

Errant navigation satellite reaches new orbit

December 3 2014

The European Space Agency says a navigation satellite that ended up in the wrong orbit has completed a corrective maneuver.

The agency said Wednesday that the fifth Galileo satellite, launched Aug. 22, has risen 3,500 kilometers (2,175 miles) to gain a more circular orbit.

It says the satellite's navigational systems were switched on in late November and the signal is "good and in line with expectations."

The same maneuver is planned for a twin satellite also launched into an errant orbit.

Without the maneuver, the two satellites would have been largely useless to the Galileo navigation system, which the European Union wants to have fully operational by 2020.

A final decision on whether they will be part of the 30-satellite network will be taken based on further test results.

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