

Drone Tests Delayed Till 2014

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An Israeli-produced drone on display at the 2009 MAKS air show outside Moscow. **Sergei Porter**

Testing on the first Russian attack drone will not take place at the end of this year as previously planned but in 2014, a top defense official said Friday.

Russia has struggled to produce its own military drone technology, pouring billions of rubles into projects that have not resulted in useable models. The military has in the past purchased attack drones from Israel.

Last year, the armed forces signed a contract with defense contractors Sokol and Tranzas to develop an attack drone, RIA-Novosti reported. General Staff head Nikolai Makarov had said testing of prototypes would begin later this year.

But on Friday, First Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Sukhorukov told journalists that the first prototypes would be ready for testing only in 2014. At the same time, he said, "Everything is going according to plan," according to RIA-Novosti.

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