

Expedition Eleven Receives Vital Supplies

June 20 2005

After a busy week of preparations, the Expedition 11 crew on the International Space Station (ISS) has welcomed the arrival of the latest Progress cargo spacecraft. The Progress docked Saturday at 8:42 p.m. EDT to the aft port of the Zvezda Service Module.

Commander Sergei Krikalev and NASA Station Science Officer John Phillips spent the week packing the previous cargo ship and making room for the new Progress. The new craft has more than two tons of supplies and equipment. It will be the 18th Progress to dock with the Station. Today was a light duty day for the crew in preparation for a busy weekend.

Krikalev and Phillips spent Monday and Tuesday filling the departing Progress with unneeded equipment and trash. Wednesday, the spacecraft, which had been at the Station since March 2, was undocked at 4:16 p.m. EDT, deorbited and burned up on re-entry.

The new Progress launched Thursday from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 7:09 p.m. EDT. Its cargo includes food, fuel, oxygen, 40 solid fuel oxygen generation (SFOG) cartridges and parts for the Elektron oxygen generation system. The oxygen and SFOGs will add to the existing supplies aboard the Station.

Flight control teams in Houston and Moscow hope the new parts will enable the crew to reactivate the Elektron, which has been out of service for several weeks. A new liquids unit, the heart of the Elektron, will be launched on another Progress in late August.

Crew members plan to open the Progress hatches tomorrow and begin unloading cargo Sunday. Beginning Monday, they plan to use oxygen from the Progress to replenish the Station's atmosphere instead of using two SFOGs daily.

The crew also packed equipment, scientific experiments and samples for return to Earth on board the Space Shuttle Discovery on its Return to Flight mission, STS-114, planned for launch next month.

On Tuesday, Phillips made history as the first person to testify before Congress while in space. Phillips appeared via satellite before the House Science Committee, Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics, chaired by Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif. He answered questions from subcommittee members about what it is like to live and work in space. He focused on the Station's role in preparing humans for longer-duration missions, as outlined in NASA's Vision for Space Exploration.

Phillips also found time this week to work with the Fluid Merging Viscosity Measurement experiment, designed to use microgravity to provide insight into behavior about how fluids, including molten materials, flow. Krikalev worked with several Russian experiments.

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