

Superjet Engine Certified After Fake Diploma Flap

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia has certified engines for its Sukhoi Superjet 100 planes, bringing the first deliveries of the much-delayed aircraft a step closer, engine producer Saturn announced Friday.

The Superjet 100, which risked an additional setback last month when prosecutors reported that dozens of workers at the plane's Far East plant had fake diplomas, will be the first passenger plane built by Russia since the Soviet collapse, and will attempt to challenge Canada's Bombardier and Brazil's Embraer in the regional carrier sector.

The manufacturer, controlled by state-run Sukhoi and 25 percent owned by Italy's Finmeccanica, has postponed airplane deliveries to early customers several times, and sources familiar with the production program said the problem lay in engine certification.

The jet engine, designed by a joint venture between Saturn and a subsidiary of France's Safran, must get additional Federal Aviation Administration certification to be sold in the

United States and Canada, said Yury Basyuk, deputy managing director of Saturn.

Superjet plans to produce 1,000 planes primarily aimed at international markets, and the plane itself may be certified as early as October 2010, Basyuk said.

Aeroflot, which accounts for 30 of the 161 orders to date, and Armenia's Armavia are most likely to receive the first aircraft.

A cloud was cast over the Superjet 100 in July when Khabarovsk region prosecutors said more than 70 engineers working at the Komsomolsk-on-Amur plant, which produces the plane, had fake diplomas from a local technical college, Ren-TV television [reported](#).

The employees said the diplomas were only a formality because they had worked at the plant for years and knew their jobs from experience, NTV television [reported](#).

Plant management said no engineers with fake diplomas were employed in actual plane production.

No employees were fired over the incident because their contracts did not permit dismissal for minor offenses, Ren-TV said. Fake diplomas are widely available for sale in Russia.

(Reuters, MT)

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