

United Aircraft to Start R&D on New Strategic Bomber in 2014

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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SOCHI — Russia will begin the full-scale research and development work on its future strategic bomber in 2014, a senior aircraft-manufacturing industry official said Thursday.

The project, known as PAK-DA, an acronym meaning future long-range aircraft, has been in the works for several years but was given the formal go-ahead by the Russian leadership last year.

“A decision was made this year to expedite the development of the PAK-DA aircraft,” Mikhail Pogosyan, head of United Aircraft Corporation, said at a meeting on the future of the Russian Air Force chaired by President Vladimir Putin.

“We finished coordinating the project with the Defense Ministry in September and at present we are getting ready to start full-scale work on research and development of these aircraft next year,” Pogosyan said.

According to Russian media reports citing Defense Ministry sources, the Tupolev design bureau has won the PAK-DA development tender with its concept for a subsonic aircraft with a “flying wing” shape that provides superior “stealth capabilities.”

The Defense Ministry insisted that the PAK-DA should be equipped with advanced electronic warfare systems and armed with new nuclear-capable long-range cruise missiles in addition to a variety of high-precision conventional weapons.

The new bomber is expected to go into production by 2020 and will most likely be built at a new aircraft assembly line at the KAPO plant in Kazan, according to Defense Ministry officials.

The PAK-DA is due to replace Russia’s aging fleet of 63 Tupolev Tu-95MS Bear and 13 Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bombers in the next decade.

Pogosyan said Thursday that the preliminary tests of the modernized Tu-160 and Tu-95 bombers have been completed and they will now undergo a series of inspections by a state acceptance commission.

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