

Ice reconnaissance is nothing new today. However, flying along such routes is not easy. Nowadays the best pilots are assigned to ice reconnaissance. Their first names and their flying style are recognized by ship captains, by the scientists at the research stations scattered along the gigantic perimeter of the arctic seaway, by the radio operators and by all those who, together with the aviation, provide guidance for high latitude convoys and expeditions. One day in the '30s, M. Sorokin, captain of the icebreaker Krasin, picked up a stranded flyer from the ocean. "How difficult a sailor's life is - remarked Sorokin then - the fog, the sandbanks, the reefs... And now there are airplanes - they fly above the sea, they land on water. Now we have to look for them." Soon, however, all the captains in the north began refusing to sail without air reconnaissance. And so it has been up to date.

Ice reconnaissance systems are being perfected continually. For this purpose, a new aircraft, the Il-24N, is undergoing tests. A modern radiolocation system "Nit'" has been tried out. Now it is possible under any weather conditions to receive information about the ice conditions covering a broad zone and to transmit it rapidly to the icebreaker. The distance to the ship may be quite considerable. Specialists on board of the "flying laboratory" produce maps which are speedily transmitted to the ship by phototelegraphy.

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14 February 1988

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