

# Uncrewed Russian spacecraft that leaked coolant lands safely

March 28 2023

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In this handout photo released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, The uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft undocks from the International Space Station before heading back to Earth on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP

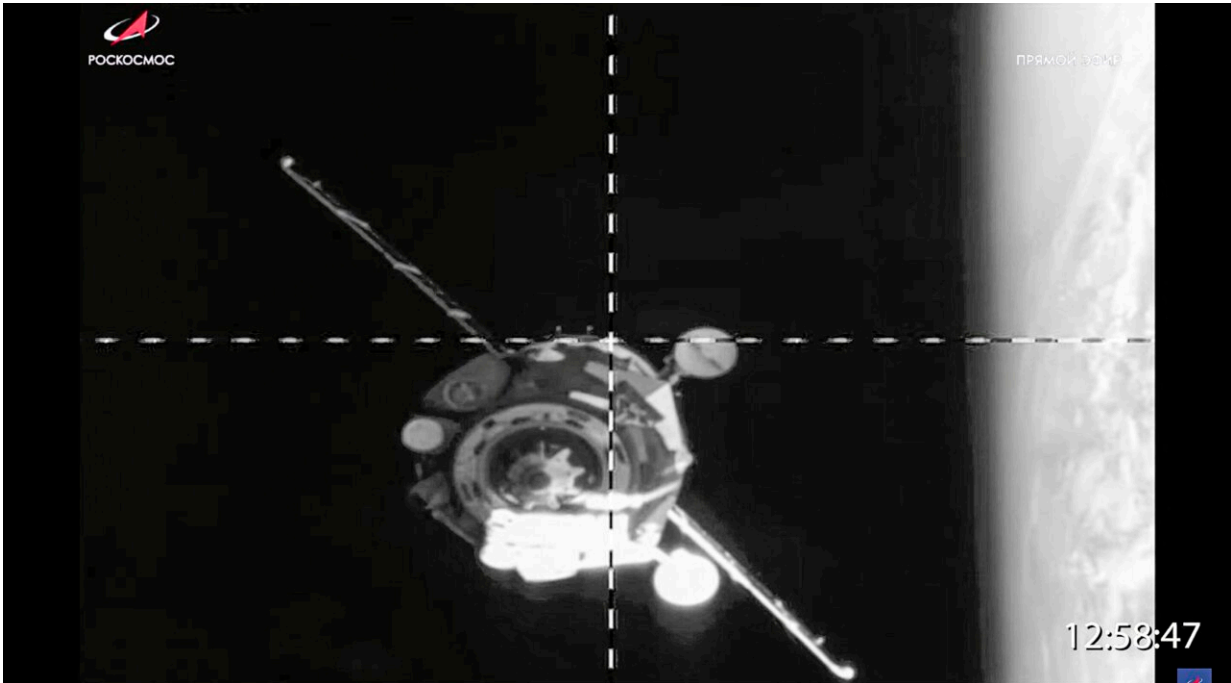
A Russian space capsule safely returned to Earth without a crew Tuesday, months after it suffered [a coolant leak](#) in orbit.

The Soyuz MS-22 leaked [coolant](#) in December while attached to the International Space Station. Russian [space](#) officials blamed the leak on a tiny meteoroid that punctured the craft's external radiator. They launched an empty replacement capsule last month to [serve as a lifeboat](#) for the crew.

The damaged capsule safely landed Tuesday under a striped parachute in the steppes of Kazakhstan, touching down as scheduled at 5:45 p.m. (7:45 a.m. EDT) 147 kilometers (91 miles) southeast of Zhezkazgan under clear blue skies.

Space officials determined it would be too risky to bring NASA's Frank Rubio and Russia's Sergey Prokopyev and Dmitri Petelin back in the Soyuz in March as originally planned, as cabin temperatures would spike with no coolant, potentially damaging computers and other equipment, and exposing the suited-up crew to excessive heat.

The three launched in September for what should have been a six-month mission on the International Space Station. They now are scheduled to return to Earth in September in a new Soyuz that arrived at the space outpost last month with no one on board, meaning the trio will spend [a year in orbit](#).



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In this handout photo taken from video released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, the uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft is seen as it lands in a remote area near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan after undocking from the International Space Station on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP



In this handout photo taken from video released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, the uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft is seen as it lands in a remote area near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, after undocks from the International Space Station on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP



In this handout photo taken from video released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, a helicopter flies over the uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft after it landed in a remote area near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan after undocking from the International Space Station on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP



In this handout photo taken from video released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, the uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft is seen as it lands in a remote area near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan after undocking from the International Space Station on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP



In this handout photo taken from video released by Roscosmos State Space Corporation, Russian specialists work at the uncrewed Soyuz MS-22 spacecraft after it landed in a remote area near the town of Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, after undocking from the International Space Station on Tuesday, March 28, 2023. Credit: Roscosmos State Space Corporation via AP

Also on the station are NASA astronauts Stephen Bowen and Woody Hoburg, the United Arab Emirates' Sultan Alneyadi, and Russia's Andrey Fedyaev.

[A similar coolant leak](#) was spotted in February on the Russian Progress MS-21 cargo ship docked at the space outpost, raising suspicions of a manufacturing flaw. Russian state space corporation Roscosmos ruled out any defects after a check and concluded that both incidents resulted



from hits by meteoroids,

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