

S-400 air defense systems to be deployed in central Russia

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Russia's advanced S-400 air defense missile systems will be initially deployed in central regions of the country, the Air Force commander said on Monday.

The S-400 Triumf (SA-21 Growler) air defense system is expected to form the new cornerstone of Russia's theater air and missile defenses up to 2020 or even 2025.

"The S-400 air defense systems will be primarily deployed in central Russia, and only after that in other regions of the country, when more systems become available," Col. Gen. Alexander Zelin said.

Russia successfully conducted last year live firing tests of the S-400 air defense complex at the Kapustin Yar firing range in south Russia's Astrakhan Region, and deployed a battalion equipped with the new system to protect the airspace around Moscow.

The S-400 is designed to intercept and destroy airborne targets at a distance of up to 400 kilometers (250 miles), twice the range of the U.S. MIM-104 Patriot, and 2.5 times that of the S-300PMU-2.

The system is believed to have high capability to destroy stealth aircraft, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles, with an effective range of up to 3,500 kilometers (2,200 miles) and a speed of up to 4.8 kilometers (3 miles) per second.

A regular S-400 battalion comprises at least eight launchers with 32 missiles and a mobile command post, according to various sources.

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