

# Curious about Mars?

Tomorrow starts our newest KiwiSpace expedition to the Mars Desert Research Station, which this year is called TasMars and it is an international collaboration of three nations: Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Together with the [Mars Society Australia \(MSA\)](#) we wish the greatest success to the TasMars expedition. The TasMars crew is the 123rd to work at MDRS and includes members of Mars Society Australia and Mars Society New Zealand with colleagues from NASA Ames Research Centre.

Crew commander is MSA director [David Willson](#), he is joined by [Emma Braegen](#), engineer from Melbourne, [Melanie Newfield](#), a biologist from New Zealand, and [Dr Jennifer Blank](#), a geologist from NASA ARC. Other researchers will visit the crew during their two week stay.



The TasMars mission is a follow on to the very successful KiwiMars mission in 2012. The name is chosen to reflect the common exploration heritage of Australia and New Zealand in the voyages of Abel Tasman who explored the coastlines of our two countries in 1642. Tasman's explorations are reflected and honoured in many place names in both countries. The spirit of exploration shown by Tasman and his antecedents in the aboriginal and Maori peoples of Australia and New Zealand is the same spirit that will one day take us to Mars and beyond.

You can follow the mission at <http://www.kiwispace.org.nz/mars2013> and of course at the MDRS facebook page.