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# NASA rescues two errant satellites

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — NASA engineers have rescued a \$22 million satellite — itself aimed at helping rescue survivors of airplane and ship accidents — from spinning uselessly in space. And they are preparing to save an errant communications satellite carried aloft by the shuttle Challenger.

Jim Elliott, spokesman for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, said Monday that the environmental monitoring satellite called NOAA-E was finally in place — after a month of spinning like

a propeller — and is ready to serve as the first spaceborne American search and rescue system.

The search and rescue satellite was launched into a near-perfect polar orbit from Vandenberg Air Force Base March 28, but its attitude control thrusters fired wildly and sent it into a spin.

The firing of the thrusters deprived the craft of propellant, and engineers turned to gyroscopes and momentum wheels aboard the satellite, planning to use Earth's magnetism to stabilize the craft.

One radioed command, on April 2, slowed the satellite so it tumbled end-over-end once

every three hours. Two weeks later, while the spacecraft was over Gilmore, Alaska, another command began the stabilizing procedure. Engineers are checking out the satellite's subsystems and turning on its six environmental monitoring instruments and the search and rescue equipment.

The American satellite joins two Soviet satellites capable of locating downed airplanes and foundering ships.

In the second rescue operation, NASA engineers are readying attempts to push the world's biggest and most expensive communications satellite 9,000 miles though space into proper orbit.

The \$100 million Tracking Data and Relay Satellite was

carried aloft by the shuttle Challenger on April 4. It went into a misshapen orbit when the engine on an attached rocket quit too early.

Instead of a circular path, 22,300 miles above Earth, the satellite, called TDRS, has been traveling a loop 22,000 miles at the high point to 13,600 miles at the low end.

If the tests are satisfactory, thrusters will be fired three hours a day for two weeks to get the satellite to a circular orbit. Once in place, TDRS will be able to relay signals from up to 26 satellites to a ground station in New Mexico and will be used to keep in touch with space shuttles nearly all the time they are in space.

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## Senate debates VDT safety

**SALEM (AP)** — With video display terminals being used in a growing number of businesses, steps need to be taken to protect the health of those who operate VDTs, an Oregon Senate committee was told Monday.

Several people who testified before the Senate Labor Committee said workers who operate VDTs often experience eye problems, mus-

cle strain and job stress.

Those claims were disputed, however, by a spokesman for a company that produces video display terminals.

The comments came as the panel opened hearings on a bill, SB568, to provide safeguards for people who use VDTs, which are computerized hybrids that are half typewriter keyboard and half television screen.

Introduced by Sen. Margie Hendriksen, D-Eugene, the bill would require employers to pay for annual eye exams for employees who use VDTs. It also would set lighting standards for rooms where VDTs are used, require certain kinds of chairs for VDT operators and require rest periods for those people.

Among the supporters of

the bill was Steven Hecker, an assistant professor at the University's Labor Education and Research Center.

Hecker said some of the problems most commonly experienced by people who operate VDTs are blurred vision and eye strain along with muscle strain.

Increased job-related stress is another problem VDTs can cause for many workers, he said.

People who use VDTs in their work often are subject to "monotonous and repetitive tasks, machine pacing of work, lack of participation in decision-making (and) physical confinement to the workstation," Hecker said.

Those things "correspond very closely to common causes of job-related stress," he said.

## Group's ads to fight drunk drivers

**EUGENE (AP)** — The Oregon Medical Association plans to place advertisements in eight of the state's newspapers as part of its campaign against drunk drivers.

The OMA says driving under the influence of alcohol has reached epidemic proportions in the state.

The organization's House of Delegates approved the advertising campaign at its meeting here Sunday.

The advertisements, to be published May 1, urge immediate suspension of licenses for people who drive while drunk or refuse breath tests. The ads also support limiting diversion programs to first-time offenders.

Mandatory penalties are urged for repeat offenders. The advertisements also push for increased efforts by the state and private sector toward enforcement of traffic-safety laws, along with more education about the nature of the health problem.

The campaign was launched after an OMA study showed drunken driving to be a far more serious threat to human lives than are other types of violent crimes.



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