

NASA image: Mission Control, Houston, April 13, 1970

April 14 2015



Credit: NASA

Apollo 13, NASA's third crewed mission to the moon, launched on April 11, 1970. Two days later, on April 13, while the mission was en route to the moon, a fault in the electrical system of one of the Service Module's

oxygen tanks produced an explosion that caused both oxygen tanks to fail and also led to a loss of electrical power. The Command Module remained functional on its own batteries and oxygen tank, but these were usable only during the last hours of the mission.

The crew shut down the Command Module and used the Lunar Module as a "lifeboat" during the return trip to Earth. Despite great hardship caused by limited power, loss of cabin heat, and a shortage of potable water, the crew returned to Earth, and the mission was termed a "successful failure."

This photograph of the Mission Operations Control Room in the Mission Control Center at the Manned Spacecraft Center (now Johnson Space Center), Houston, was taken on April 13, 1970, during the fourth television transmission from the Apollo 13 mission. Eugene F. Kranz (foreground, back to camera), one of four Apollo 13 flight directors, views the large screen at front as astronaut Fred W. Haise Jr., Lunar Module pilot, is seen on the screen.

More information: The Flight of Apollo 13:
www.hq.nasa.gov/pao/History/apollo/apo13hist.html

Provided by NASA

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