

Russian firm besieged with rocket orders

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Russia's Khrunichev State Research and Production Space Center has received 14 orders for the Proton carrier rockets the firm manufactures.

Center Director Vladimir Nesterov said the research facility has been overwhelmed by the recent influx of orders and employees are struggling to meet the sudden demand for Proton rocket launches, RIA Novosti reported Sunday.

"So far there are more orders than we can fulfill," Nesterov said of that demand.

While the space center significantly increased the cost of its launch services last year, Nesterov said numerous customers in Europe have nonetheless requested the center's services.

The research center has become a major manufacturer of rocket boosters for other nations and its products have even been added to the International Space Station.

Nesterov said among those facilities asking the Khrynichev center to organize a commercial rocket launch is the European Space Agency.

The Russian news agency reported the company already has created a launch portfolio through 2009 and is in the midst of organizing launch orders for 2010.

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