

# Lightweight Mars Ascent Vehicle

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## 1 Abstract

This paper presents the development of a lightweight Mars Ascent Vehicle (MAV) mission concept. Mars Ascent Vehicles are critical components of manned missions to Mars, as they transport the astronauts from the surface of Mars to a low-Mars orbit where they can rendezvous with a vehicle that will take them back to Earth. The Cooper Union Mars Ascent Vehicle is a two-person two-stage vehicle with a 3588 kg dry mass. Mass efficiency was the focus for the project, as heavier systems lead to challenges during entry, descent, landing and takeoff. This vehicle saves weight by reducing its crew capacity to two astronauts and by functioning only during the ascent from Mars. The proposed MAV will travel directly to a 1-Sol orbit, therefore limiting the risk involved in multiple docking events and eliminating the need for an expensive taxi vehicle. The MAV's thermal protection system reduces cost and weight by using a thin Advanced Flexible Reusable Surface Insulation blanket with a protective ceramic coating that is adhered to the MAV. This MAV further saves weight by utilizing a unique paraffin fuel hybrid in-situ propulsion system that eliminates the need for complex and heavy cryogenic cooling systems. An in-situ propellant production system will be used to produce the oxidizer for the hybrid system which prevents the need for oxidizer to be carried from Earth.

The mass savings, cost, and timeline for the two-person MAV mission were assessed to determine whether it meets NASA requirements of a 2035 launch date with a budget of no more than 2 billion USD per year. A cost analysis of the MAV was conducted using a standard NASA cost spread of 60:40 for technically challenging designs. In this cost spread, 60% of the budget is used in the first half of the project and 40% is spent in the second half. Cost estimate relationship equations were used to determine the overall cost of each subsystem for design, development, testing, and evaluation (DDT&E) as well as flight unit cost. The sum of both the DDT&E and flight unit cost resulted in the overall cost of the subsystem. This analysis shows that the MAV will be designed within the budget of two billion dollars per year until the launch year of 2035. A five-phase schedule for the production of the MAV will be used in order to meet the 2035 launch deadline.

## 2 Introduction

Mars is the next frontier for mankind's exploration of outer space. The first people to walk on Mars will spark an era of innovation, just as the first humans to walk on the Moon sparked excitement and optimism for humanity. Manned exploration of the

surface of Mars will also be key to research on the planet's history and possible long-term habitability. For these reasons, NASA has made manned missions to Mars a key goal for 2020-2030. Rapid technological development and international collaboration will be necessary to meet this goal.

To stimulate innovation in decadal space exploration goals, NASA has created and funded the RASC-AL (Revolutionary Aerospace Systems Concepts - Academic Linkage) competition for university students. This competition challenges students to design mission concepts and the necessary technology for those missions that serve themes relevant to NASA's goals for the upcoming decade. One theme for the 2021 competition focuses on developing technology that will enable manned missions to Mars. The challenge specifically focuses on developing a lightweight vehicle that can carry astronauts from the surface of Mars to rendezvous vehicles waiting in a low-Mars orbit.

This paper outlines a Mars Ascent Vehicle (MAV) with a focus on weight reduction. This novel design is meant to deliver two astronauts from the surface of Mars to a 1-Sol orbit around Mars. The mission design also meets RASC-AL specified budget and timeline constraints. Careful attention to the weight of the vehicle drove many of design decisions throughout the MAV.

In a preliminary trade study, it was concluded that having the vehicle function purely as an ascent vehicle, as opposed to an ascent and descent vehicle, would lower cost and weight and maintain crew safety. The ascent and descent vehicle has the advantage of eliminating long waiting periods on Mars and is less affected by changes in trajectory during the mission. The ascent-only vehicle separates landing into two phases, in which the first uses the landing unit to bring the MAV to the Mars surface, and the second brings the crew to Mars.

Knowing the total function of the MAV, the vehicle was broken down into 6 subsystems: Trajectory,

Structures, Propulsion, Thermal Protection, Avionics, and Power. The trajectory system focused on the takeoff trajectory, the required  $\Delta V$  and the mars orbit that will meet up with the waiting orbital vehicle. Structures focused on the the sizing and shape of the vehicle. Propulsion looked at various propellants and found the best method for fueling the MAV. Thermal Protection analyzed the heating of the MAV due to the rocket engines and atmospheric heating upon liftoff and found suitable protective materials to prevent the internal structure from getting too hot. Aero focuses on reducing the drag of the MAV for takeoff by tweaking the exterior shape of the MAV. Finally the Power system is responsible for providing all the electricity necessary for the MAV to function. Each of these systems are analyzed in depth in this paper

### 3 Top Level Requirements

#### 1. Functional Requirements:

- (a) Must be able to safely transport two astronauts from the surface of Mars to a low-Mars orbit
- (b) Must facilitate the astronaut transfer from Mars into the Mars Ascent Vehicle (MAV) and facilitate the transfer from the MAV into the Mars transit vehicle (which is in low-Mars orbit)
- (c) Must be able to reasonably meet requirements and technological capabilities for Entry, Descent, and Landing (EDL)
- (d) Must provide human necessities and life support measures including cabin space and basic needs, such as bathroom, removal of waste, etc.

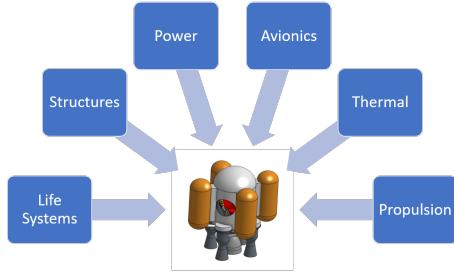
#### 2. Design Requirements and Other Constraints:

- (a) Dry mass limit within 5000 kg and wet mass limit of 20,000 kg depending on MAV deployment case

- (b) Project must be able to be completed by 2035
- (c) Project cannot exceed annual budget of \$2 billion from 2025 to 2035
- (d) Technology used must be at a high technological readiness level before launch

### 3. Design Criteria:

- (a) The vehicle's dry mass should be as low as possible to minimize fuel consumption
- (b) Cost-efficiency and timeline: if this MAV can be built cheaper and faster than the current design, then it is better
- (c) Sustainability: the more parts that can be reused for future missions, the better. This is also a cost-reduction measure.



The Mars Ascent Vehicle (MAV) was divided into six critical systems:

- Structures—Focusing on the materials, layout and frame of the MAV,
- Propulsion—Focusing on thrust production,
- Thermal—Focusing on protecting the MAV from external heat,
- Power—Providing electrical power to the vehicle,
- Avionics—The brains that control the MAV flight path,
- and Life Support—the systems that keep the astronauts alive

Each system produced a minimum and maximum mass estimate. The average mass for each system is displayed in Figure 3 and is significantly lower than the RASC-AL dry and wet mass requirements. It should be noted that the 121 kg thermal mass was included in structures mass. The resulting average dry mass is 4061 kg while the wet mass is 6749 kg, all abiding by constraints such as mechanical, thermal loading and manufacturing capabilities.

The cargo and life support estimates were determined from the four-person MAV report from NASA that had per person per day requirements listed [1].

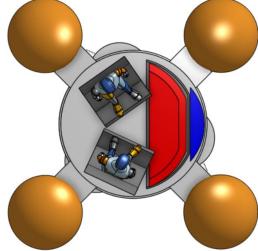


Figure 1: Top View of the MAV

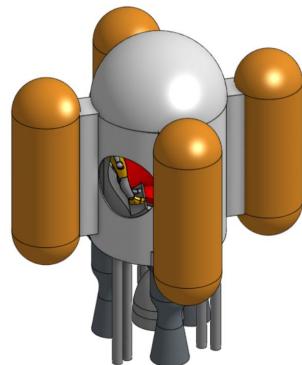


Figure 2: Isometric View of the MAV

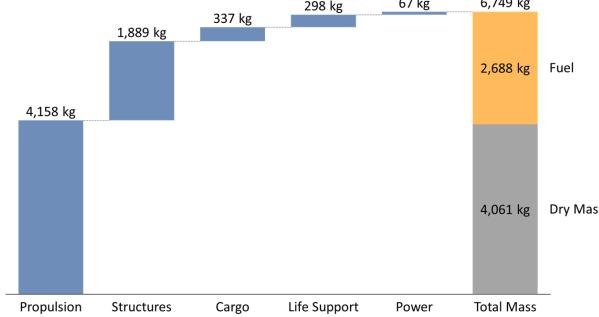


Figure 3: Mass Overview

#### 4.1 Cost Estimate

The estimated cost was calculated using techniques described by Dr. Arney and Dr. Wilhite [2]. Using a series of Cost Estimating Relationships (CERs) that require basic information from the system sizing tools, a budget was developed for the proposed MAV. This initial cost estimate provides evidence that the proposed MAV is financially feasible in regards to the allocated budget for the project. A summation of all the Design, Development, Testing, and Evaluation (DDT&E) costs and flight unit costs for every MAV subsystem resulted in a total estimated budget of \$9.6 billion for the MAV. Figure 3, below, shows the MAV subsystem cost breakdowns.

Subsystem:	Subsystem DDT&E Cost (\$M)	bfFlight Unit Cost (\$M)	bfTotal Subsystem Cost (\$M)
Crew Capsule	1872.4	272.9	2145.3
Ascent Stage (Storable)	2060.8	222.6	283.4
In-space Habitat	2750.1	228.9	2979.0
Propulsive Stage	1111.3	85.4	1196.7
Propellant Depot	958.9	110.4	1069.3
Total Cost (\$M)			9673.7

Table 1: MAV subsystem breakdown cost estimates: DDT&E costs, Flight unit costs, and Total costs

The techniques described in the Rapid Cost Estimation paper [2] account for costs being distributed over multiple years through the use of a beta distribution curve. The cost estimation accounts for standard practices at NASA and operates on an 60:40 spread in which 60% of the cost is spent over the first half of the project and the remaining 40% of the cost is spent over the second half of the project. NASA uses this standard for technically challenging designs

and manned systems in which more money must be committed early in the development period.

#### 4.2 Product Development Timeline

- 2025: Phase A: Concept Development
- 2026: Phase B: Preliminary Design and Fabrication
- 2029: Phase C: Final Design and Fabrication
- 2031: Phase D: System Assembly and Integration
- 2033: Phase E: Launch Operation

#### 5 Trajectory

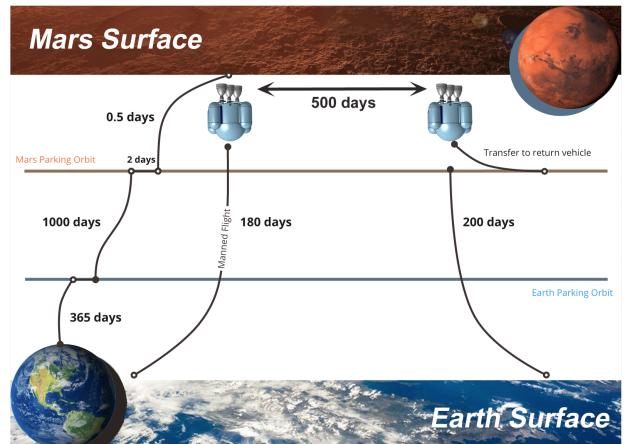


Figure 4: Mission Timeline

The trajectory of the MAV to Mars was researched for three main reasons. First, to find a suitable parking orbit for the return vehicle—information that drives many decisions for the MAV’s design. Second, to determine the MAV entry velocity, and third, to plan out the mission timeline. The trajectories were analyzed by looking at the change in velocity ( $\Delta V$ ), the number of launch opportunities, the travel time, the associated risk, and the vehicle’s entry velocity.

The MAV first travels without a crew from Earth to Mars. This occurs four years prior to the manned flight. The first flight will use a minimum energy Hohmann transfer orbit to reach Mars. Ion thrusters will propel the MAV because of their cost and mass

savings. While this increases transit time, this is not a concern because the MAV is unmanned during this stage [1].

For the manned flight, Earth to Mars trajectories with travel times varying from 100 days to approximately 550 days were analyzed. Since Mars and Earth are in a 15-year periodic cycle with each other, Earth to Mars trajectories plotted over a 15-year span can be extrapolated to apply for any time after that. A weighted decision matrix was used to evaluate the best trajectory for the manned mission based off of  $\Delta V$ , associated risk, time of flight, number of flight windows and other factors. The decision matrix is shown in Appendix D: Trajectory Decision Matrix. It was found that the 180-day conjunction class trajectory offered the best balance among the selected criteria. After the 180 day flight, the rocket will perform an Aerocapture maneuver to enter a 250 km by 33,900 km elliptical orbit [3]. This is commonly called a 1-Sol orbit.

The three main options considered for the Mars to 1-Sol trajectory were a 48-hour, 24-hour, and 12-hour rendezvous. Looking at the  $\Delta V$  and using the 48-hour trajectory as a baseline, the 24-hour trajectory cut the time of ascent in half while only increasing the  $\Delta V$  by 3 m/s [1]. The 12-hour trajectory took a quarter of the time but required an extra 170 m/s  $\Delta V$ . As the time of flight decreased, the number of possible launch opportunities also shrunk [1]. A 48-hour trajectory has multiple launch opportunities per day while a 24-hour trajectory is only able to launch a few times a month. The 12-hour trajectory was even more infrequent [1]. The 24-hour trajectory was chosen because it has a relatively small  $\Delta V$  penalty while reducing the overall time of flight by half. The smaller quantity of launch windows was deemed a suitable risk because there would still be several opportunities to launch per month. This trajectory will require a  $\Delta V$  of 5274 m/s [1].

## 6 Entry Decent Landing

The MAV will enter the Martian atmosphere with a heat shield that will slow down the vehicle while protecting the structure from overheating. Once the atmosphere is thick enough, parachutes will deploy to further slow down the vehicle. Finally, in the landing stage, rocket thrusters will fire which will allow the MAV to safely and gently touch down on Mars. The main component of these procedures involves two developing technologies: The Range Trigger and Terrain Relative Navigation (TRN). The range trigger will enable the vehicle to calculate the precise time of parachute deployment during descent, and the TRN can locate efficient landing spots that are devoid of hazardous terrain. Using these, the environmental conditions of the landing spot can be secured before the mission and thus relieve possible safety hazards. The Entry, Descent, and Landing equipment were not modeled in Figure 1 or 2.

## 7 Propulsion

The propulsion system for the Mars Ascent Vehicle provides the thrust necessary to propel the MAV from the surface of Mars to a 1-Sol orbit. It was determined that the optimal  $\Delta V$  for this mission was 5274 m/s, so the fuel requirements were shared around achieving that  $\Delta V$ . The proposed MAV will use a two-stage hybrid propulsion system with a paraffin-based wax as the fuel and liquid oxygen oxidizer collected using an in-situ propulsion system. The system will use three 125kN engines for the first stage, and one for the second stage.

A two-stage system was selected for its fuel efficiency and failure modes. With a two-stage system, the tanks from the first stage can be ejected upon completion. This means that the second stage can continue propulsion with less mass. A two-stage system also allows for higher safety margins against failure modes, which is desirable. Calculations for mass dif-

ferences between a single stage and a two stage system for a four-person MAV were obtained from Polsgrove et al. [1]. A single stage system would require an excess  $\Delta V$  of 275 m/s to reach just a 500km final orbit. The MAV would have to rendezvous with a taxi vehicle to carry the crew from the 500km orbit to the return vehicle in the 1-sol orbit. It was decided that this added complexity and cost outweighs the mass benefits of the single stage to orbit system. The results from Polsgrove et al., run in NASA POST, are shown in Figure 5. There are only 6% mass savings between the single stage to orbit and two stage to 1-Sol orbit systems.

**Table 4. MAV Vehicle Trades and Assumptions. Vehicle options and mass assumptions that are used in the mass sensitivities to thrust and launch latitude.**

	Stages to Orbit	Orbit	Payload	Propellant	Isp	Stage PMF	
						1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage
Option 1	SSTO	500 km Circular	3,919 kg	NTO/MMH	335 s	0.86	--
Option 2A	TSTO, 2 Engine 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	1 sol	4,178 kg	LOX/LCH <sub>4</sub>	360 s	0.83	0.73
Option 2B	TSTO, 3 Engine 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	1 sol	4,178 kg	LOX/LCH <sub>4</sub>	360 s	0.83	0.73
Option 3A	TSTO, 2 Engine 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	5 sol	4,326 kg	LOX/LCH <sub>4</sub>	360 s	0.83	0.73
Option 3B	TSTO, 3 Engine 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	5 sol	4,326 kg	LOX/LCH <sub>4</sub>	360 s	0.83	0.73

Figure 5: Comparison of single stage to orbit and two stage to orbit designs [1]

A hybrid propulsion system was selected for this mission for its higher specific impulse, large range of operating temperatures, and safety. The paraffin-based wax does not require temperature control, which eliminates most of the cryogenic liquid and cooling systems necessary for conventional propulsion systems. This greatly reduces lift-off mass from Earth. The paraffin wax will be brought from Earth, while the liquid oxygen (LOX) will be produced on Mars using an in-situ propellant production system (ISPP) originally proposed by Boiron et al. [4].

To produce the LOX,  $CO_2$  collected on Mars will be decomposed into  $O_2$  using a Zirconia membrane solid oxide electrolysis system. This decomposition happens in two steps. First, the  $CO_2$  is thermally and catalytically decomposed into CO and  $O_2$  close to the Zirconia membrane. The Zirconia membrane has a voltage passed through it so it can then capture and extract the oxygen ions and recombine those ions

into dioxygen.

The three 125 kN engines were selected for their commercial availability and thrust capability. The engine thrust vs. liftoff mass was based on calculations done for a *LOX/LCH<sub>4</sub>* propulsion system. From Figure 6, it can be seen that the optimum engine thrust per liftoff mass is from the three-engine system at 125 kN of thrust per engine. The two-engine case causes a higher overall liftoff mass, which is undesirable.

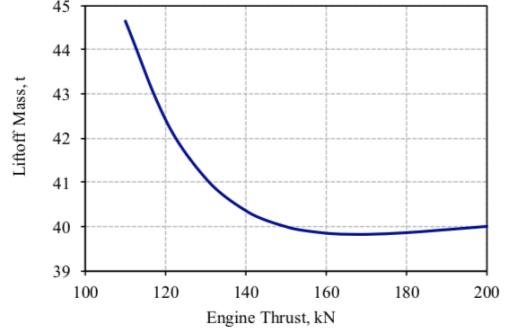
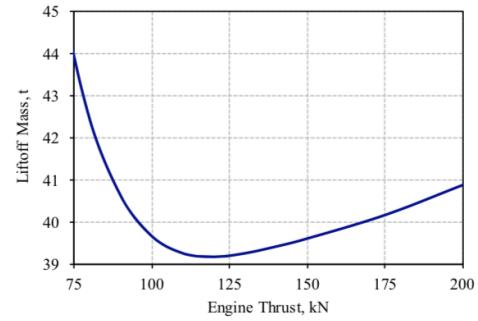


Figure 6: Comparison of MAV liftoff mass vs. engine thrust for three and two engine MAV case [1]

For the ISPP system to operate, it requires dust filtering, compression, heating, and cryocooling subsystems. The parameters for each of these components are in Appendix A. Masses for the ISPP system were found by sizing the Zirconia cell based on the total amount of oxidizer needed for the system, and the capabilities of the Zirconia membrane to produce that oxidizer. The total amount of oxidizer needed for the mission was found to be 2,500 kg. For a 500-day mission duration, that means the system must

produce 5.0 kg of oxidizer per 24.4hr sol. The resulting requirements of the Zirconia cell are shown below in Table 2. These parameters from the sizing of the Zirconia cell were then used to create mass and power budgets for the system, shown below in Tables 3 and 4. A generous 20% margin was applied following methods referenced in Chandler et al. [5].

Table 2: Zirconia cell sizing

Units		
Total current	637	A
Cell power	1082	W
Cell area	1591	cm <sup>2</sup>
# of 10cm wafers	22	
Wafer area	1521	cm <sup>2</sup>
ZrO <sub>2</sub> system mass	20	kg
Stack heat loss	220	W
CO <sub>2</sub> extraction rate	635	g/hr
Sorption comp. power	217	W
Sorption comp. mass	22	kg

Table 3: Mass budget

kg	
ZrO <sub>2</sub> system	19.8
Sorption comp.	21.7
Cryocooler	20.2
Dust filter	1.2
Heat exchanger	0.8
Other	39.0
ASRG	266.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>369.5</b>

Table 4: Power budget

W	
ZrO <sub>2</sub>	1301.7
Sorption	217.5
Cryocooler	268.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1787.4</b>

To determine whether the ISPP system would lead to overall mass savings for the MAV, it was compared to the same proposed MAV structure where both the oxidizer and the fuel were brought from launch on Earth. Comparing the mass of the non-ISPP system to the ISPP system, the In-Situ system has a 48.9% in-situ gain as shown in Table 5. In-situ gain compares the savings between the lift-off mass and the hybrid ISPP system mass while accounting for the additional mass of the ISPP unit itself. The Earth launch mass for the ISPP system is approximately 2,700 kg lighter than the non-ISPP system. The calculations for the ISPP unit mass, the system brought mass, and the in-situ gain can be found in Appendix B.

System	Mass (kg)
Lift-off mass (non-ISPP)	6999
Rocket brought mass	4476
ISPP unit mass	370
System brought mass (ISPP)	4846
<b>In-Situ Gain</b>	<b>48.62%</b>

Table 5: Mass comparison of hybrid-ISPP system vs. traditional hybrid system

## 8 Thermal Protection System

The goal of the Thermal Protection System (TPS) is to protect the MAV from excess heat. The two main sources of heat are from the hot gas plumes of the rocket engine and the atmospheric compression upon landing and takeoff.

### 8.1 Atmospheric Heating

To protect the main structure from the heat generated during takeoff, 0.5 inches of Advanced Flexible Reusable Surface Insulation (AFRSI) blanket with a Protective Ceramic Coating (PCC) will be adhered to the exterior of the MAV. This material was selected for its light weight, affordability, and maximum op-

erational temperature. Table 6 shows the considered materials, costs and max effective temperature.

material	Max temp (K)	Material Cost (\$1000/m <sup>2</sup> )
Carbon fiber CMC (C/SiC)	1922	161.46
Advanced C-C (ACC)b	1866	129.17
Shuttle coated C-C (RCC)	1755	129.17
AETB-8/TUFI	1700	8.61
LI-900/RCG	1533	12.51
TABI (PCC coating)	1366	11.09
AFRSI-HT (PCC coating)	1478	5.38
AFRSI (C-9 coating)	922	3.55
PBI felt (VHT coating)	810	2.55
FRSI (DC92 coating)	644	1.72
Nickel super-alloy tile	1311	47.90
Nickel super-alloy sheet	1255	47.90
Titanium multiwall	866	64.96

Table 6: TPS Materials Considered. [6]

A simplified launch trajectory was developed in order to run a 1-D heat transfer model that approximated the compressive heating of the MAV and ensured it was within operational temperatures. Several key assumptions were made for the launch trajectory. These assumptions include a vertical launch trajectory, a thrust launch weight ratio of 2, negligible drag, and a propellant exit velocity of 3000 m/s. The elapsed time, MAV mass, altitude, and speed were then iteratively calculated. Using an atmospheric lapse rate [7] and knowing the MAV velocity, the mach number was calculated. Due to the MAV's blunt shape, a bow shock wave model was used to find the stagnation temperature at the tip of the rocket. Figure 7 displays the convective heat transfer coefficient and stagnation temperature as a function of altitude. The equations used for the heat transfer coefficient calculation are included in Appendix C.

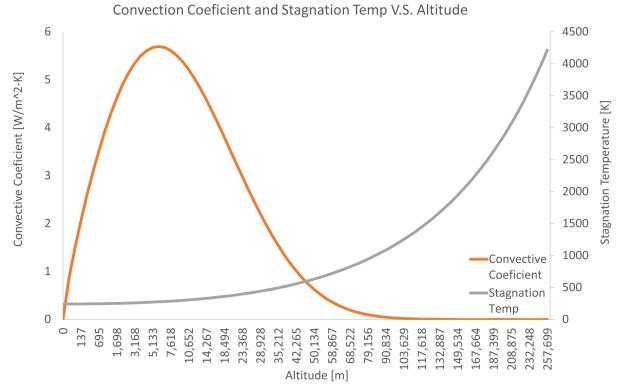


Figure 7: Stagnation temperature at the tip of the MAV for a given altitude

It should be noted that the stagnation temperatures are much higher than 1500 K. This is not an issue because the system only reaches such high temperatures in the upper atmosphere, where the convective heat transfer coefficient is very close to zero. This means little to no heat transfer will occur. At 100,000 m the stagnation temperature is about 1200 K and the convective heat transfer coefficient approaches 0, so a 1000 K estimate for the heat shield temperature is reasonable and is in line with Lobbia et al. [8].

A simplified 1-D heat transfer circuit model was created, as shown in Figure 8. The thermal model is made up of four sections.

1. The Martian atmosphere outside
2. The TPS
3. The Aluminum frame
4. The inside of the MAV

The outside temperature was conservatively modeled as a constant temperature source of 1200 K—the highest temperature encountered before the convective heat transfer coefficient approaches 0. For calculation purposes the convective heat transfer coefficient was conservatively held constant at its maximum value for the whole simulation thus overestimating the total amount of heat transfer that happens. The internal MAV temperature and all the walls were

set constant at 293 K. Each wall had one node which was located at the center of the material. Weight savings were achieved by adjusting the thickness of the AFRSI until the temperature just barely reached the 50% yield stress limit. It was found that 0.5 inches of AFRSI accomplished the goal. Using the above parameters, the temperature with and without the AFRSI TPS were calculated and are displayed in Figure 9. Without the TPS the frame reaches 475 K, the temperature where the aluminum is at half its original yield strength, in 11.5 min while with the TPS the frame doesn't reach that temperature during the ascent.

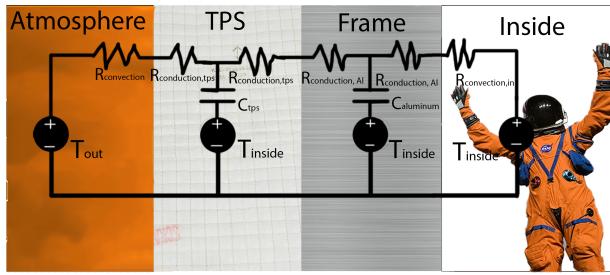


Figure 8: 1-D Thermal circuit used for heat transfer model

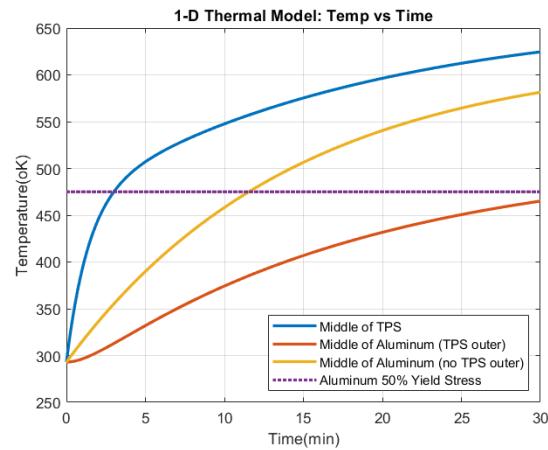


Figure 9: Temperature of Aluminum With and Without TPSI

## 8.2 Rocket Motor Thermal Protection

Sella et al. [9] outlines a method for protecting the structure of a rocket from rocket plumes emitted by the MAV engine. An ablative phenolic canvas is placed between the fuel grain and the combustion chamber's inner wall. This protects the chamber from high temperatures and pressures of the motor. Phenolic canvas was chosen for its poor thermal conductivity, ablation at a slow rate of between  $0.02 - 0.09 \text{ mm/s}$ , and its reliability as shown through testing for small scale models.

## 9 Structures

The MAV structure is comprised of an exterior vehicle frame and permanently fixed interior components including control panels, seats, and environmental control systems. The complete vehicle is divided into three main parts:

- The cabin that holds all crew and mission necessities and a living space
- Fuel tanks for both solid and liquid fuel
- The engines that are part of the propulsive system.

The vehicle cabin (excluding the fuel tanks) equals approximately 13 cubic meters, including

- The crew space
- The equipment section
- Avionics and other electronics.

The propulsion system is placed directly under the cabin area. Two fuel tanks supply the fuel for the three first stage engines, and explosive bolts are used to discard the first stage tanks. The other two tanks connect to the second stage engine.

## 9.1 Exterior and Interior Frames

The exterior system includes the frame, tank, and other structural components. The inner frame is manufactured using aluminum 7075, and is connected to a layer of AFRSI as mentioned in the thermal protection system section. The mass for the frame is estimated between 440 kg and 488 kg. This estimation is calculated based on material density, production thicknesses, and buckling loads. The minimum thickness is just enough for full heat protection and the maximum thickness accounts for factors of safety. The tank uses PTFE as its inner frame to withstand pressures from the liquid oxygen fuel and Surface foam Insulator (SOFI) for its thermally protective coating. The mass for the tank is estimated between 910 kg and 1035 kg. Similar to the frame, the mass was calculated by using the material density and required volume for the two types of fuel, and the mass estimate disparity occurs due to manufacturing constraints. Additionally, the thickness required to withstand the internal pressures from liquid oxygen was taken into account.

The other structural components include sections such as the inner frame components, and material connections. Since these necessities will not exceed the ones needed for the four-person ascent vehicle, the masses were based on the one in Polsgrove et al. [10]. The mass is estimated between 538 kg and 585 kg. This totals to an average of 1890 kg for the exterior mass.

## 9.2 Avionics

The mass assessment for avionics is dependent on functional aspects. As a result, the mass estimate was decided to be 407 kg—the same as the four person MAV listed Polsgrove et al. [10]. This value also includes the control panel that is inside the crew compartment.

The avionics of the vehicle is located at the upper hemispherical cap. This area is not only easily accessible for the crew, but also saves cabin space, which is designed to be compact for the necessary cargo.

## 9.3 Egress and Ingress

The egress and ingress structure chosen for the MAV design is a retractable intravehicular activity (IVA) tunnel. This structure is designed to connect the MAV to a Mars Habitat Rover. The design was chosen in order to save space on the MAV and limit the amount of Martian contamination brought back to the MAV.

Extravehicular activity (EVA) suits are worn by the crew members on the Martian surface. The EVA suits are not able to be worn when using the retractable IVA tunnel. Therefore, crew members will change into IVA suits prior to ascent and use the IVA tunnel to access the MAV.

## 9.4 Power

Altair [11] [12] and the 4 person MAV concept [10] were used to get a baseline for power requirements. Both of these vehicles provide a conservative estimate for power needs since the estimated power requirements for the 4 person Altair vehicle were driven by the 7 day 'sortie' mission where astronauts would be living in the ascent vehicle (requiring significant electrical power) and the 4 person MAV has 2 more people (that drive up electrical requirements for life support). Although both concepts use fuel cells for power at some point, the Altair vehicle uses batteries for to power the ascent phase. Which gives a good baseline for the 2 person MAV.

	Altair[12]	4 person MAV[10]
System Type	Battery	Fuel Cell
Energy requirement [kW-h]	14	10
mass [kg]	67	377

Table 7: Altair and 4 person MAV power system

The highest energy requirement estimate for either the Altair or the 4 person MAV was 14 kW-h. Thus the 2 person MAV concept features a similar 62 kg, 14 kW-h, silver-zinc (Ag-Zn) battery. This battery was chosen because of its high energy den-

sity and its previous track record in space applications. Although in the past, the Ag-Zn battery has had some issues after many recharging cycles, this should not be a problem since few recharging cycles will be required during the mission.

## 10 Conclusion

The MAV design listed in this report is lighter, more cost effective and more feasible than all previous designs. The weight cuts are feasible partially because of the reduced cabin capacity, but also because of the MAV's unique hybrid Nitrox propulsion method and lack of cryogenic storage systems. The MAV will take 24 hours to rendezvous with the transport capsule in a 1-Sol orbit. TPS will be required and AFRSI was selected because of its cost weight and thermal properties. Most of the systems on the MAV use preexisting proven technology but there are some systems that need some development. By allotting the proper funds in these areas it will definitely be possible for the technology to be ready by 2030.

## A Appendix A: Propulsion System Operation Parameters

<b>RPS system parameters</b>			
Power production	6.7 We/kg of specific power		
<b>Zirconia cell parameters</b>			
$O_2$ production rate	0.325	g/hr	per 1A
Current density	0.4	$A/cm^2$	
Cell voltage	1.7	V	
$CO_2$ conversion efficiency	90%		
System specific mass	5.4	kg	per 440cm of wafer area
Heat loss	10	W	per wafer
<b>Dust filtering</b>			
Filter capabilities	0.6	kg	per 2.5kg $O_2$ per 24.4hr day
<b>Compression</b>			
Compressor mass	6	kg	
$CO_2$ production	175	h/hr	$CO_2$ for 60W of power
<b>Heating</b>			
Heater mass	0.4	kg	per 2.5kg of $O_2$ per 24.4hr day
<b>Cryocooler</b>			
Cryocooler mass	10	kg	per 2.5kg $O_2$ per 24.4hr day
Cryocooler power	70	W	per 2.5kg $O_2$ per 24.4hr day

## B Appendix B: Propulsion System Equations

Knowing the  $\Delta V$  required for the first and second stage, the payload mass  $m_{PL}$  as well as the specific impulse  $I_{sp}$  delivered by the system at the set O/F ratio, the required propellant for the first and second stage were found by rearranging the equation and solving for  $m_o$ , where  $m_o$  is the empty mass, propellant mass, and payload mass.

$$\frac{\Delta M}{m_o} = 1 - \exp - \frac{m_{PL}}{m_o - m_{PL}}$$

Then,  $\lambda$ , the payload fraction was found

$$\lambda = \frac{m_{PL}}{m_E + m_p}$$

and set equal to

$$\lambda = \frac{1 - \epsilon \exp \frac{\Delta V}{ng_o I_{sp}}}{\exp \frac{\Delta V}{ng_o I_{sp}}}$$

where  $n$  is the number of stages, and  $\epsilon$  is the structural efficiency set at 0.18 following methods outlined in Boiron et al. [4]. The payload ratios were found for both stage 1 and stage 2. Then, knowing the amount of propellant required,  $m_p$ , the corresponding amounts of fuel and oxidizer were found by comparing the total amount of propellant required to the O/F ratio. The fuel mass,  $m_f$  was found by taking

$$m_f = \frac{m_p}{1 + O/F}$$

and the oxidizer mass  $m_{ox}$  was found by taking

$$m_{ox} = m_f \cdot O/F$$

The in-situ gain was defined as

$$G_{in-situ} = \frac{O/F}{1 + O/F} (1 - \Gamma)(1 - \epsilon) - \frac{m_{ispp}}{m_{lifttoff}}$$

where  $\Gamma$  is the payload fraction defined for  $n$  identical stages

$$\Gamma = \left( \frac{1 - \epsilon \exp \frac{\Delta V}{ng_o I_{sp}}}{(1 - \epsilon) \exp \frac{\Delta V}{ng_o I_{sp}}} \right)^n$$

## C Appendix C: Thermal System Equations

Lapse rate of Martian Atmosphere:  $P[atm] = \frac{.699e^{(-0.00009*H[m])}}{101.3}$  [7]

The convective heat transfer coefficient was calculated by finding:

The Prandtl number: ( $Pr = \frac{\mu*C_p}{\rho*K}$ )

The Reynolds number: ( $Re = \frac{\rho*V*D}{\mu}$ )

The Nusselt number ( $Nu = .037 * Re^{0.8}$  assuming  $Pr = 0.7$  and  $0 < Re < 70000$ ) and finally using  $H = \frac{Nu*K}{D}$  to find the convection coefficient [13]

### C.1 1D Thermal Simulation Equations

Using Kirchhoff's current law on the circuit in Figure 8, These thermal equations were found. T2 is the node corresponding to the temperature in the middle of the TPS and T4 is the node corresponding to the temperature in the middle of the Aluminum. (The equations are in the Laplace domain):

$$T_2\left(\frac{1}{R_{conv,out} + \frac{R_{tps}}{2}} + \frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}} + SC_{tps}\right) - T_4\left(\frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}}\right) = \frac{\frac{T_{out}}{S}}{R_{conv,out} + \frac{R_{tps}}{2}} + T_{in}C_{tps}$$

$$-T_2\left(\frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{al}}\right) + T_4\left(\frac{1}{R_{conv,in} + \frac{R_{Al}}{2}} + \frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}} + SC_{Al}\right) = \frac{\frac{T_{in}}{S}}{R_{conv,in} + \frac{R_{Al}}{2}} + T_{in}C_{AL}$$

The equations were put into  $[A][X]=[b]$  matrix form of where

$$[A] = \begin{bmatrix} \left(\frac{1}{R_{conv,out} + \frac{R_{tps}}{2}} + \frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}} + SC_{tps}\right) & -\left(\frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}}\right) \\ -\left(\frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{al}}\right) & \left(\frac{1}{R_{conv,in} + \frac{R_{Al}}{2}} + \frac{2}{R_{tps} + R_{Al}} + SC_{Al}\right) \end{bmatrix}$$

,

$$[X] = \begin{bmatrix} T2 \\ T4 \end{bmatrix}$$

and

$$[B] = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{\frac{T_{out}}{S}}{R_{conv,out} + \frac{R_{tps}}{2}} + T_{in}C_{tps} \\ \frac{\frac{T_{in}}{S}}{R_{conv,in} + \frac{R_{Al}}{2}} + T_{in}C_{AL} \end{bmatrix}$$

the system of equations was solved for X in the Laplace domain and then the time domain step response was taken which resulted in Figure 9,

## D Appendix D: Trajectory Decision Matrix

		Paths							
		Opposition Class		Free Return		Conjunction Class			
Criteria	Weight Factor (0-5)	Dash/Venus swing	2 year cycle	3 year cycle	Hohman transfer	120 day	180 day	270 day	
	$\Delta V$	5	2	3	4.5	5	3	3.75	4.25
	Time of Flight	4	5	2.5	2	1	4.75	4.5	3.5
	Time on Mars	4	2	4	4	4	5	4.75	4
	Entry Speed	3	1	2.5	3.5	4	2	3	4
	Structural mass	3	3.5	3	2.75	2.75	3.5	3.25	3
	Radiation Exposure	3	1	3.25	3	2.75	5	4	3.75
	Readiness level	2	4	2	4	4	2.75	4	4
	Abort option	1	1	5	4	3	1	1	1
	Sum		63.5	76.25	86.25	84.5	92	<b>94.5</b>	92.5

Table 8: Trajectory Decision Matrix. Table displaying the trajectories considered and their weighted scores.

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