

NASA briefly loses contact with space station

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NASA image photographed through the Cupola on the International Space Station on December 29, 2011 by one of the Expedition 30 crew members. The International Space Station briefly lost contact with ground controllers on Tuesday because of a computer problem, but its commander said the crew was fine, NASA said.

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The [glitch](#) lasted just under three hours.

The agency initially said flight controllers in Houston were updating software on board the station's flight computers when one of the station's data relay systems broke down.

The primary computer that controls critical station functions defaulted to a backup computer, but it was not letting the station communicate with NASA's Tracking and Data Relay Satellites, the [US space agency](#) said.

Officials in Houston were later able to communicate briefly with the crew as the space station flew over Russian ground stations. They instructed them to connect a backup computer to begin the process of restoring communications.

And communications were restored nearly three hours after the initial breakdown, NASA said in a [tweet](#).

The [International Space Station](#) marked its 10th anniversary of continuous human occupation on Nov. 2, 2010. Since Expedition 1 in 2000, the space station has been visited by 204 individuals.

The current crew is made up six men: two Americans, three Russians and a Canadian.

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