

Trials of Aerial Observation Aircraft to Start by Kazan Soon

Russian TU-214-OS Open Skies Aircraft

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[Translated from Russian to English.]

Flight trials of the Tupolev TU-214-OS, the first airplane designed for air survey operations as part of the Open Skies agreement will be launched by Kazan's Gorbunov Aircraft Production Association (KAPO) in the near future, a Russian defense industry spokesman told Interfax-AVN.

"Ground-based tests are currently under way at KAPO ahead of the TU-214-OS plane's maiden flight.

This modified version [of the TU-214] is fitted with various special-purpose equipment, including aerial photography equipment intended for monitoring missions flown under the international Open Skies Treaty," the spokesman said.

The equipment installed in the new airplane's cabin differs from that used onboard the base model, he said. "That is why it will undergo all kinds of trials – flight, certification and state commissioned trials," he said. The state commissioned tests will focus on the airplane's special-purpose equipment, the spokesman said.

"All of the trials are expected to finish in 2012," he said.

The TU-214-OS was developed on orders from the Russian Defense Ministry, the spokesman said.

KAPO has signed a contract on the delivery of two such planes. "In the next few years KAPO will manufacture the TU-214-OS in various modifications for the Defense Ministry," he said.

The spokesman said he did not rule out that the first TU-214-OS could be demonstrated at the MAKS 2011 air show in the town of Zhukovsky outside Moscow in August.