

# Chechen Airline to Open Crimean Hub

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Chechen airline Grozny Avia has announced it will turn Crimea's Simferopol airport into a regional hub in a radical expansion of its single route.

The agreement between Simferopol airport and Grozny Avia will see half of Grozny Avia's four-aircraft fleet operate out of two of the airport's gates. The airline, which previously ran only one route between Moscow and Grozny, began regular flights to Simferopol on April 14, Grozny Avia's general director Hasan Salgiriev said, Izvestia reported Thursday.

Simferopol airport has confirmed the agreement and said that Grozny Air will be the first and so far only airline to have a hub there following Crimea's entrance into the Russian Federation.

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the airline may purchase Airbus A-319s to add to the two Yak-42s currently at Simferopol.

A source at the Transportation Ministry told Izvestia that Grozny Avia has already registered a thrice weekly flight between Simferopol and Rostov-On-Don, which will start Oct. 31. Russian state subsidies for Crimean flights will allow Grozny Avia to sell one-way tickets for 3,400 rubles (\$95).

The last carrier to operate a hub in Simferopol was Ukrainian airline Air Onix, which suspended flights due to financial difficulties in December 2013.

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