# After a spacecraft was damaged en route to launch, NASA says it won’t launch

Three weeks ago, NASA revealed that a shipping container protecting a Cygnus spacecraft sustained “damage” while traveling to the launch site in Florida.

Built by Northrop Grumman, Cygnus is one of two Western spacecraft currently capable of delivering food, water, experiments, and other supplies to the International Space Station. This particular Cygnus mission, NG-22, had been scheduled for June. As part of its statement in early March, the space agency said it was evaluating the NG-22 Cygnus cargo supply mission along with Northrop.

On Wednesday, after a query from Ars Technica, the space agency acknowledged that the Cygnus spacecraft designated for NG-22 is too damaged to fly, at least in the nearterm.

# Loading up Dragon

“Following initial evaluation, there also is damage to the cargo module,” the agency said in a statement. “The International Space Station Program will continue working with Northrop Grumman to assess whether the Cygnus cargo module is able to safely fly to the space station on a future flight.” That future flight, NG-23, will launch no earlier than this fall.

As a result, NASA is modifying the cargo on its next cargo flight to the space station, the 32nd SpaceX Cargo Dragon mission, due to launch in April. The agency says it will “add more consumable supplies and food to help ensure sufficient reserves of supplies aboard the station” to the Dragon vehicle.

As it mulls stopgap measures, one option available to NASA may be to try to slot in a cargo mission on Boeing’s Starliner spacecraft. After the propulsion issues experienced on Starliner’s first crew flight to the space station last June, NASA is still evaluating whether the vehicle can be certified for an operational crew mission, or whether it would be better to perform an uncrewed test flight.

https://arstechnica.com/space/2025/03/nasa-sidelines-cygnus-spacecraft-after-damage-in-transit-to-launch-site/