

aspects of the up-coming encounter with the sea must be thought out in advance. This was precisely the topic of a conversation our special correspondent had with Yu. Bukhonov, deputy head of the harbour fleet of the Provideniya Maritime Commercial Port.

Q. "What is the status of your organization's readiness for the navigation season?"

A. "Maintenance work on the passenger and transport fleet is virtually completed. The tugboards 'Burun' and 'Kapitan Belomestnov', the roadstead cutter 'Chaika' and the ship SPA-005 are ready to sail. We are awaiting the arrival of the motorvessel 'Inzhener Kazandzhi' from the Nakhodka Ship Repair Plant. We will also be getting so-called "new blood": construction of the bulk cargo transport 'Provideniya', with a capacity of 350 tonnes, is drawing to a close in Arkhangelsk. The ship has an expanded range of navigation, its own cargo-handling facilities, and other facilities which enable it to unload freight on an unequipped shore.

The locations of ships for the navigation period and the level of operation for each ship have been set, and a number of leasing agreements involving our ships have been outlined. In short, we are ready for work, and ready for a new way of working."

Q. "The Provideniya Maritime Port is now on a self-financing basis, and that means suddenly a new way of working..."

A. "Yes, self-financing, but it's too early to say that this economic model is running smoothly. First of all, not everyone has what you would call identical or equal starting conditions. For example, while the crew of the tug 'Burun' is already in its second year of operation under a collective contract, the 'Inzhener Kazandzhi', which transports passengers along the Chukotka coastline, is incurring annual losses of 250,000 to 300,000 rubles.