

ISS crew busy with fire alarm, other tasks

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Expedition 15 crewmembers aboard the International Space Station were kept busy Wednesday with a full schedule of work and an unscheduled fire drill.

Commander Fyodor Yurchikhin and flight engineers Oleg Kotov and Suni Williams completed a blood test before breakfast to monitor each crewmember's proportion of red cells in the blood. The red blood cell count in space travelers tends to go down over time.

A fire alarm was accidentally triggered on the Microgravity Science Glovebox while Williams was testing the facility. After the crew followed emergency procedures and cut power to the rack, it was determined it was a false alarm, National Aeronautics and Space Administration controllers in Houston said, noting there was no evidence of fire or smoke.

The Zvezda Service Module's engines were tested Wednesday in the first of a set of reboost maneuvers to optimize the station's docking opportunities with the ISS Progress 25 cargo next month and with space shuttle Atlantis in June. It was the first firing of the service module's main engines since construction of the space station began.

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