

Russia postpones Proton-M launch over defect

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Russia's space agency said Wednesday it was postponing the launch of a Proton-M rocket carrying a satellite in order to correct a defect, in just the latest problem to ground the rocket.

The glitch was yet more bad news for Russia's troubled space industry, which earns millions of dollars from the launches of Western and Asian commercial satellites.

The rocket had been due to take off carrying a Russian satellite on Friday from the Baikonur cosmodrome, which Russia rents from Kazakhstan.

The [space agency](#) Roscosmos said it had found a problem in the controls of the Briz-M upper-stage used with the Proton-M rocket.

It said a commission had decided to halt preparations for the launch and move the rocket into a test zone to correct the problem.

The Proton-M rocket is an upgraded version of the Soviet Proton rocket. It has recently experienced a string of problems that have grounded it several times.

In 2012, a Proton-M missed the correct satellite orbit. In July 2013, one of the rockets exploded on takeoff and fell apart mid-air. And in May this year, another rocket failed and burned in the atmosphere.

The most recent launch of a Proton-M rocket, in September, went smoothly.

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