29.09.2010 | AIRBRIDGECARGO DELIVERS 450-TONNE RUSSIAN PAVILION AS PRESIDENT DMITRY MEDVEDEV OFFICIALLY OPENS 'RUSSIA DAY' AT EXPO 2010 IN SHANGHAI

AirBridgeCargo Airlines (ABC), the scheduled cargo airline of Volga-Dnepr Group, has transported over 450 tonnes of exhibition equipment using six dedicated charter flights and scheduled services for the Russian Pavilion at Expo 2010 in Shanghai, which was honoured this week by a visit from Russia's President, Dmitry Medvedev.

President Medvedev officially opened Russia Day at the exhibition, which has participants from more than 190 countries and 50 international organizations, making it the largest Expo ever.

The Russia-China route was the first to be launched when ABC commenced operations in 2004. The introduction of regular scheduled Boeing 747 cargo services between the two countries has created new economic opportunities for both Chinese and Russian businesses and this has been boosted by the close political ties between the two countries.

Alexey Isaikin, President of Volga-Dnepr Group and a member of Mr Medvedev's official delegation in Shanghai, said: "We are proud to have supported this magnificent showcase for Russia at such a significant global event. Volga-Dnepr Group, as Russia's largest international cargo airline, has enjoyed many years of strategic partnership with the authorities and customers in China and we will continue to grow our aircraft fleet and network to ensure we can always meet the strong growth of both China and Russia in the global market.

"China is strategically important to Volga-Dnepr Group and the Russian economy as a whole because it offers major potential to help grow Russia's domestic market. We are experiencing month-on-month growth in our business levels to and from China and this will be further strengthened by the important economic relationship that has been established between our two great countries."

China is AirBridgeCargo's biggest and fastest-growing market and accounts for over 60% of the airline's annual cargo volumes. In the opening eight months of 2010, ABC's fleet of modern Boeing 747-400 freighters carried over 10,000 tonnes of cargo to and from China, an increase of 166% over the same period in 2009.
ABC's traffic from Russia to China has grown 74% while cargo volumes from China to Russia are up 26%. For airfreight moving from China to Europe, ABC has reported an increase of 7-8%.

ABC has consistently increased its services linking Europe, Russia and China since the airline commenced operations in 2004. Today, it offers customers a choice of daily services to Shanghai,

Beijing and Hong Kong and, earlier this month, launched all-cargo flights from its fourth destination in China, Zhengzhou.

The new twice-weekly flights from the capital of Henan province depart from Zhengzhou International Airport to ABC's hub in Moscow and then continue onto Frankfurt, Germany, connecting central China with Europe and Russia. AirBridgeCargo aims to increase frequencies to four B747F flights per week by the end of the year.

ABC carried exhibition stand components, lighting and technical equipment to Shanghai for the event. The Russian Pavilion, themed 'New Russia: City and Citizen' has a castle-like design and includes 12 white, red and gold towers and a 15-metre high central building called the 'Civilization Cube' that links the towers.

Since Expo 2010 began in May, the Russian Pavilion has attracted over five million visitors. The exhibition, themed 'Better City – Better Life' to reflect Shanghai's new status in the 21st century, will have welcomed between 70-80 million visitors by the time it ends on October 31st. On September 23rd, Expo 2010 set a new record for the number of daily visitors with over 631,100 people entering the exhibition.

