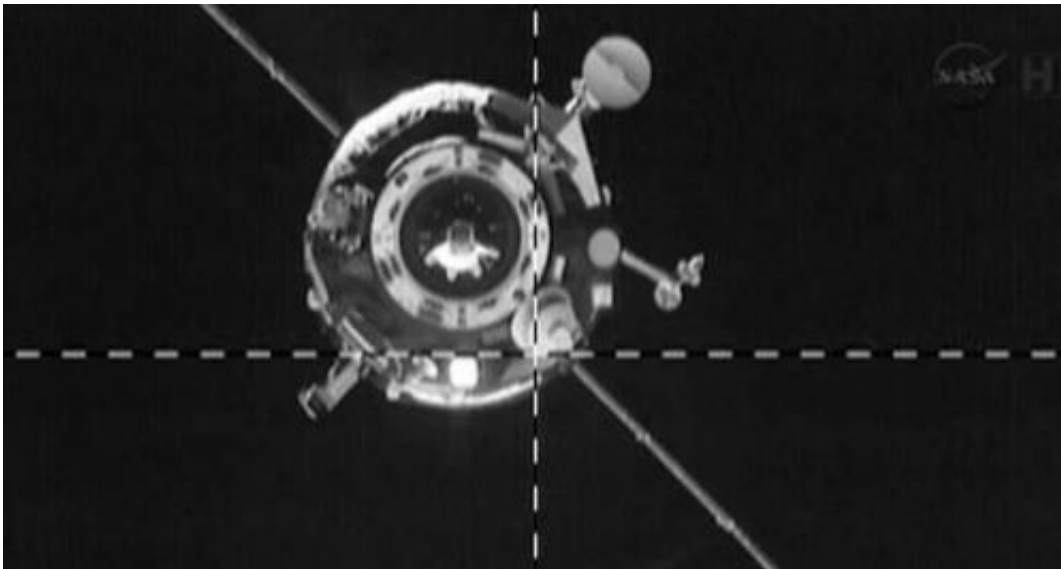


Cargo spaceship docks with ISS despite antenna mishap (Update)

April 26 2013



This NASA video image shows the ISS Progress 51 cargo craft arriving at the Zvezda service module on April 26, 2013. The unmanned cargo vehicle on Friday successfully docked with the International Space Station, in a delicate manoeuvre after its navigation antenna failed to properly deploy following launch, Russian mission control and NASA said.

An unmanned cargo vehicle on Friday successfully docked with the International Space Station, in a delicate manoeuvre after its navigation antenna failed to properly deploy following launch, Russian mission control and NASA said.

Russian cosmonauts Roman Romanenko and Pavel Vinogradov first oversaw a so-called partial "soft docking" of the Progress craft at 1225 GMT, careful to make sure the unopened antenna did not cause any damage.

Around 10 minutes later the full docking was completed with "hooks closed" and the cargo ready to be taken on by the crew into the main station modules.

"We have capture between the ISS and Progress," a NASA commentator said after the soft docking completed while the space station was over Kazakhstan.

The full docking, which was considerably slower than normal, was then completed at 1234 GMT.

The cosmonauts were on standby for possible manual docking, but in the end it was done automatically, a spokesman for Russian mission control told Russian news agencies.

The failure of the Kurs antenna on the craft to properly deploy after launch from Russia's Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan earlier this week had raised fears about whether the docking manoeuvre could be successfully carried out.

It was also mooted a spacewalk could be required to check the antenna, but in the end mission control deemed that this would not be necessary.

Launched on Wednesday, the Progress vehicle took two days to reach the ISS, bringing with it about three tonnes of cargo.

Besides fuel, spare parts, oxygen and water, space station crew received packages from their families, books, fresh fruits and some specially

requested foods.

"By special request, we are sending some garlic and chili pepper sausages to the station," Alexander Agureyev of the Russian Academy of Sciences biological institute, which oversees the ISS rationing, told Interfax news agency.

The cargo vessel, like its predecessors, will be filled with trash and released from the station on June 11, according to NASA.

The crew of six at the ISS currently includes Russian cosmonauts Romanenko, Vinogradov, and Alexander Misurkin, as well as NASA astronauts Tom Mashburn and Chris Cassidy, both American, and Canada's Chris Hadfield, who is currently ISS commander.

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