

Aeroflot Could Take Over Sibir Airlines

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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National air carrier Aeroflot could soon take over one of three of its main competitors, Transaero, UtAir, or Sibir, a news report said Tuesday.

No specific decisions have been made yet, but according to a government source, Aeroflot's consolidation with Sibir is seen as the most likely, Vedomosti reported.

The source said that if the offers for a 25.5 percent stake in Sibir are too low, the package could be given to a state company, possibly Rostech or Aeroflot, which would then make preparations for the takeover.

The starting price is 1.1 billion rubles (\$35 million), according to Alpha Bank, which is organizing the sale, and the results of the tender will be announced on Thursday.

Two bids for Sibir shares have been registered so far, one by the S7 group and the other by its subsidiary Globus, both of which are controlled by Sibir's principal owners, Natalya and Vladislav Filyev, according to the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service.

However, a source close to the bidders said they had not received the documents for the tender, which could lead to its cancellation.

Sibir would be the best possible addition to Aeroflot, a government source said, because it would allow Aeroflot to add Sibir's routes to destinations in China, while turning the airline into a low-cost carrier by taking advantage of its fleet of A320 planes.

Meanwhile, Aeroflot has asked the Federal Accounting Chamber to consider amendments to the Air Code which would facilitate the creation of low-cost carriers, according to RBC daily.

The initiative was raised by Aeroflot's head Vitaly Savelyev during a meeting with President Vladimir Putin in October 2012.

The amendments would allow foreign pilots to be hired, authorize the sale of non-refundable tickets, thereby laying the groundwork for the creation of low-cost airlines in Russia.

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