



## Iran's Amphibious Aircraft from Russia

**OE Watch Commentary:** The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has announced that it has taken possession of four fixed-wing amphibious aircraft, which have been added to the Iranian base in the Persian Gulf province of Hormozgan. IRGC head Mohammad Ali Jafari told Iranian press assembled to witness the unveiling of the aircraft that “Adding the amphibious aircraft... [demonstrates] a constant state of improvement.” According to *Tasnim News*, a web portal affiliated with the IRGC, the amphibious planes will be stationed at the IRGC-Navy base in Bandar Abbas. IRGC-Navy chief Ali Fadavi said the planes are LA-8s. LA-8s are eight-seat amphibious aircraft designed by AeroVolga, a Russian company. They can be used in both fresh and salt water—although, in Iran’s case, they would likely be limited to the latter given the lack of any large body of fresh water near Bandar Abbas. They can operate with wave heights of approximately two feet which, while small, should not be a problem in the relatively placid waters of the Persian Gulf, although it may limit their utility in the Gulf of Oman on the other side of the Strait of Hormuz (alongside which Hormozgan stretches). On land, the LA-8 does not need a tarmac runway, making it be useful in the desert and scrubland which characterizes southwestern Iran. `

Iran’s apparent purchase of amphibious aircraft from Russia demonstrates growing military ties between the two countries. Iran’s claims that the aircraft are for purely peaceful purposes enables Tehran to bypass sanctions. Nevertheless, Iran’s possession of amphibious aircraft will have some military utility, both in terms of surveillance and with regard to the possibility of inserting and recovering IRGC units both on land and at sea. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

*“Today, there are four fixed wing amphibious aircraft that have augmented the IRGC Navy’s capabilities.”*

**Source:** “Alhaq-e Havapaymahaye Abnashin be Niruye Daryaye Sepah dar Bandar Abbas (The Addition of Amphibious Aircraft to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy in Bandar Abbas),” *Tasnim News*, 13 December 2017. <https://goo.gl/5BcsnH>

*Admiral Ali Fadavi, commander of the IRGC Navy, this afternoon while visiting the fixed wing, amphibious aircraft of the naval forces at Bandar Abbas, stated, “Today, there are four fixed wing amphibious aircraft that have augmented the IRGC Navy’s capabilities in Bandar Abbas.” He continued: “These aircraft, including the LA-8 series dual-engine aircraft, has a variety of capabilities and can be used for surveillance, support, rescue, and maritime transport.” The Commander of the IRGC Navy reiterated, “The ability to land on water, the ability to [enable] floating radar, and carry out all flight operations at various levels are among the benefits of this aircraft.”*



Iran's New Amphibious Aircraft.  
Source: Tasnim News, [goo.gl/7GZfuh](https://goo.gl/7GZfuh), CC BY-SA 4.0.