

Roscosmos Wants Only Domestic Civilian Satellite Makers

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Federal Space Agency Chief Oleg Ostapenko proposed in a letter to Deputy Premier Dmitry Rogozin to end the practice of placing orders for the production of civilian communication satellites with foreign manufacturers, a news report said Friday.

The new head of Roscosmos sees such orders as a kind of subsidy of foreign manufacturers, Kommersant reported.

If the government heeds Ostapenko's advice European space concern EADS may lose part of its contracts here, leaving Russia's Information Satellite Systems Company, or ISS, as the only supplier of civilian communication satellites. Ostapenko noted in the letter that the planning for the launch of the next series of three communication satellites — Express-AMU2, Express-AMU3 and Express-AMU4 — in 2016-2025 — involves only one supplier, ISS.

Sources in the Federal Space Agency admit, however, that the company has to invite "foreign

subcontractors" for the execution of civilian orders: modification of satellites of the Express-A series was performed in cooperation with French manufacturer Alcatel Space, while two broadcasting satellites Express-AT1 and Express AT-2 are being created in partnership with French-Italian aerospace company Thales Alenia Space.

ISS is experiencing difficulties with fulfilling current contracts. The launch of the Express-AM8 satellite will be postponed until August of the next year due to "delays with supplies and repairs of onboard equipment" despite the government's demand to have the spacecraft ready by May 30.

Nevertheless, ISS is confident it will be able to produce all satellites of the Express series.

Head of ISS, Nikolai Testoyedov, said the company had built two new production facilities and is capable of manufacturing about 20 spacecraft per year.

A representative of EADS Astrium said the company had not received any information from ISS regarding production of Express satellites, while a source in state firm Kosmicheskaya Svyaz, which commissioned the satellites, said ISS's plans may violate WTO rules as well as the current legislation on competition.

In the meantime, the U.S. space agency NASA announced this week that it will gradually phase out its contracts with the Russian Space Agency to transport U.S. astronauts and cargo to the International Space Station using Russian spaceships and replace them in the course of four years with spacecraft manufactured by private U.S. companies.

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