

Created by the O. Antonov experimental design office, the experimental prototype of the AN-74 was at first operated several times in the Arctic to deliver cargoes to the drifting ice stations and as a backup for the Soviet-Canadian ski trek across the North Pole. From the end of last autumn, the new AN appeared in the Antarctic where it spent about three months. Readers of Izvestiya were able to read about these flights over Antarctica (Nos. 300 and 366, 1988). The leader of the group of aviation specialists of the experimental design office, A. Romanyuk now tells us about the performance of the new plane during those three months on the job:

"The AN-74 can be successfully operated under the harsh natural conditions which prevail in the Antarctic. This has been confirmed by the many flights we made in Antarctica, including those to the earth's cold pole. Four flights with landings on a frozen snow crust airstrip were carried out to "Vostok" station, which is near the cold pole."

"It is important that the AN be capable of delivering five or six times more cargo per flight, from the coast to deep within the continent, than an IL-14 mounted on skis. Incidentally, an AN-74 equipped with skis will be the next design assignment our team will undertake. This will make it possible to considerably extend the range of the new plane."

A. Myalitsa, the director the Khar'kov aircraft plant, had this to say:

"We mastered the procedures for the mass production of the new aircraft in an extremely short time. Of great help to us was the cooperation of the plane's designers. We got the technical