

Kawasaki C-X vs Il-76TD-90VD

Russian aircraft companies (now competing with Boeing and Airbus) will be facing tougher competition as Japan's Kawasaki is hitting the Russian market with a new commercial freighter, C-X. The new airplane performed its maiden flight in early July.

In the circumstances when Russia's aircraft industry is being consolidated and upgraded, the United Aircraft Company will have to compete with the Japanese freighter producer who might greatly affect the volume of contracts awarded to the Russian corporation.

However, it would be wrong to say that Kawasaki's new airplane is better by all characteristics. Specs of C-X and the modernized Il-76TD-90VD are quite comparable. The Russian airplane will probably appear less fuel efficient, all the more so because C-X is twin-engine. However, new PS-90-76 engines used to power Il-76 are more fuel efficient than PS-90.

Il-76TD and Kawasaki C-X specifications

	Il-76TD	C-X
Takeoff weight, tons	150	141
Payload, tons	50	37.6
Range, thousand km	5.6	3.6-4
Cruise speed, km/h	850	890
Ceiling, km	14.5	12.2

Russia's largest air carrier, Volga-Dnieper, has started investing into the program to enlarge and upgrade its fleet. Under this program, ten Il-76TD units will be acquired by 2015. New C-X freighters may be purchased not instead of Russian liners but along with them.

It is hard to predict what will become of the contract of delivery of 38 Il-76 airplanes to China. C-X does not surpass the Russian Il units technically and the Japanese aircraft will most likely be priced higher than its Russian counterpart. Also, Il-76 has earned a reputation of a reliable freighter over time – something that C-X cannot boast of so far.

By Kirill Lebedev