

USSR: The Soviets are testing a type of satellite whose operations suggest that it has a mission of ocean surveillance.

Two Soviet satellites flown during the past year--Cosmos 469 and Cosmos 516--performed what appeared to be 50X1 surveillance over selected ocean and coastal areas of the world. Both are believed to have been equipped with a radar sensor. The active life of the satellites varied from about a week for Cosmos 469 to about a month for Cosmos 516. 50X1
50X1

Cosmos 469 and Cosmos 516 were the latest in a series of eight satellites that the Soviets have launched from Tyuratam since December 1967--two of these failed to achieve orbit. Until the two most recent tests, 50X1
50X1 and their operation in low earth orbit lasted only about a day or less. These earlier flights are now believed to have been for research and development tests on the spacecraft subsystems.

The type of satellite system tested could be useful in locating surface ships at sea because it can cover large areas of ocean and because its radar sensor can operate during both daylight and darkness. Although the operation of the satellite thus far is indicative of an ocean surveillance system, it is not yet clear that the radar aboard the spacecraft is adequate for this role.

50X1 the latest test suggests that this satellite system is in an advanced stage of development, 50X1

50X1
50X1 The value of such a system would be related to its ability to discriminate among different sizes and types of ships and to the timeliness with which the information could be transmitted to users.

(continued)

30 Sep 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

3

~~TOP SECRET~~

CIA Statute

The Soviets had an opportunity to test the system against a large-scale NATO exercise--Strong Express--that was conducted in the past two weeks off the coast of Norway. 50X1

50X1

50X1

CIA Statute

30 Sep 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

4

~~TOP SECRET~~