

Glonass-K Satellite Launched



The Russian Space Forces have successfully launched a new Glonass-K navigation satellite from the Plesetsk space center, a Defense Ministry spokesman said Saturday. The previous launch under the Glonass project in December 2010, supposed to conclude the forming of the satellite grouping, was unsuccessful as the rocket veered off course and sunk in the Pacific Ocean. The loss cost Russia 2.5 billion rubles (USD86 million) in direct damages.

The Glonass-K, which has a service life of ten years, will beam five navigation signals - four in the special L1 and L2 bands and one for civilian applications in the L3 band.

The complete grouping must have 24 operational and 2-3 reserve satellites for the Glonass network to operate with global coverage.

Russia currently has 22 Glonass satellites in orbit and will launch another three Glonass-M satellites on board a Proton heavy carrier rocket later this year to complete the Glonass grouping.