-old, it was extremely exciting. To think that I was part of a U.S.

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space program that was going to launch astronauts, whether they be military or not, just launch astronauts, wa

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Every day I would wake up excited to go to work, every single day.

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Slate: How does it feel to lead one of the next big U.S. efforts in space?

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Ed Mango: The feelings about wanting to come to work every day are about the same.

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The mission is a lot different. Now, it isn't me doing a lot of the work, it's me getting other folks to do the work.

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Having my team do the details and so I get to strategize more.

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00:02:09,630 --> 00:02:16,770

And then I often wonder about those folks who decided to put a plan together to go to the moon and put a plan

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eventually from Vandenberg, which eventually we did not do.

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But the strategy behind those is now kind of the thinking mode that I have to be in.

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Slate: What do you hope the Commercial Crew Program learns from the Space Shuttle Program?

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Ed Mango: Mostly the experiences of what could work and what cannot work from the shuttle program are now

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everything we do in the Commercial Crew Program.

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About half of the folks that work on the Commercial Crew Program came from the shuttle

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program or have experiences with the shuttle program.

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So, we bring our history, plus some of the hard lessons that they learned about

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keeping the crew safe and alive and getting them back home.

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Many of us had to deal with those failures in the shuttle program as engineers,

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as test conductors and as assistant launch directors. So, we have those scars in order to go make this program

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00:03:06,940 --> 00:03:11,850

Slate: What did you learn as launch director for Ares 1-X?

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00:03:11,850 --> 00:03:16,110

Ed Mango: I was extremely excited. Excited for the data that we collected,

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00:03:16,110 --> 00:03:19,130

but far more excited for what the team had accomplished.

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00:03:19,130 --> 00:03:21,940

And it clearly showed that we could develop a new vehicle,

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00:03:21,940 --> 00:03:28,070

test a different vehicle and then move forward with new development for human spaceflight.

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Slate: What would you say to skeptics of the Commercial Crew Program?

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Ed Mango: I would say there is no great endeavor that does not have skeptics who believe that it cannot be done.

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I look at what the Wright brothers did, I look at what Neil Armstrong did walking on the moon,

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00:03:42,900 --> 00:03:49,250

I look at what we did with shuttle flights to do all that science and there were skeptics in each of those programs.

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at the very beginning that said that would never happen, that would never work.

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The Wright brothers would never be able to fly, and yet now we fly airplanes all over the world every day.

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00:03:57,670 --> 00:04:02,510

Slate: What is your hope for the Commercial Crew Program?

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00:04:02,510 --> 00:04:10,840

Ed Mango: My hope for Commercial Crew Program is that we have a capability that is designed and developed to meet the needs of the program.