The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Crimea May Launch Airline to Boost Ties With Russia

By The Moscow Times

March 22, 2015



According to the proposal, the hypothetical carrier's fleet would consist of six of UAC's Sukhoi Superjet 100s.

Crimean authorities are considering a proposal by Russia's United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) to create a local air carrier, news agency Kriminform reported on Saturday.

According to UAC's proposal, the as-yet unnamed airline would cost 1.45 billion rubles ($24 million) and transport nearly half a million passengers during its first year of operation in 2016, UAC spokesman Sergei Turik said.

The carrier would be based in Crimea's capital Simferopol, and offer service to Crimea from 14 Russian locations, with the possibility of extending to 36 destinations in the long term. Flights from locations other than Moscow would account for 90 percent of all trips, news agency RBC reported.

In a move that would dodge EU and U.S. sanctions on Crimea, annexed from Ukraine last March, the airline would be equipped with six of UAC's own Sukhoi Superjet 100 airliners.

The tourism-dependent peninsula expects up 4.3 million visitors this year with a little over half arriving by plane, news agency RIA Novosti reported late last week. Around 6 million tourists, mostly from Ukraine, visited the region annually prior to the March annexation.

Russia currently has only air and sea connections to its newest territory, with a land route through Ukraine effectively closed by tension between Kiev and Moscow. Construction on a multibillion-dollar bridge from Russia to Crimea has begun, but is not expected to be completed until 2018.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/03/22/crimea-may-launch-airline-to-boost-ties-with-russia-a45000