

Space station mating adapter is relocated

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An International Space Station pressurized docking unit was re-located Thursday to prepare the orbiting laboratory for continued growth.

Pressurized Mating Adapter 3 was moved from the left side of the Unity node to its bottom area with astronaut Clay Anderson controlling the station's robotic arm, while cosmonaut Fyodor Yurchikhin worked with the docking systems. Cosmonaut Oleg Kotov backed up both men.

PMA-3 was undocked at 8:18 a.m. EDT and docked to Unity's lower port about half an hour later.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration controllers in Houston said fault alarms were observed during unberthing -- first in one bolt after it had reached zero load and then intermittently in three other bolts. After two delays to study the situation, controllers instructed the crew to continue with the operation.

PMA-3 was moved to prepare for the arrival of Node 2, the Harmony module, on the STS-120 flight of space shuttle Discovery in October.

NASA said the Harmony module will provide docking ports for the European Space Agency's Columbus laboratory and the Japanese Space Agency's Kibo experiment module.

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