

ISS component sets a record

August 14 2007

Zarya, the International Space Station's first component, completed its 50,000th orbit Tuesday at 11:17 a.m. EDT.

Zarya was funded by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration and built by Russia. It was launched Nov. 20, 1998, atop a Proton rocket from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

The module is 41.2 feet long and 13.5 feet wide and was designed to have a lifespan of at least 15 years. It initially provided orientation control, communications and electrical power, but now is used primarily for its storage capacity and its 16 external fuel tanks that can hold more than 6 tons of propellant, NASA controllers in Houston said.

Zarya, when translated into English, means "sunrise."

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