

ESA: Satellite causes no damage after re-entry

November 11 2013



In his image, publicly provided by the European Space Agency ESA, research satellite GOCE flies above earth. The European Space Agency says its GOCE research satellite will crash to Earth on Sunday night Nov. 10, 2013, most likely over the ocean or polar regions. Spokeswoman Jocelyne Landeau said the satellite will mostly disintegrate as it comes down and "we will have only a few pieces which could be 90 kilograms at the most." The crash is expected to occur between 19:30 and 1:30 Central European Time from Sunday to Monday night. ESA said Friday that humans are 250,000 times more likely to win the lottery than to get hit by the debris that may survive the breakup. GOCE was launched in 2009 to map the Earth's gravitational field. It ran out of fuel last month, ending the mission. (AP Photo/European Space Agency,ESA)

The European Space Agency says one of its research satellites that had run out of fuel caused no known damage after re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

ESA said the satellite re-entered the atmosphere at about 0000 GMT Monday on a descending orbit pass that extended across Siberia, the western Pacific Ocean, the eastern Indian Ocean and Antarctica.

ESA says "as expected, the satellite disintegrated in the [high atmosphere](#) and no damage to property has been reported.

The Gravity field and steady-state Ocean Circulation Explorer, or GOCE, was launched in 2009 to map the Earth's gravitational field.

ESA says its information is being used to understand ocean circulation, sea level, ice dynamics and the Earth's interior.

It's been gradually descending over the last three weeks after running out of fuel Oct. 21.

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