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Sanctions-Hit Russia Starts Stripping Aircraft for Parts – Reuters

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Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency

Russia’s flagship airline Aeroflot has started stripping its passenger aircraft for parts after Western sanctions over Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine it off from foreign equipment and servicing it heavily relies on, Reuters reported Tuesday, citing four unnamed aviation industry sources.

Russia's 2030 aviation industry strategy envisions the “partial dismantling” of a portion of foreign-made aircraft to keep two-thirds of the country's fleet airworthy until 2025.

At least one almost brand new Airbus A350 and the Russian-built Sukhoi Superjet 100 are grounded and being disassembled, Reuters cited one source as saying.

Equipment from some of Aeroflot’s Boeing 737s and Airbus A320s is also being taken to keep other planes airworthy.

These are the first detailed examples of what aviation experts predict to be the cannibalization

of Russia-based planes as the impact of Western sanctions becomes more apparent.

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International flight bans imposed on Russian airlines in retaliation to the Ukraine war also means that grounded jets can be stripped for parts, Reuters cited a second source as saying.

At least 50 out of Aeroflot's 360 airliners have not taken off since July, according to Reuters' calculations based on flight data.

Aeroflot has seen a 22% fall in traffic this April-June compared with the same time last year.

The risk of secondary sanctions is expected to discourage companies from Asian and Middle Eastern countries that have not imposed sanctions on Russia from supplying the needed aircraft equipment.

"Each single part has its own [unique] number and if the documents will have a Russian airline as the final buyer, then no one would agree to supply, neither China nor Dubai," Reuters quoted one source as saying.

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