

RD-180 ban thrusts Russian manufacturer into uncertain future

Bus./Industry

Posted by:

Posted on : 2017/4/13 10:57:06

UBO asks: "Is this an opportunity for Ukraine and what is being done about it?"

By Valerie Insinna for Defense News, April 11, 2017 COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — With the replacement of the RD-180 all but inevitable, the head of a Russian space agency downplayed concerns about losing the engine's biggest buyer the Lockheed Martin and Boeing joint venture United Launch Alliance. ULA has long relied on the RD-180, a liquid-fueled engine produced by Russia's NPO Energomash, to power the Atlas V rocket. However, spurred by a ban on the RD-180 that will go into effect in 2022, ULA plans to adopt either Blue Origin's BE4 or Aerojet Rocketdyne's AR1, which could leave the Russian engine struggling to find other customers. When Defense News asked about the matter at last week's Space Symposium, Igor Komarov, director general of Roscosmos, painted a bright future for the RD-180 and other Russian rocket propulsion systems. "We have requests from some countries that are developing launchers and their expertise in space," he told reporters April 4. "We have requests to sell engines. It's not just the United States. We have good relations, good history for our sales and successful launches, very high performance and statistics, very good statistics of these launches. No one can complain." Komarov's comments depict a rosy picture, but Energomash's situation may be more complicated, Russian space analysts told Defense News. While Energomash's takeover of Khrunichev State Research and Production Space Center's manufacturing facility in Perm, Russia, has brought in new commercial business — mostly through sales of RD-276 engines for the Proton-M launch vehicle — RD-180 sales still make up a large part of the company's revenue. […]

[http://www.defensenews.com/articles/r ... rer-into-uncertain-future](http://www.defensenews.com/articles/r...rer-into-uncertain-future) (Photo Credit US Air Force)