



RUSSIAN AIR FORCE LOOKS FORWARD TO FIRST IL-76MD-90 DELIVERIES

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The Russian air force is preparing to take delivery of the first two Ilyushin Il-76MD-90A airlifters by the end of the year. The Russian defense ministry placed an order for 39 of the new version of the twinjet in October 2012, worth 140 billion rubles (then \$4.5 billion), with deliveries to complete by 2020. Nearly 1,000 original Il-76s were produced at the Tashkent Aviation Production Association (TAPO) factory in Uzbekistan, but President Vladimir Putin made the decision in 2009 to relaunch production at the Aviastar factory in Ulyanovsk, Russia.

In a ceremony at Ulyanovsk on August 15, the first production Il-76MD-90A was named for the chief executive officer of Ilyushin, Victor Livanov, who passed away last May. MSN 01-05 made its first flight the previous day. It was preceded by three development aircraft. The first two Il-76MD-90As will be delivered to Ivanovo airbase, where crews from the Russian air force's Military Transport Aviation (Russian acronym VTA) will undergo type conversion.

At the ceremony, Lieutenant-General Vladimir Benediktov, commander of the VTA, said the first operational squadron will likely be based "close to" Ulyanovsk. Although he would not comment on the delivery schedule, Benediktov said that in his opinion, "the Russian armed forces need more

aircraft than in the first contract.”

Today, the VTA operates approximately 120 of the older Il-76M/MDs. Benediktov said, “The newer machine differs in having greater payload, and longer range. State-of-the-art onboard systems allow for a wider spectrum of missions to be performed. The accuracy of parachute dropping and touchdown in adverse weather conditions is much improved. These and other qualities shall ease the pilot workload and enable the crew solve assigned tasks more efficiently, including in wartime.” With a gross weight of 463,000 pounds and four Perm Motors PS-90A76 turbofans, the Il-76MD-90A can transport a payload of 114,000 pounds for 2,700 nm.

Aviastar CEO Sergei Dementiev told **AIN**, “We are ready to produce up to 190 Ilyushins within the next fifteen years. To do that, we are refitting our final assembly facility, so that our annual production rate shall rise to 18 aircraft. The financial model we developed for the type runs through to 2030.”

So far, the Russian military is the only customer for the Il-76MD-90A, but Dementiev said other government agencies, including the Ministry for Emergencies and the Police and Federal Security Service, are also expected to place orders. “Besides, I believe this aircraft will win many export orders, with Algeria, Iran, Kazakhstan and even South Africa having requested such aircraft. I think we’ll manage to export the first pair in 2017.”

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