
Investigation in accident of carrier rocket proton-M with Glonass satellites



The Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee has finished investigating criminal cases opened in the July 2013 launch of Proton-M carrier rocket with three Glonass-M space apparatuses.

Workers of federal state-run unitary enterprise M.V. Khrunichev State Space Scientific and Production Center a special product electrician Denis Grishin, master Alexander Nikolayev and supervisor Diana Gudkova were charged with safety breach – part 1 of article 216 of the RF Penal Code. In addition, Marat Nasibulin, head of military representative office 1653 of the Russian Ministry of Defense was charged with a crime under part 1 of article 293 (negligence).

According to investigators, Grishin, Nikolayev and Gudkova in 2011 set yaw-rate sensors on A Proton-M. They breached maintenance procedures provided by construction and maintenance documents and set the sensors incorrectly (with a 180-degree-turn from the normal position). This

distorted the work of control system of the rocket, caused to go down and fall apart. Grishin and Nikolayev admitted part of their guilt.

In his turn Nasibulin, due to the fact that for a long time there had not been any problems with setting the devices and due to staff reduction struck the device control off the List. As a result, an official of a military representative office was not present there and the devices were set without adequate control. The state suffered damage of over 5 billion rubles.

At present Grishin, Nikolayev and Gudkova have finished reading the case files, so the case is going to be sent to the Prosecutor General's Office for the indictment to be approved. Nasibulin and his lawyer are finishing reading the case, and after they are done it will also be forwarded for the indictment to be approved.

The said people are being prosecuted because their actions are in direct cause-and-effect relation with the consequences. Grishin and Nikolayev did their job poorly creating conditions for the accident to happen. Gudkova and Nasibulin basically were the final link in the process and were obliged to eliminate those conditions, but did nothing. By the way, further control would not have revealed any errors in setting the devices so the flaw could have been repaired only during the operational stage in 2011. This way, the investigators found a full circle of people involved in the accident which is confirmed by forensic inquiries.

In addition, of course it should be taken to notice that in 2009-2011 the center had a higher number of semiskilled and preretirement employees. This happened when production volume and the number of orders started to grow. Those factors had their effect on the quality of operations carried out in the center. If we take a look deeper into the problem we will see that the reason that triggered the accident was the decline of authority of blue-collar professions that happened in the 90s and subsequent deficit of highly skilled workers.

Head of Media Relations V.I. Markin

27 May 2015

Page address: <https://en.sledcom.ru/news/item/931219>