

H 2

Launch vehicle	H 2
Launch site	Tanegashima Space Centre, Tanegashima, Japan
Date/Time	1998-02-21
Description	Second stage partial failure
Cause	Cumbustion chamber leak
Payload	Comets [Takehashi] (Experimental satellite, NASDA, Japan)
Desired orbit	Geostationary transfer orbit

The second stage of the H2 shut down after 44 seconds--it should have been 192 seconds. The payload, the experimental Comets satellite (a.k.a. Kakehashi [bridge]) was left in a rather useless orbit of 250 x 1901 kilometers.

About seven seconds before the engine stopped, a series of malfunctions had occurred, including damage to the electricity system and the overheating of various engine parts.

NASDA suspects that there was a leak of at least 5 cm² that let some of the hot fuel gas escape from the combustion chamber. The gas damaged the system of pipes and electricity wires and eventually stopped the engine.

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