

## Mars500 Mission Finally Coming To End

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After a year-and-a-half of being locked up in isolation, the Mars500 crew's mission is finally coming to an end.

The 17-month simulated Mars mission had six men spend 520-days of isolation to study the mental and physical challenges that would be faced for a manned mission to Mars.

The crew had their brains monitored and bodies scanned to study the effects of the long period of isolation.

The Mars500 crew believes they have properly answered the question of whether men can mentally and physically survive a trip to Mars.

"Yes, the crew can survive the inevitable isolation that is for a mission to Mars and back. Psychologically, we can do it," Patrik Sunbald, the human life sciences specialist at ESA, said in a press release.

"They have had their ups and downs, but these were to be expected. In fact, we anticipated many more problems, but the crew has been doing surprisingly well."

The mission started on June 3, 2010, just a few months after ESA announced the candidates.

The crew "entered Mars orbit" on February 1, 2011, and left the imaginary red planet on March 2, 2011.

ESA has added communication delays and connection disruptions that coincide with what it would actually be like in space.

**Image Caption: Mars500 crew having a fun portrait with red protective goggles. Credit: ESA**