



## DOSAAF Reinstituting Pilot Training

**OE Watch Commentary:** The accompanying excerpted article from *Izvestiya* discusses how Russia is, for the first time since the Soviet era, making flight training available to students through the Voluntary Society for Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy (DOSAAF) program. In addition, this new program is envisioned to train other flight personnel (navigators, among others) and aviation technicians. Although a pilot training for children may seem like an inefficient use of state resources, it does have some advantages. As described in the article, in the Soviet Union, military and civil aviators were plucked from these programs, ensuring that cadets selected to attend military (flight) academies were already proficient pilots. According to *Izvestiya*, DOSAAF flight programs could become a precursor for some Russian Aerospace Forces academy students.

In terms of aircraft, Russia has opted for quantity over quality, by opting to build or refurbish more modestly priced aircraft rather than building just a few very expensive aircraft. This practice has likely led to the Russian Aerospace Forces being short some 1,300 flight personnel, as mentioned by *Izvestiya*. DOSAAF flight programs may help to fill these shortages, with not only pilots, but also other flight personnel and technicians. In addition, DOSAAF flight programs create a large strategic reserve of flight personnel and technicians that may be called to service in times of need. As can be seen in the accompanying excerpted article from *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, DOSAAF is an increasingly important component of Russia's military training system. In the spring draft, approximately 16,000 conscripts entered the service with a military occupational specialty obtained through DOSAAF. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)**

*“On completing DOSAAF courses, young people will help form a good reserve of pilots for the Armed Forces...”*

**Source:** Sergey Ptichkin, “Армия стала умней: Весенний призыв в Вооруженные силы завершен (Army Getting Smarter: Spring Armed Forces Draft Completed),” *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 16 July 2018. <https://rg.ru/2018/07/16/v-minoborony-rasskazali-o-rezultatah-prizyvnoj-kampanii.html>

*A total of 128,000 recruits have been drafted for military service... This was stated by Lieutenant General Yevgeniy Burdinskiy, chief of the Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate.*

*The statistical results of the draft as reported by the Defense Ministry are extremely interesting. For instance, 15 percent of the conscripts have a higher education. The number of science companies has been increased -- from 12 to 16 -- and the two science and production companies set up to operate at defense industry complex enterprises are fully manned for the first time. As of today more than 750 people are serving in science or science and production companies...*

*More than 23,000 citizens trained in military occupational specializations were sent to the formations and military units in the spring of 2018, including around 16,000 from DOSAAF programs... There were draft evaders too. The number of those summoned but failing to present at the military commissariats did not exceed 0.3 percent of the total number of draftees.*

**Source:** Roman Krechul, Bogdan Stepovoy, “Российские школьники впервые смогут пройти летную подготовку: Система обучения на базе ДОСААФ поможет сэкономить миллионы рублей и обеспечить воздушно-космические силы кадровым резервом (Russian Schoolchildren Will Be Able To Take Flight Training for the First Time: The Training System at DOSAAF Facilities Will Help Save Millions of Rubles and Provide the Aerospace Forces With a Cadre Reserve),” *Izvestiya*, 20 July 2018. <https://iz.ru/766245/roman-kretcul-bogdan-stepovoi-aleksei-ramm/rossiiskie-shkolniki-vpervye-smogut-proiti-letnuu-podgotovku>

*The DOSAAF Press Service told *Izvestiya* that the Voluntary Society leadership decided to establish multifunctional Military-Patriotic Indoctrination and Military Service Centers in all federal districts where young pilots will be trained. DOSAAF now is holding talks with the VKS about how and to what extent to train predraft personnel. The Defense Ministry informed *Izvestiya* that the question of basic flight training of predraft personnel now is being studied. There already have been several conferences for this purpose involving the department leadership.*

*The Voluntary Society recently summed up a pilot project for training young people to fly. In two years over 500 youths of boarding schools and cadet corps took basic flight training at DOSAAF airfields. This resulted in the majority of flying course graduates entering military and civilian aviation higher educational institutions. Now DOSAAF is preparing to accept ordinary schoolchildren for the courses as well...*

*Construction of one of the first aviation and sports centers named for Valentina Tereshkova is concluding in Yaroslavskaia Oblast. The site was not chosen by chance. Two runways and certain other structures that belonged to the Society in Soviet times have been preserved there since the 1930s...*

*Experts believe that present-day applicants who have taken the basic flight training course in the DOSAAF system should be given preference on entering flight schools. And in the future it will be possible to return to the old system and train officers for the VKS at Voluntary Society facilities, as was the case in Soviet years.*

*In recent years the VKS experienced a shortage of trained cadres because of the reduced number of cadets training in flight schools in the late 2000s. An increased demand also spurred the activation of new air units. The VKS will receive around 400 aircraft per year under the new State Armaments Program 2018-2025...The shortage of flight personnel in the VKS was estimated to be 1,300 persons in 2017. On completing DOSAAF courses, young people will help form a good reserve of pilots for the Armed Forces, believes Major General Vladimir Popov, former chief of the Federal Directorate of Aerospace Search and Rescue under the Defense Ministry...*

*According to the expert, it is of no small importance that this system will help the state save substantial money in training pilots. Cadets begin taking flight training in the second or third year in military academies, but only during such training does it become clear that a particular cadet is incapable of mastering the flight program for psychophysiological or emotional reasons. The money spent on their training cannot be gotten back. The DOSAAF program will help avoid such “add-ons.”*