

Broken cable damages giant radio telescope in Puerto Rico

August 11 2020



This photo provided by the Arecibo Observatory, shows the damage done by a broken cable that supported a metal platform, creating a 100-foot (30-meter) gash to the radio telescope's reflector dish in Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020. The University of Central Florida that manages the National Science Foundation facility said eight panels in the dome also were damaged and the platform used to access the dome is now twisted. (Arecibo Observatory via

AP)

A broken cable caused severe damage at Puerto Rico's Arecibo Observatory, causing a suspension of operations for one of the world's largest single-dish radio telescopes, officials said Tuesday.

The University of Central Florida, which manages the National Science Foundation facility, said in a statement that a cable that helps support a metal platform broke and caused a 100-foot (30-meter) gash on a reflector dish. The university said eight panels in the dome also were damaged and the platform used to access the dome is now twisted.

The statement said it was unclear why the cable broke. The cost of the damage wasn't immediately known.

Scientists worldwide use the telescope to detect radio emissions emitted by objects such as stars and galaxies. It was featured in the Jodie Foster film "Contact" and the James Bond movie "GoldenEye."



This May 31, 2007 file photo shows the world's largest single-dish radio telescope at the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. The University of Central Florida that manages the National Science Foundation facility said in a statement Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2020, that a cable that helps support a metal platform broke and caused a 100-foot (30-meter) gash on a reflector dish. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley, File)

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Citation: Broken cable damages giant radio telescope in Puerto Rico (2020, August 11) retrieved 30 March 2023 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-08-broken-cable-giant-radio-telescope.html>

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