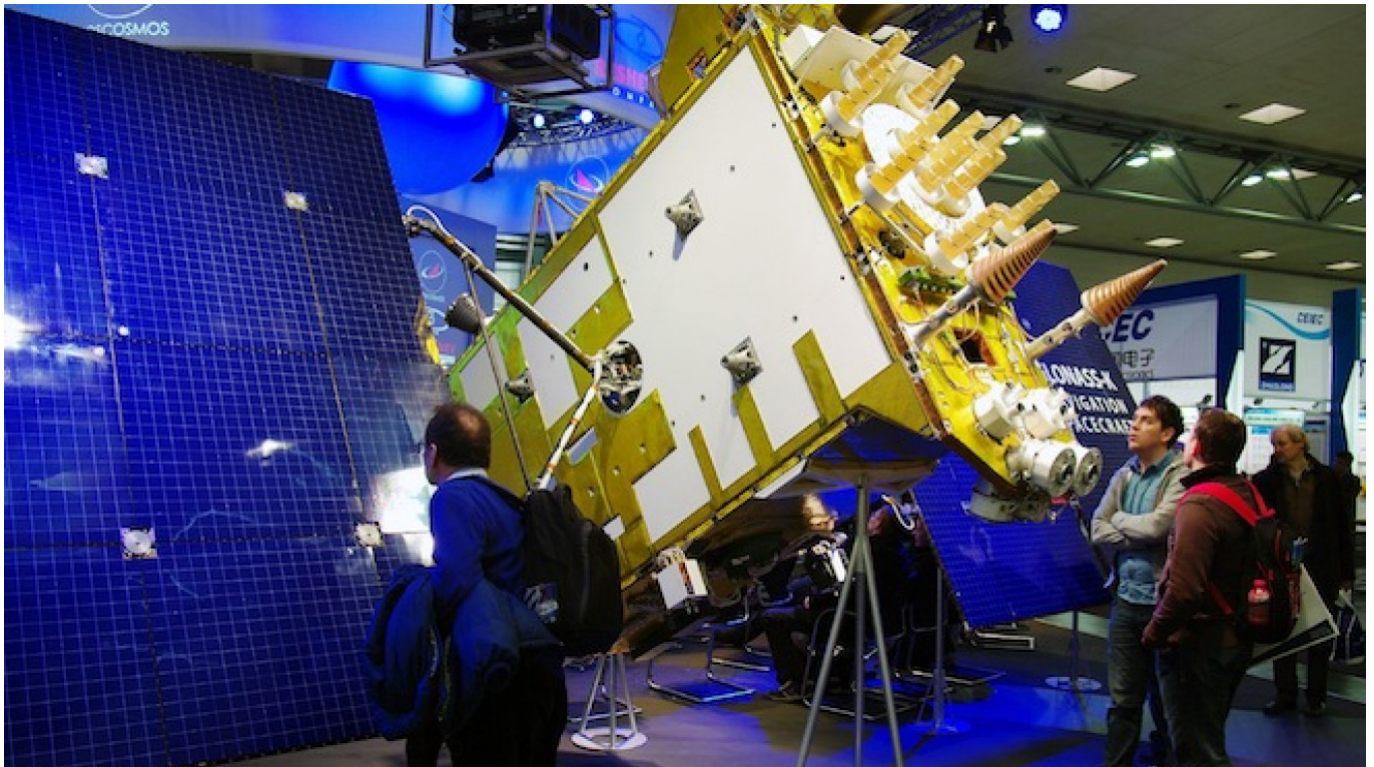


Russia's Glonass Navigation System Undergoing Final Tests

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The Glonass system was expected to be ready in 2012 but the Defense Ministry was dissatisfied with the system's ground stations. The system has undergone extensive testing since then.

Russia's development of its Glonass global navigation system is nearing completion and it is now undergoing final tests at the Defense Ministry, the Izvestia newspaper reported Monday.

"I don't want to skip ahead, but I can say that we are doing our best to get the job done. We hope that after the tests the system will be approved," director of the Russian Space Systems company (RKS) Andrei Tyulin told Izvestia.

Glonass is Russia's satellite navigation system, designed to provide Russia with its own navigation data for military and civilian use, as well as to compete with the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS) in the commercial market for navigation data.

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Russia has been developing its own satellite navigation system since 1976, completing the first stage of the Glonass system in 1995, but it was not brought online due to a lack of funding.

In 2001 President Vladimir Putin said Glonass was a project of national importance and called for efforts to be redoubled to refurbish and complete the system.

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