

Let light shine down on Opportunity.

Almost one year to this day 15 years ago, NASA Rover Opportunity embarked on its journey to Mars.

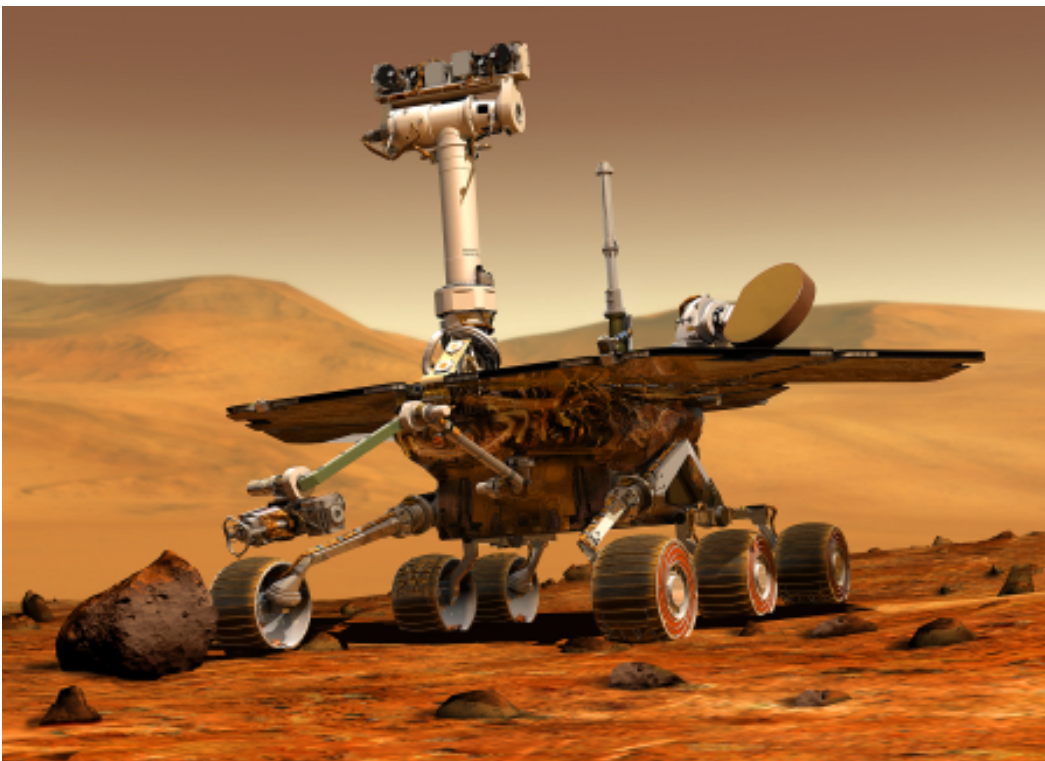
NASA Engineers have been trying to reach the Opportunity Rover in recent weeks, however due to a heavy and persistent sandstorm they haven't been able to make contact. It's assumed the batteries have fallen below 24V causing the machine to enter into standby mode. It needs sunlight to recharge the batteries to "wake up" the computer and resume communications.

Opportunity's six wheels are driven by maxon DC motors. There are 35 drive systems with diameters of 20mm and 25mm for the rover. The maxon motors in the wheels, for example, did more than 78 million revolutions each, under extreme environmental conditions and temperature fluctuations from -120 to +25°C. The practicalities and knowledge from this successful project are being transferred across developments of new motors that will soon fly to Mars on forthcoming Mars missions by NASA and ESA. "Opportunity has braved many minor and major sand storms over the years and has always managed to recover its energy. We have no doubt that our motors will also run without trouble afterwards," says maxon CEO Eugen Elmiger.

For more information on DC motors to suit harsh environment applications please contact maxon motor tel. +61 2 9457 7477.

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The media release is available on the internet at: www.maxonmotor.com.au



Opportunity Rover
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