

This is a person who is far from aviation, except as a regular passenger. But then, how can you live on Chukotka without aviation? And so when I explained to him that the reason for this roundabout journey was that the level of flight safety does not meet standards for international flights, he was unpleasantly surprised: "Well, we fly. Are our lives cheap or something?"

Alas, this is just what I was writing about in the newspaper piece entitled "Safety on the Scales of Economics, or What Price Does Aeroflot Put on Our Lives" ("Vozdushnyi transport", No. 84, 13-07-1989). When flying, our passengers are insured for 1,000 rubles, whereas Americans are insured for an average of 300,000 dollars. Equally different are the standards for flight safety support, for air traffic control, navigational and communication aids, airport facilities, and so forth.

However, the economic advantages of air links between airports of the Soviet Far East and Alaska are very tempting for both sides. Also alluring are proposals from the government of the USA to establish international routes in the future via the Far East to the countries of Southeast Asia - Japan, Korea, Singapore, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Indonesia, China, India and others. The advantage for our neighbors is the possibility of shortening the distance and time and thereby saving money, fuel, and aircraft resources. For us the advantage is the possibility of earning revenues from aerial navigational support.

There is just one thing missing: to bring our technical equipment for ensuring flight safety up to international standards. On October 2, at the airport of Providenie Bay, a Soviet-American meeting