

Audit: Hurdles remain for upcoming Mars mission

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(AP) -- A new report says significant challenges remain before NASA can launch its next rover to Mars later this year.

The report Wednesday from the space agency's inspector general says the project may need more money to meet its November launch date, even though mission managers have worked through problems that caused the two-year launch delay.

The mission has been plagued by development woes that have put it behind schedule and driven up costs. The price tag has ballooned to \$2.5 billion from \$1.6 billion.

The rover, named Curiosity, is scheduled to be shipped later this month from California to Florida, where it will be prepared for [launch](#).

It will analyze [Martian rocks](#) and soil to determine whether conditions would have allowed primitive life to form.

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