

Bulava Missile Test Postponed Until 2012

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A fourth and final test launch of the Bulava intercontinental missile scheduled for Monday was postponed, RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

“The final Bulava test launch will be delayed until a later time. A final date has not yet been set,” a Defense Ministry source [told](#) the news agency.

The official reason for the delay was icy conditions in the White Sea, and another test is unlikely to take place before the end of the year, Interfax [reported](#).

If the launch had been successful, officials then planned to incorporate the Bulava into the country’s nuclear arsenal, along with the submarine Yury Dolgoruky that had been used in prior tests.

The postponement follows three successful Bulava launches earlier in the year, most recently on Oct. 28 near the Kamchatka Peninsula. In total, 17 Bulava tests have been carried out — seven of which hit snags — since testing began in 2004.

The missile is Russia's latest three-stage ballistic weapon. It was developed in the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology and is considered a cornerstone of the country's nuclear deterrent.

It boasts a range of up to 8,000 kilometers, can carry up to 10 warheads with a payload of 100 to 150 kilotons. It is deployed from the new Borei-class nuclear submarines, eight of which the Defense Ministry plans to build by 2015.

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