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Defense Ministry to Invest $158M in Drones

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The Defense Ministry has invested about 5 billion rubles ($158 million) with state-owned holding Russian Helicopters to develop three types of pilotless aircraft, unnamed sources told Gazeta.ru on Tuesday.

The first test models are expected to appear in 2015.

Russia has invested in drone technology before but has been largely unsuccessful in its attempts to create advanced models.

Aerospace company Vega developed drones for the Russian army, also receiving approximately $158 million in Defense Ministry funds, but had little success. In 2009, the company's Aist drone failed dramatically during a test flight, exploding in mid-air.

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