

DELIVERIES

Indian air force takes first batch of Su-30MKIs

The Irkutsk Aircraft Production Association (IAPO) has completed delivery of the first batch of 10 Sukhoi Su-30MKIs for the Indian air force. The deliveries began in late June (*Flight International*, 2-8 July).

IAPO is scheduled to deliver a second instalment of 12 Su-30MKIs in the third quarter of next year, and the final 10 by the end of 2003.

Vladimir Kovalkov, IAPO general director, says the second batch of aircraft is being assembled, and that metal has been cut for the last batch.

Sukhoi and IAPO are working together on Su-30MKI incremental improvements through software upgrades.

The third batch of aircraft are scheduled to be delivered in the final configuration, to which earlier delivered Su-30MKIs will be upgraded during 2004.

Improvements are focusing on additional precision-guided munitions capability, while consideration is being given to integrating the Bramos PJ-10 supersonic cruise missile, an Indian version of the NPO Machinostroyeniya Yakhont.

The NIIP N-011M Bars radar will also be gradually upgraded during the course of the next three years.

Software improvements are also due to be made to the Rif navigation and weapon-aiming system, which was integrated by RPKB Ramenskoye using Elop, Thales, Indian and Russian equipment.

The Hindustan Aeronautics plant in Bangalore is due to roll out its first Su-30MKI in 2004, and by 2007, production will reach 10 aircraft a year.

Meanwhile, NPO Saturn has completed a two-year programme to improve the AL-31F engines used on Chinese and Indian Su-27/30s. Changes include a fuel system re-design to prevent clogging.

FIGHTER PROCUREMENT RYZSARD JAXA-MALACHOWSKI / WARSAW

Dassault offers Mirage 2000 to answer Polish fighter need

French manufacturer leads efforts to stimulate Polish economy with offset package

Dassault has launched its Polish fighter campaign, offering the Mirage 2000-5Mk2, as MBDA proposes a munitions package including the Mica infrared and radar-guided air-to-air missiles, and Brimstone, Scalp EG and Exocet air-to-surface weapons.

The French fighter manufacturer, teamed with MBDA, Snecma and Thales, is also offering an offset deal

"focused on speeding up Polish economic development". Poland needs 48 fighters—other candidates are the Lockheed Martin F-16C/D and Saab/BAE Systems Gripen.

Dassault's offset offer includes defence and commercial aviation proposals, as well as technology transfer. Half the offset will be direct. PZL Swidnik is already supplying Mirage 2000 cockpits and control surfaces

for Dassault's Falcon business jet family. Snecma has links with Swidnik, PZL Rzeszow, PZL Mielec, Kalis and Hydral of Wroclaw.

Final assembly of Polish Mirages would be undertaken by Mielec, which has already signed an agreement. Thales already employs 6,000 people in Poland through a series of non-defence related investments over the last 10 years.

A suggestion that Dassault could locate Mirage III/F1 maintenance in Poland has not been repeated, but could be reprised when the formal offer is submitted on 11 November. Mirage 2000 maintenance would be in Poland.

Other organisations mentioned in the offer, but not connected to a specific programme are the Aviation Institute, the Aviation Institute of Military Technology, Mesco, Radmor and Radwar. Programmes on offer include weapons and radar technology acquisition, while Snecma is proposing to build a factory at Sedziszow employing 150.

Indirect offset includes food, heavy and steel industries, infrastructure and ecological programmes. The creation of investment funds and bodies supporting and promoting Polish exports have also been proposed.

UPGRADES

WZL adds Iskra work

WZL-2, the Polish air force's maintenance facility at Bydgoszcz, is expanding its upgrade programmes to include the PZL-Mielec TS-11 Iskra as well as the Polish air force's Sukhoi Su-22 Fitters and RSK MiG-29 Fulcrums.

The TS-11 provides WZL-2 with an export opportunity. India, like Poland, has delayed an advanced trainer acquisition, and both countries will have to retain the Iskras for some years. Export opportunities for the Su-22 package are limited, although the company is promoting its MiG-29 programme.

Any TS-11 avionics upgrade will likely be limited to a GPS satellite navigation system and a modern transponder, VOR/ILS radio-navigation and instrument-landing system (ILS) and communications systems.

PZL-Mielec will undertake fatigue tests and design a structural upgrade package which would be implemented by WZL-2.

Financial restrictions have forced the Polish air force to adopt a staged upgrade approach: ILS is being fitted to its Su-22s and flight testing of a similar modification for the MiG-29 is due to start this month. WZL-2 has prepared GPS and other navigation system upgrades, and has fitted an aircraft with QAR/S54 and QAR6A displays built by Warsaw-based ATM. The QAR/S54 displays flight, navigation and weapons-system information, while the smaller QR6A is linked to navigation and communications systems.

DEVELOPMENT

Russian navy revives A-40 twin-engine amphibian

Work has resumed on the A-40 Albatros after renewal of Russian navy interest, says Beriev general designer/general director Gennady Panatov. The twin-engine amphibian intended for the anti-submarine warfare role was shelved in the early 1990s due to lack of interest. The A-40 prototype has been restored to airworthiness and work "activated" on the first prototype of the A-42 search-and-rescue variant. The A-42 features the ZMKB Progress D-27 propfan in place of NPO Saturn D-30Ks. Beriev is also eyeing an export variant, the A-42PE.



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