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New Building Assembly Continues at Vostok Station in the Austral Summer of 2022/2023

English version provided by the author

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The assembly of the new station building at Vostok in the austral summer of 2022/2023 continued with the arrival of 166 construction workers and vehicle drivers to the new airfield in the Progress station area. They arrived from Cape Town by two flights of the Il-76TD-90VD aircraft on November 7 and November 12, 2022. Starting from November 11, 2022, the transportation of fuel and construction materials along the Progress-Vostok route began (1480 km long). Ninety drivers and forty-five vehicles (forty *Pisten Bully Polar 300* and five *Challenger MT865*) participated in the traverses. Altogether, seventeen traverses were fully completed (12 traverses with construction materials and 5 traverses for fuel transportation). In total, 2 486 tons of cargo were delivered to Vostok station to ensure the construction continued. The last traverse left Vostok station on February 14, 2023, when night temperatures were already reaching -50C. It returned to Progress station on February 21.

Construction works at Vostok station continued with the arrival of the first tractor train traverse on November 29, 2022, which transported cargo and construction workers. Seventy-four people were involved in the work. On February 13, all works were completed. Three out of five modules were installed according to the design: Module C (living accommodations for the wintering team, mess-room facilities and food storage rooms), Module D (main diesel generators, a boiler room and other technical equipment to operate all engineering systems), Module E (a garage, workshops and other technical facilities). The installation of external wall insulation for those three modules was also completed. Waste generated during the construction works was collected, packaged and transported to Progress station; additionally, safety measures were taken to ensure the building structures, necessary equipment and machinery survived the Antarctic winter in order to continue construction works next austral summer.

Twenty-two construction workers remained at Vostok station for the winter. They will be engaged in adjustment operations of all main engineering networks for Module C, Module D and Module E until November 2023. Other construction workers and vehicle drivers returned to Cape Town by two flights of the Il-76TD-90VD aircraft on February 27 and March 1, 2023

In the austral summer of 2023/2024 units of Module A (storage rooms and an emergency diesel generator) and Module B (living accommodations for the summer team, a medical unit and laboratories) will be delivered to Vostok by several tractor train traverses and will be assembled by the end of summer. During the austral winter (February - November 2024), all the main engineering networks of Modules A and B will be adjusted. The station should be ready for its first wintering in February 2025.