



NASA Considered ISS Evacuation Amid Russia's Hull Repair Plans

Description

On June 5, NASA instructed its Crew-12 astronauts to prepare for an evacuation from the International Space Station (ISS) due to a longstanding air leak on the Russian side. After several tense hours, NASA declared the situation safe. The incident revealed that the issue stemmed not merely from the leak, but from Russian cosmonauts attempting to fix it using a drill and a saw in space.

Reports indicate that earlier in the year, Russian engineers had used sealant to address the leaks. These leaks, located in the PrK transfer tunnel connected to the Zvezda module, had allowed air to escape for years, losing between 2 to 4 pounds daily. In severe cases, the leaks could have caused an explosion that would threaten the entire station. Fortunately, the sealant had put a temporary stop to the problem.

However, new leaks reappeared in May. On June 4, the Russian space agency, Roscosmos, communicated to NASA their intention to drill into the station's hull to tackle the leaks.

NASA did not support this approach. After urging Roscosmos to reconsider, they warned that an evacuation alarm would be triggered if the drilling proceeded. This ultimatum caused the cosmonauts to stand down, although they soon returned with a saw, intending to cut through a structural bracket. This prompted NASA to order an evacuation into the Dragon capsule.

As a result of this international incident, Russia has chosen to decommission the PrK tunnel. It will no longer be pressurized, thus eliminating the risk of explosion. The future of the ISS remains uncertain, with plans to extend its operation, but concerns linger about the safety of further repairs.

Vocabulary List:

1. **evacuation** //i,vækju'eɪʃən// (noun): moving people away from danger to safety
2. **sealant** //ˈsi:lənt// (noun): material used to close gaps and stop leaks
3. **ultimatum** //,ʌltɪ'meɪtəm// (noun): a final demand with a threat if refused
4. **decommission** //,di:kə'mɪʃən// (verb): officially stop using or operating something
5. **hull** //hʌl// (noun): the outer shell or body of a ship
6. **pressurized** //ˈpreʃər,aɪzd// (adjective): filled with air or gas at high pressure

Comprehension Questions



Multiple Choice

1. What prompted NASA to declare the situation safe on June 5?
 - Option: Successful repairs to the leak
 - Option: Evacuation preparation being completed
 - Option: Return of the astronauts to Earth
 - Option: Resolution of communication with Roscosmos

2. Which part of the ISS was involved in the leaks?
 - Option: The Zvezda module
 - Option: The PrK transfer tunnel
 - Option: The Dragon capsule
 - Option: The Harmony module

3. What did Russian engineers use earlier in the year to address the leaks?
 - Option: Plugs
 - Option: Sealant
 - Option: Welding
 - Option: Tape

4. When did new leaks reappear?
 - Option: April 4
 - Option: May
 - Option: June 1
 - Option: March

5. What did NASA warn would happen if drilling proceeded?
 - Option: They would cut communication
 - Option: An evacuation alarm would be triggered
 - Option: The ISS would lose power
 - Option: The astronauts would be abandoned

6. What action did Russia decide to take as a result of the leaks?
 - Option: Increase the number of astronauts
 - Option: Decommission the PrK tunnel
 - Option: Repair the Zvezda module
 - Option: Enhance communication with NASA



True-False

7. NASA supported the approach of drilling into the ISS hull.
8. The leaks allowed air to escape at a rate of 2 to 4 pounds daily.
9. The Russian space agency is called NASA.
10. The situation in the ISS was resolved without an evacuation.
11. The temporary stop to the leaks was due to the actions of NASA.
12. The future of the ISS is uncertain regarding further repairs.

Gap-Fill

13. NASA instructed its Crew-12 astronauts to prepare for an evacuation from the ISS due to a longstanding air leak on the Russian side and the gap _____.
14. Russian engineers used sealant to address the leaks in the gap _____.
15. The leaks had allowed air to escape for years, losing between 2 to 4 pounds _____ daily.
16. The cosmonauts used a _____ to cut through a structural bracket.
17. As a result of the leaks, Russia decided to _____ the PrK tunnel.
18. Concerns about the safety of further repairs linger as the future of the ISS remains _____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Evacuation preparation being completed 2. The PrK transfer tunnel 3. Sealant 4. May 5. An evacuation alarm would be triggered 6. Decommission the PrK tunnel

True-False: 7. False 8. True 9. False 10. False 11. False 12. True

Gap-Fill: 13. leak



14. PrK transfer tunnel 15. daily 16. saw 17. decommission 18. uncertain

CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL5

POST TAG

1. C1
2. drill
3. ESL learning
4. esl news
5. ISS
6. leak
7. Level 5
8. NASA
9. Russia

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