

BIG NEWS



INTERACTIVE BUSINESS NEWS FROM THE HEAVYWEIGHT IN AIRFREIGHT

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2011 | ISSUE 37

Volga commits US\$400 million investment to AN-124 fleet modernisation



Volga-Dnepr Group will commit US\$400 million to modernise and upgrade its Antonov AN-124-100 aircraft fleet over the next six years.

The investment was confirmed by Valery Gabriel, CEO of Volga-Dnepr Airlines, in an interview with the Russian news agency, RIA Novosti.

The expenditure programme, due for completion by 2018, will see the modernisation of the freighter's avionics and engines, producing significant operating efficiencies and extending the operational life of the AN-124 fleet. The investment will also enable Volga-Dnepr to upgrade the payload of its AN-124s from 120 tonnes to 150 tonnes, he said.

Volga-Dnepr, which operates the world's largest AN-124 fleet, also plans to resume

series production of the aircraft at the Ulyanovsk-based Aviastar-SP plant in a collaborative effort with Antonov Design Bureau, the aircraft developer, and other stakeholders in Russia and Ukraine.

The unique market for heavy and oversize air cargo transportation is based on the exceptional operating capability of ramp freighters such as the AN-124. This sector is growing faster than the scheduled services market – at an average of 10-12% p.a. in cash terms. Experts predict the market will reach US\$3 billion by 2020 and grow to \$7 billion by 2030. Russian operators lead this sector with a total market share of some 75%.

The project to build a new AN-124 will see the revival of Russia's aircraft manufacturing industry and preserve the country's leading position in the global outside air cargo market. It will also expand cooperation between Russia and Ukraine through the successful implementation of such a large industry project and help to establish an environment for the next technology breakthrough in civil aviation.



Valery Gabriel
CEO of
Volga-Dnepr Airlines

Big increase in demand for Boeing 747 charters

Volga-Dnepr Group's 'cargo supermarket' concept and the diverse capability of its aircraft fleet has seen a big increase in customer demand for Boeing 747 charters in the past three months.

Careful utilisation of AirBridgeCargo Airlines' fleet of 11 Boeing 747s has enabled Volga-Dnepr to satisfy demand for 30 charter flights in the December-February period while still maintaining its full commitment of scheduled flights linking Europe and Asia via Russia.

Charters have included two flights on behalf of EMERCOM in Russia, carrying 200 tonnes of relief cargo from Moscow to Islamabad after the major floods in Pakistan as well as a flight from New Delhi to Port-au-Prince in Haiti with 100 tonnes of multi-purpose soap for earthquake victims.





A global reputation for precision loading

Precision loading is one of the reasons why Volga-Dnepr Airlines' technicians and loadmasters are so highly respected in the international air cargo industry and a 100 tonne shipment of oilfield equipment carried onboard two flights from Luxembourg to Pointe Noire in the Republic of the Congo clearly demonstrated why.

The IL-76TD-90VD flights, operated on behalf of Ceva Logistics Charter department Luxembourg, transported a 36 foot long basket measuring 1114 x 119 x 124 cms and weighing 12,000 kilos and a 23 tonnes winch with dimensions of 390 x 264 x 290 cms.

The size of the shipment required the most exact loading in line with Volga-Dnepr's carefully specified loading plan. The total process took eight hours and was strictly monitored throughout by the airline's specialist team.

Two hours was spent building a platform on the back of a truck to ensure the load was spread safely across the trailer whilst being moved into position. The gap between the aircraft frame and the crane rails when loading the 23 tonnes winch was a mere 5mm, leaving no margin for error.

Thanks to the detailed preparation, special loading equipment and the team's expertise, the cargo was loaded first time without any delays.

ABC extends contract with TRAXON CDMP

AirBridgeCargo Airlines (ABC) has extended its cooperation with Traxon Europe with the signing of a new contract for the implementation of the TRAXON CDMP to improve supply chain visibility and quality processes.

This latest agreement was signed on March 9th during the IATA World Cargo Symposium in Istanbul.

The TRAXON Cargo Data Management Portal (CDMP) collates and evaluates performance data collected along the airfreight transport chain as specified by the IATA Cargo 2000 initiative. The performance data is visualised in easily understandable graphics and all data is made available to authorised partners along the transport chain in real time. Thus airlines and their partners have the same information available simultaneously. In addition, a complete data history on shipment basis (after entering an air waybill number) or by station can be produced.

"We want to improve our service quality and reduce flaws in the transport process with the help of TRAXON CDMP. Before making our final choice we have compared

three CDMP providers and came to the conclusion that TRAXON meets ideally our expectations for a platform in terms of interface usability, reports generated and functionality of the system. It is a well proven tool. The verifiability and reliability of the measured data as well as easy access to the information are a definite bonus. Thus real process improvements become

possible and traceable," explained Tatyana Arslanova, Executive President of ABC.

Felix Keck, Managing Director of TRAXON Europe, added: "Quality improvements are not only good for the image and customer retention but also good for the balance sheet. They reduce time spent on manual tracking and tracing of shipments and on the management of irregularities."



Tatyana Arslanova, Executive President of ABC, and Felix Keck, Managing Director of Traxon Europe, signing the agreement for the provision of TRAXON CDMP services on March 9 at the Traxon stand at the World Cargo Symposium 2011 in Istanbul.



Volga-Dnepr Group once again proves its expertise in transporting large shipments of live animals

Volga-Dnepr once again demonstrates its expertise in the safe transportation of large quantities of livestock by flying 810 foxes to Beijing for breeding.

The blue, shadow and silver foxes were carried on ABC Boeing 747-200F charter flight from Helsinki in Finland. The animals were transported in 400 special cages, each weighing 35 kilos, to ensure their safety and well-being during the flight.

Moving large quantities of live animals has become one of Volga Dnepr's specialist capabilities. Last year it carried 1,275 breeding pigs to Vladivostok in Russia from Montreal in Canada. This followed other charter flights delivering 105 elite horses from Amsterdam to Moscow and 380 breeding cows from Melbourne, Australia, to Kazan in Russia.

As well as moving lots of animals at one time, the Volga Dnepr's other live animal shipments have included expensive racehorses, walrus, dolphins, brown and polar bears,

elephants, great sturgeons and even a whale.

Dennis Gliznouts, Group Commercial Director (Charters), said: "This latest flight is a further demonstration of our expertise in the carriage of live animals on both scheduled and charter flights. The size and flexibility of our fleet means we are able to provide solutions for virtually any live animal shipment and this is reflected in the growing number of customer enquiries we are now receiving."

Volga-Dnepr helps sports broadcasters with 'trial run' for 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi

Hosting an Olympic Games is a serious business that takes years of detailed preparation work to ensure the event itself goes without a hitch in front of hundreds of millions of viewers all over the world.

The organisers of the 2014 Winter Olympics in the Russian city of Sochi are well advanced with their planning and Volga-Dnepr has been an active participant in the programme including air cargo deliveries that supported the initial bid process through to transportation of construction equipment for the Olympic site's infrastructure.

The latest project for Volga-Dnepr involved two AN-124-100 freighter flights delivering media communications and broadcasting equipment from Moscow for the ANO Sports Broadcasting Company to cover the Russian Cup and European Cup skiing competitions.

The event provided an ideal 'field test' for broadcasters that will be covering the 2014 Games. A team of 150 specialists are advising the media of the technological challenges of working in such an uneven terrain, such as the installation of camera supports ranging from two to 10 metres in

height and weighing up to 30 tonnes.

In support of the broadcast project, Volga-Dnepr transported eight special vehicles to Sochi, including two equipped with transmitter-receivers. The total shipment weight was 93 tonnes.

The flights were conducted to strict timelines and had to be performed within 24 hours. Volga-Dnepr also supplied special equipment for loading and offloading.

Despite regularly transporting media broadcasting equipment all over the world, this was the first occasion Volga-Dnepr has completed such a task for a Russian TV company.



Contract signed with Aerofuels at Ulyanovsk Vostochny airport

Volga-Dnepr Airlines has signed a long-term aviation fuel contract with Aerofuels Group for aircraft fueling at its hub at Russia's Ulyanovsk Vostochny airport.

The "TZK Aerofuels" and "Aerofuels Ulyanovsk" fuel facility will supply the required annual fuel volume for all of Volga-Dnepr's outbound and inbound flights at the airport.

"We have been cooperating with Volga-Dnepr Group both in Ulyanovsk and at other Russian airports for more than 10 years," says General Director of Aerofuels Group, Vladimir Spiridonov. "Volga-Dnepr is the largest air cargo carrier in Russia and a leader in the global market and we also help our long-standing partner organise fueling abroad. Taking into account our long-term cooperation, we offer the carrier the most favourable pricing across the globe."

"We hope for further efficient cooperation with Aerofuels Group and are confident about the reliability of our long-standing fueling partner," added Maxim Astashin, the Head of the Group on Cooperation with Service Suppliers at Volga-Dnepr.

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