

other hand, it's clearly not too bad: you spend some 40 days a year on it, and they send you to the big city by air for free. On the other hand, when you think of the cost involved for the state, you are simply ashamed. There are a hundred of us helicopter pilots in Byurba. Multiply that by the cost of a round-trip ticket to Tyumen and then add on the travelling allowances, the operation expenses, and the other money spent on that training contraption. A crazy sum of money! And all for what? To play with some controls in the cockpit. I have been sitting in cockpits for thirty years, so I am pretty well familiar with them."

"But, emergency situations? I guess they are rare in actual practice, fortunately."

"Of course. And, you know, you can work out these situations in an ordinary mock-up, in other words, in a real cockpit with a tapped in power supply and a console for providing on-off commands. Every training detachment has such cockpits, and it is not a great problem for any amateur engineer to set up something similar all by himself, if he wants to. Provide only one-tenth of what is spent on all this jaunts to Tyumen and that cockpit will 'fly' right into a place in the training class - even without a pilot to guide it."

We had a laugh, and then I recalled my recent meeting with an old friend; he is a pilot in the detachment at Yakutsk - and I met him in Moscow!

"I am flying to Tyumen to use the simulator."

"Huh!?!?"

"Don't even ask. I could have flown by way of Novosibirsk, but they have only three flights a week from there to Tyumen, so the higher ups decided that it would