



SERGEI SERGEYEV

Concerns that the Tupolev project could become a victim of the recent link up between Russia and Boeing to develop a regional jet (RRJ) were dismissed earlier this month. According to Yuri Koptev, general director of state aviation agency Rosaviacosmos, the RRJ will not compete with the Tupolev's 100-seat Tu-334 and 50-seat Tu-324 which are already under development, since they are designed for different markets.

Production

An assembly line to produce the Tu-324 is being set up at the Kazan Aircraft Production Plant (KAPPO) plant in Kazan. Assembly of prototypes is due to begin next year.

Tu-334/354

Conceived as a replacement for the Tu-134, the baseline Tu-334-100 twinjet is designed to carry 102 passengers, and a stretched, 120-seat version is planned which is designated the Tu-334-200 or Tu-354.

Tu-334 testing is gathering pace, but the twinjet's long term prospects are still unclear

The original Tu-334-100 prototype was powered by two rear-mounted Progress D-436T turbofans. It was rolled out in August 1995, but funding problems prevented the first aircraft from flying until February 1999. This aircraft has now completed around 100 flights. Work on a two more airframes is underway at Aviant's plant in Kiev.

In May 1997, R-R signed an agreement with Tupolev to power the Tu-334-100 with BR700 engines. This version, intended for export, is dubbed the -120. In June 2000, Aeroflot signed an Memorandum of Understanding for 20 R-R BR715-powered Tu-334-120s. It is also likely to incorporate Honeywell avionics. However at the Paris air show in June it emerged that CFMI partner Snecma was discussing a CFM56-powered version of the Tu-334.

Production

Aviant is building the initial 100-seat Tu-334-100 in

Kiev which has two airframes nearing completion awaiting the installation of engines and avionics. A second line has been laid down at Aviakor's plant in Samara which will eventually produce the larger -200.

A line was set up at the MiG aircraft factory in Moscow to produce the Tu-334-100, but work has not progressed at this plant due to financing problems. MAPO remains determined to pursue production of the Tu-334 and hopes it will soon be able to resolve its funding problems.

Discussions are under way to eventually rationalise Tu-334 production into a single assembly line at the Avistar plant in Ulyanovsk with Aviant and Aviakor sharing production of subassemblies.

Ordered: 20

Delivered: 0

VULCANAIR

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Samanta moved into aircraft production in 1997 through its acquisition of the SF600A Canguro programme from Siai Marchetti. In early 1998 the company was renamed VulcanAir and last year it acquired Partenavia of Milan through its purchase of AerCosmos. The entire product line is manufactured, completed and supported at VulcanAir's Casoria base. VulcanAir says that licensing agreements established by Partenavia, notably with India's Taneja Aerospace and Aviation, are now defunct.

P68 Viator/VA300

The P68 was originally produced by Partenavia, and has been built under licence in India.

VulcanAir acquired the former Partenavia aircraft line which includes the P68C and P68 Observer 2 in 1999, and has launched new developments.

A new interior has been designed for the P68C

TUPOLEV

	Tu-324R	Tu-334-100	Tu-334-200*
Length (m)	25.5	31.26	35.16
Wingspan (m)	23.2	29.77	32.61
Height (m)	7.1	9.38	9.38
Wing area (m ²)		83.23	100
Max take-off weight (kg)	23,700	46,100	54,800
Max landing weight (kg)	-	43,400	-
Operating empty weight (kg)	-	30,050	-
Standard fuel capacity (l)	-	11,711	-
Max payload (kg)	5,500	11,000	11,970
Powerplant	2x Ivchenko Progress AI-22 or 9,220lb GE CF34-3B1	2x 16,535lb Ivchenko Progress D-436T1 or R-R BR715	2x 19,995lb R-R BR715
Max cruise speed (kt or Mach)	448	448	-
Max operating altitude (ft)	36,500	36,500	-
Accommodation (typical)	52	102	126
Design range/typical load	3,000km/46 pax	-	-

Notes: *also called Tu-354