

Spacesuit problem mars ISS spacewalk

22 February 2007

Two International Space Station crewmembers successfully completed a 6-hour, 18-minute spacewalk Thursday despite a reported spacesuit malfunction.

Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Tyurin and U.S. astronaut Michael Lopez-Alegria left the space station at 5:27 a.m. and finished their work at 11:45 a.m. National Aeronautics and Space Administration controllers in Houston said the two men retracted a malfunctioning antenna on a Progress cargo carrier docked at the station and checked navigation systems in preparation for the summer docking of a European cargo craft.

The Russian news agency Interfax said Tyurin's Russian-made spacesuit's thermal regulation system apparently malfunctioned during the spacewalk. Tyurin said he felt cold when stepping into a shadow, suggesting there was a problem with the mechanism that controls the suit's temperature and humidity levels. The problem also caused fogging of the spacesuit's visor, NASA reported.

It was the fifth spacewalk for Lopez-Alegria and Tyurin during the current mission -- a record for ISS crews. The spacewalk was Lopez-Alegria's 10th, a U.S. record.

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