

MIRNEWS.83 20 APRIL 1989

MIR IN HIGHER ORBIT AS OF 16 APRIL 1989:

PROGRESS-41, the freighter still attached to MIR, pushed the complex in a higher orbit. So predictions based on Keplers before day 107 cannot be used any longer. Wim Holwerda (Working Grup Satellites) produced a 2-line set, which is accurate enough for some days. Wim used TCA-s and LOS-s logged by me:

MIR
EPOCH 89,108.49323
DECAY 0.0002
INCL 51.625
RAJ 301.1362
ECC 0.0013
ARG PER 210
MA 150
MM 15.57
ORB NR 18189
SMAX 6774.439

Apogeeum and perigeum now resp. appr. 405 en 388 KM.

Thanks very much, Wim!

RECENT RADIOTRAFFIC:

Extensive inventarisation of all equipment. In coordination with experts on earth about what can be destroyed, what has to be replaced and what might be necessary for the next crews.
Also valuable equipment has to be destroyed as it is impossible to find enough room in the "descent module" (spuskayemyy apparat) to bring this back to earth. Obviously the crew finished the work with Progress-41 on 20 April 1989 and now can concentrate activities on conservation of the systems on board MIR and preparing Soyuz-TM7 for the returnflight.

PLANNED DATE STILL 27 APRIL 1989.

If the landing operation will be successful this must be a nice birthday present for the physician Polyakov, who enjoys his 47th birthday on 27 April. Polyakov is in space since 29 August 1988 and got a grandchild during this flight.

REASONS FOR DECISION TO HAVE MIR UNMANNED FOR SOME TIME:

Certainly the decision is based on a complex of reasons. In the beginning Moscow referred to the delay of the launch of the D- and T-module. No technical reasons were mentioned. Meanwhile -we had to wait some days- the first message about "technical problems" reached the press: main problem: the power supply on board! The first conversation in which that problem was reported was on 30 March 1989. This problem was followed by other problems and it was obvious that 2 extra crewmembers in the period from 21 to 29 April would be too much for MIR's microclimate.

Greetings,
Chris van den Berg, NL-9165/A-UK3202.