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3 Dead After Russian Military Transport Plane Prototype Crashes Near Moscow

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An Ilyushin Il-112V military transport aircraft. **Marina Lystseva / TASS**

A Russian military transport aircraft prototype has crashed during a test flight outside Moscow, killing all three crew members on board, the aircraft's developers said.

Videos of the incident broadcast on state media and shared on social media showed the aircraft tipping to one side and falling to the ground after its right engine caught fire.

Three people were on board the Ilyushin Il-112V prototype, including Hero of Russia Nikolai Kuimov, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

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The incident took place "during the final approach for landing near the Kubinka airfield" outside Moscow, the press service of the United Aircraft Corporation (OAK) told AFP.

The OAK later said that all three members of the crew had died.

"According to information from the place of the IL-112's crash, there are no survivors," the group wrote on Twitter.

It added that there were no victims of the crash on the ground.

According to preliminary information, the plane's right engine caught fire before the crash, the OAK told TASS.

The company did not provide further details.

Russian investigators said in a statement that a criminal investigation has been launched over a violation of safety measures.

TASS reported that pilot error and equipment failure are also among the causes being investigated.

The Rostec defense conglomerate confirmed the accident to The Moscow Times and said it was assembling an internal commission to investigate the incident.

Rostec added that the aircraft had been experimental and was still in its testing stages.

The light military transport aircraft is designed for transporting and parachuting light weaponry and equipment, cargo and military personnel.

Ilyushin's website states that the Il-112V is capable of auto landing approaches to certain aerodromes and manual landing approaches to poorly equipped aerodromes.

Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov said last month that Russia was moving to resolve issues with the Il-112V, including its heavy weight, according to RIA Novosti.

AFP contributed reporting.

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