
Probe launched in safety breach in making engine for Proton-M in Voronezh Region



The Voronezh Region Investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee have opened an investigation in a crime under part 1 of article 216 of the RF Penal Code (violation of safety standards during work entailing large damage).

On 16 May 2015, a space rocket in a carrier rocket Proton-M with upper-stage rocket Bris-M and space apparatus MexSat-1 was launched from a launcher at Baikonur Cosmodrome. The launch ended up in a failure of the propulsion device of the 3rd stage of the Proton-M carrier rocket at the 497th second of the flight. The MexSat-1 was not taken to the calculated orbit and was destroyed causing the state damage of over 57 million rubles.

According to the conclusions of the interagency commission the preliminary reason for the accident was the failure of the steering engine of the 3rd stage caused by the increase of vibration, amplified

by the imbalance of the rotor in the steering engine related to degradation of properties of its material affected by high temperatures and a defect of the balancing scheme. The failure was of constructive nature.

It has been revealed that the engine of the 3rd stage used in the Proton-M rocket carrier was made in 2013 by workers of Voronezh Engineering Works, the affiliate of M.V. Khrunichev State Space Research and Production Center.

At present, the investigators carry on necessary investigative operations to find out all the circumstances of the crime and to consolidate the evidence. They are questioning witnesses and have assigned necessary forensic inquiries.

The investigation is ongoing.

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