

Local Airlines Need Funding, Pilots and New Planes to Improve Safety

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Sukhoi 100 project has experienced a number of accidents, contributing to the country's poor safety record.

Insufficient investments, a deficit of qualified pilots and continued use of outdated equipment are to blame for a poor safety record in the Russian aviation industry, a report said Thursday.

Tony Tyler, president of the International Air Transport Association, said Russia's flight safety record of one incident per 275,000 flights should be brought up to the world's average of one incident per 500,000 flights, Vedomosti reported.

He noted that none of the 380 global airlines that passed the IATA Operational Safety Audit had any serious safety incidents in 2012. Those companies include Russian carriers Aeroflot, Yakutia, NordAvia, Sibir, Urals Airlines, Transaero, UtAir and VIM-Avia, according to IATA's website.

"Russian passengers do not want to ponder whose plane they are boarding. All carriers should guarantee safety," Tyler said.

IATA's president added that international flight safety for jet planes reached a historic high last year with only one accident per 5 million flights, the report said.

A lack of adequate funding contributes to lower flight safety in the Russian aviation industry, Tyler said.

Local legislation should be brought in compliance with the international norms to affect all airlines regardless of their IATA membership, he added.

A deficit of pilots constitutes a serious problem in the Russian aviation industry, Tyler said, which results in lower flight safety.

He pointed out that with the current shortage of about 2,100 pilots, Russia is moving toward allowing foreign pilots to fly domestically. But to meet the demand for pilots, domestic flight schools should bring their teaching in compliance with international standards.

Finally, modernizing flight control systems and renewing fleets are other measures that would result in better flight safety here, Tyler said.

Alexei Sinitsky, editor-in-chief of Air Transportation Review, says many legislative initiatives have gotten bogged down in bureaucratic red tape. The Federal Air Transportation Agency often lacks the authority to push for the necessary steps to improve flight safety here and must work through the Transportation Ministry, as opposed to other countries where the responsible agency is directly subordinate to the prime minister, Sinitsky said.

A Superjet 100 passenger plane completed an emergency landing Thursday at Sheremetyevo Airport due to a problem with landing gear, a news report said.

According to Interfax, the Superjet 100, heading from Moscow to Nizhny Novgorod, made the emergency landing around 4:50 p.m. because one of the plane's landing gear legs would not close.

There were 77 people on board, in addition to seven crew members, but no one was injured, the Emergency Situations Ministry reported.

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