

Alenia Aeronautica signs memorandum of understanding with Sukhoi to join the Russian Regional Jet programme

Alenia Aeronautica, part of the Finmeccanica group, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Russian aviation company Sukhoi that will see the Italian company participate in the development of the Russian Regional Jet (RRJ), a new family of regional transport aircraft for the civil sector.

Under the memorandum of understanding, Alenia Aeronautica will take a stake in Sukhoi Civil Aircraft Company (SCAC), a company set up by Sukhoi in 2000 to implement civil programmes.

Alenia will contribute its experience to certain phases of the programme, such as European certification and pre-production. The two companies will also discuss working together in marketing the aircraft in western countries and in providing technical support. This could lead to the creation of a number of joint ventures.

Several European and American companies will take part in the RRJ programme, including Thales (avionics), Snecma (engines), Messier-Dowty (landing gear), Honeywell and Hamilton Sundstrand (electricity generation systems).

The RRJ family comprises two models: the 98-seat RRJ 95, which will be the first version to be launched, and the 78-seat RRJ 75.

SCAC won the bidding for the RRJ in 2003, following an invitation to tender issued in 2001 by the Russian space agency RosaviaKosmos, aimed at developing and manufacturing a new Russian regional aircraft family, which could be offered not only in Russia but also in international markets.

More than 700 of the aircraft are expected to be sold worldwide over the next 20 years, of which around 260 will be destined for Russia and the CIS nations.