



Beagle 2: Success or failure?

Clip taken from 'The Sky at Night: What have UFOs done for US?', BBC Four.

CHRIS LINTOTT:

In late December 2003, Beagle 2 began its treacherous decent, with touchdown scheduled for early on Christmas Day. Colin and his team waited for the landing signal to come back, but none was received.

COLIN PILLINGER:

On this mission, our faith has been unshakable that the mission would go ahead and we've crossed lots of bridges to get this far. So, we'll keep the unshakable faith until the point comes when we have to say it's no longer worth thinking about.

CHRIS LINTOTT:

Despite weeks of trying, contact was never established with the little spacecraft. The mission was branded a failure. Esa concluded that the landing system probably didn't work and that Beagle 2 had crashed into the surface. But Pillinger, the eternal optimist, didn't agree.

COLIN PILLINGER:

I never, ever believed that we'd crashed and I certainly, probably, don't now.