

# Trio who lived on space station return to Earth safely

October 22 2020, by Vladimir Isachenkov



In this photo released by Roscosmos Space Agency, NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy sits in a chair shortly after landing near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying Cassidy and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on Thursday. After a brief medical checkup, the three will be taken by helicopters to Dzhezkazgan from where they will depart home. (Roscosmos Space Agency, via AP)

A trio of space travelers safely returned to Earth on Thursday after a six-month mission on the International Space Station.

The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan at 7:54 a.m. (2:54 GMT) Thursday. After a brief medical checkup, the three will be taken by helicopters to Dzhezkazgan from where they will depart home.

Cassidy will board a NASA plane back to Houston, while Vagner and Ivanishin will fly home to Star City, Russia.

The crew smiled as they talked to masked members of the recovery team, and NASA and Roscosmos reported that they were in good condition.

As part of additional precautions due to the coronavirus, the rescue team members meeting the crew were tested for the virus and the number of people involved in the recovery effort was limited.

Cassidy, Ivanishin and Vagner spent 196 days in orbit, having arrived at the station on April 9. They left behind NASA's Kate Rubins and Roscosmos' Sergey Ryzhikov and Sergey Kud-Sverchkov, who arrived at the orbiting outpost a week ago for a six-month stay.





In this photo released by Rosaviatsiya, rescue team members carry Roscosmos'



cosmonaut Ivan Vagner shortly after the landing near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. A trio of space travelers safely returned to Earth on Thursday after a six-month mission on the International Space Station. The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on Thursday. (Rosaviatsiya via AP)



In this photo released by Rosaviatsiya, NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy sits in a chair shortly after the landing near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. A trio of space travelers safely returned to Earth on Thursday after a six-month mission on the International Space Station. The Soyuz MS-16

capsule carrying NASA astronaut Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on Thursday. (Rosaviatsiya via AP)



In this photo released by Rosaviatsiya, Roscosmos' cosmonaut Anatoly Ivanishin sits in a chair shortly after the landing near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. A trio of space travelers safely returned to Earth on Thursday after a six-month mission on the International Space Station. The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on Thursday. (Rosaviatsiya via AP)





In this photo released by Rosaviatsiya, Russian rescue team helicopters land near a Russian Soyuz MS-16 capsule, left, landed near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan on Thursday. (Rosaviatsiya via AP)



In this photo released by Roscosmos Space Agency, a Russian rescue team works near a Russian Soyuz MS-16 capsule landed near town of Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020. The Soyuz MS-16 capsule carrying NASA astronaut Chris Cassidy, and Roscosmos' Anatoly Ivanishin and Ivan Vagner landed on the steppes of Kazakhstan, southeast of the town of Dzhezkazgan, on Thursday. After a brief medical checkup, the three will be taken by helicopters to Dzhezkazgan from where they will depart home. (Roscosmos Space Agency via AP)

Cassidy, returning from his third space mission, has now spent a total of 378 days in space, the fifth highest among U.S. astronauts.

While serving as the station's commander, Cassidy welcomed SpaceX Demo-2 crew Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley, the first NASA

astronauts to launch to the space station on an American spacecraft from American soil since the retirement of the space shuttle fleet in 2011.

Cassidy and Behnken completed four spacewalks for a total of 23 hours and 37 minutes, becoming two of only four U.S. astronauts to complete 10 spacewalks.

Before the crew's departure, Russian cosmonauts were able to temporarily seal the air leak they tried to locate for several months. The small leak has posed no immediate danger to the station's crew, and Roscosmos engineers have been working on a permanent seal.

In November, Rubins, Ryzhikov and Kud-Sverchkov are expected to greet NASA's SpaceX first operational Crew Dragon mission comprising NASA astronauts Mike Hopkins, Victor Glover and Shannon Walker, and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Soichi Noguchi.

© 2020 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Trio who lived on space station return to Earth safely (2020, October 22) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-10-trio-space-station-earth-safely.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--