

"I wouldn't wish such a breakdown in all the plans right in the middle of the shipping season on anyone," said the director. The twenty crews of those powerful pusher tugs should have brought the line a profit of at least five million roubles. And now, instead, we are rushing around trying to find work for these boats to do. Above all we've had to find work with new cargo routes, to find new customers and to deal with a lot of other problems. In the end we found solutions. Now we are transporting a sand and gravel mixture from Krasnoiglovsk, crushed rock from Tomsk and sand from Novosibirsk..."

Our correspondent: "But some crews haven't found work even now. Tell us about other steps the Shipping Line has taken since the river Sob' operation was closed down."

Subbotin: Unfortunately, right at the height of the shipping season, we had to deal with the problem of transferring the fleet to other waterways and to set workers up in other jobs. So we have handed our motorships, the OT-2017, OT-2072, OT-2045 and OT-2046 (all belonging to the Moryakovskii Maintenance and Operations Base) to the Lena Union Steamship Line. Two motorships, the OTA-894 and the OTA-936 and also two tugs, the PT-701 and the PT-751, will be operating with our neighbours, the Yenisei Steamship Line.

At the same time, we have transferred two of the latter ships in exchange for three-hundred horsepower ships of the "Angara" type, which are urgently needed for navigating the small rivers. Moreover, two motorships belonging to the Samus' Maintenance and Operations Base have been put into mothballs. Four others are now undergoing medium-scale repairs."