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NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION CENTER

basic imagery interpretation report

Ramenskoye Flight Test Center (S)

STRATEGIC WEAPONS INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES

[redacted]

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Z-14620/82
RCA-09/0026/82
NOVEMBER 1982
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Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2010/02/02 : CIA-RDP83T00574R000102880001-7

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INSTALLATION OR ACTIVITY NAME					COUNTRY
Ramenskoye Flight Test Center					UR
UTM COORDINATES	GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES	CATEGORY	BE NO.	COMIREX NO.	NIETB NO.
NA	55-34-19N 038-09-23E				

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MAP REFERENCE

DMAAC. USATC, Series 200, Sheet 0167-5, scale 1:200,000

LATEST IMAGERY USED	NEGATION DATE (If required)
	NA

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ABSTRACT

1. (S/WN) This report updates NPIC report Z-20035/81 on Ramenskoye Flight Test Center (FTC), USSR, and discusses construction and aircraft activity observed from the information cutoff date for the previous report, through

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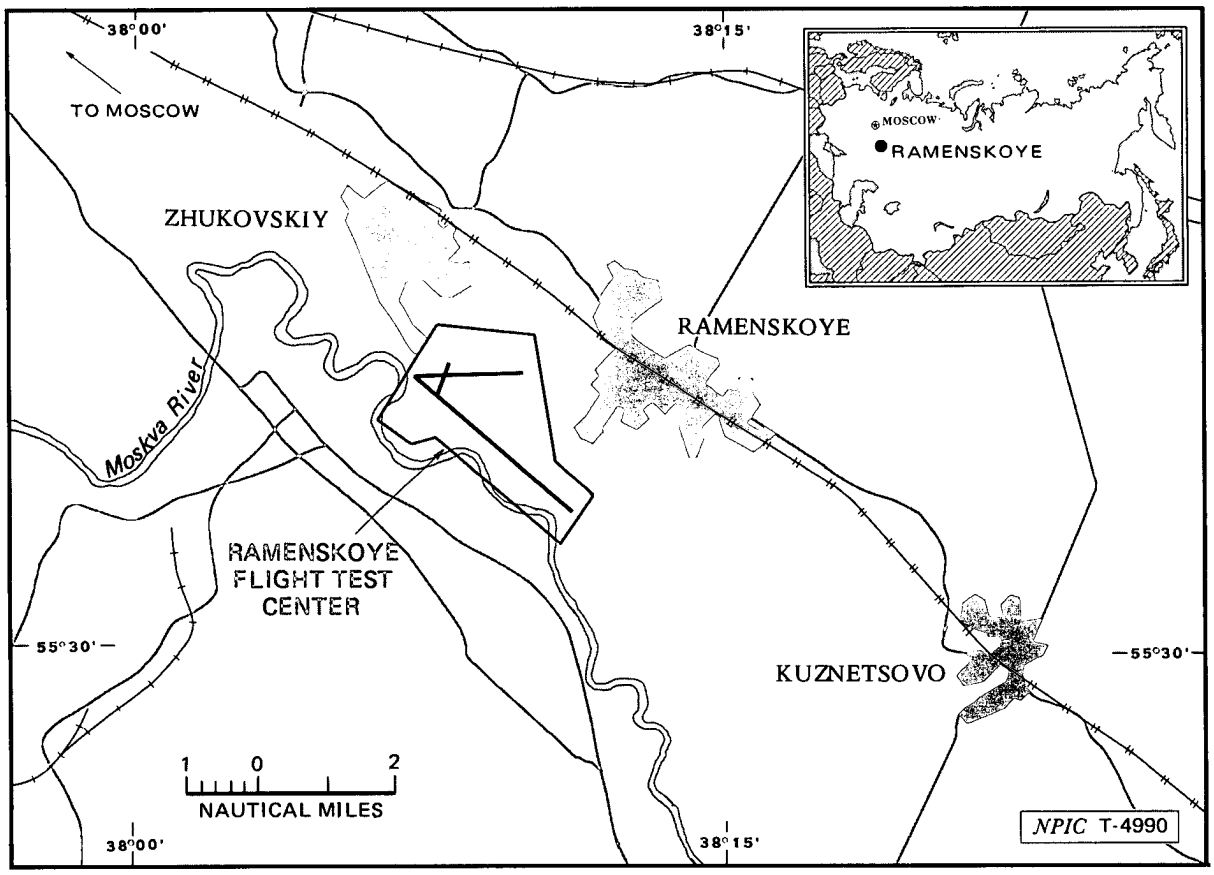

FIGURE 1. LOCATION OF RAMENSKOYE FLIGHT TEST CENTER, USSR

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2. (S/WN) Significant developments in new and modified aircraft systems are discussed, including related activity observed at other facilities.

3. (S/WN) This report includes 30 annotated photographs, including an overview of the FTC with functional areas delineated; a location map; and a table of mensural data.

BASIC DESCRIPTION

4. (S/WN) Ramenskoye FTC is approximately 20 nautical miles southeast of Moscow (Figure 1). An overview of the FTC with the functional areas delineated (Figure 2) is keyed to Table 1—an outline of construction observed during this reporting period.

Construction Activity

5. (S/WN) Three small structures were built in the new Ilyushin area (Figure 2). A small quonset-type aircraft shelter (item 1, Figure 2 and Table 1) had been completed by

Table 1.
Mensural Data for new Construction, Ramenskoye Flight Test Center, USSR (Items keyed to Figure 2)
This table in its entirety is classified SECRET/WNINTEL

Item	Structure	Dimensions* (m) L	W	H	Floorspace (sq m)	Date Complete	Remarks
1	Aircraft shelter				522	Apr 82	
2	Admin/engr bldg				1,635	Apr 82	3 stories
3	Spt bldg				99	Feb 81	
4	Spt bldg				502	Oct 81	
5	Hangar				5,593	Aug 81	New Tupolev hangar in east parking area
6	Spt bldg				744		Ucon
7	Stor bldg				455	Jul 81	
8	Admin/engr bldg				8,688		4 stories; ucon
9	Admin/engr bldg				1,014		2 stories; ucon
10	Prob shop				3,791	Jun 82	Multistory with 5-story admin/engr sect
11	Prob spt bldg				86		Footings measured; ucon
12	Prob spt bldg				231		Footings measured; ucon
13	Aircraft shelter				645	Mar 81	
14	Prob spt bldg				374		Ucon
15	Spt bldg				202		1 story; ucon
16	Prob admin/engr bldg				519		Foundation only
17	Hangar admin/engr addition				2,166		6 stories; ucon
18	Admin/engr bldg				12,719		5- and 10-story wings; ucon
—	Unid bldg				361		Construction stopped

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*Horizontal measurements are accurate to within [redacted] of measured distance), and vertical measurements are accurate to within [redacted] of measured distance), both at a 95% confidence level.

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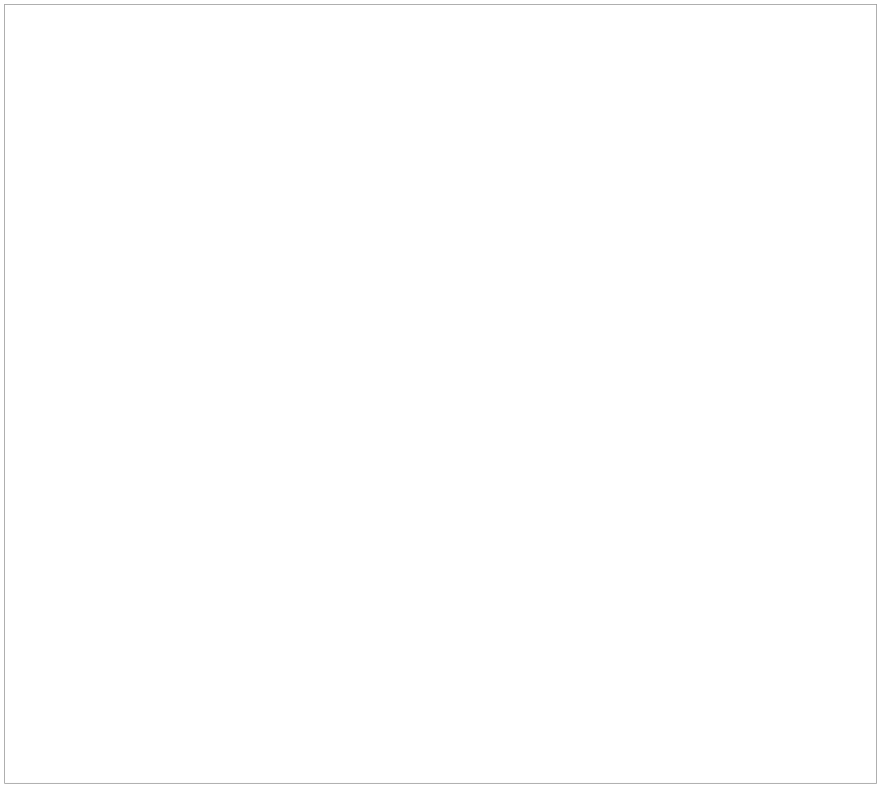

a small administration/engineering building (item 2) had been completed by and a small support building (item 3) had been completed by

6. (S/WN) A quonset-type support building (item 4) had been completed by in the Tupolev area. A hangar (item 5), completed by in the east parking area, is discussed in greater detail in paragraph 18. No further progress has been made on the unidentified building started during the previous reporting period. This construction appears to be for a building with at least one story underground or possibly for a personnel shelter.

7. (S/WN) Construction of a support building (item 6) in the Tupolev area, begun during the previous reporting period, continued. In the support area, a quonset-type storage building (item 7) had been completed by and construction continued on a four-story administration/engineering building (item 8) and a two-story administration/engineering building (item 9).

8. (S/WN) A probable shop with a five-story administration/engineering section (item 10) has been completed in the Yakovlev area. Two probable support buildings (items 11 and 12) are under construction in the support area.

9. (S/WN) A quonset-type aircraft shelter (item 13) in the crossover parking area had been completed by

10. (S/WN) A probable support building (item 14) in the MIL area will probably be completed by late 1982. In the flight research institute (LII; formerly Myasishchev) area, construction included a small support building (item 15); the foundation for a probable administration/engineering building (item 16); a six-story administration/engineering addition to the largest hangar in the LII area (item 17); and a multistory, multiwing administration/engineering building (item 18). When complete, these buildings will significantly increase the floorspace in the LII area.

11. (S/WN) New, unidentified construction (area Q, Figure 2) is underway beyond the south-southeastern end of the FTC. This construction may represent a substantial addition to the FTC.

12. (S/WN) In the spring of 1981 in subarea Q1, grading, backfilling, and the construction of three rectangular structures began. Grading for a probable taxiway to connect the structures to the runway was also observed. This construction has proceeded slowly. Additional activity was observed in March 1982, when trenches, possibly for footings, were observed.

13. (S/WN) Subarea Q2 was previously reported to be an FTC-related area.[1] During the previous reporting period, mounds that had been under construction near the southern corner of subarea Q2 were paved with concrete. The mounds resemble electronics mounds, although no electronics equipment has been observed.

14. (S/WN) The first observation of the BLACKJACK A, the new Soviet strategic bomber, on (Figure 3) was the most significant observation at the FTC during this period. The BLACKJACK A, originally designated the RAM-P, is a variable-geometry-wing aircraft similar to the Rockwell B-1B strategic bomber. Although approximately one-third larger than the B-1B, the BLACKJACK A has a similar wing-fuselage blend, empennage configuration, and engine placement (Figures 4 and 5).

15. (S/WN) The overall length of the BLACKJACK A is and the unswept wingspan is The BLACKJACK A has not been observed with the wings in the swept position, but calculations indicate that the swept wingspan is approximately ters. The vertical stabilizer is approximately meters high. The strakes, inboard of the engines on each side of the fuselage, are approximately long.

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17. (S/WN) The maximum takeoff weight of the BLACKJACK A cannot be determined without refined mensuration. The Rockwell B-1B, which is smaller than the BLACKJACK A, has a maximum takeoff weight of 477,000 pounds.[2]

18. (S/WN) Statements made by Soviet leaders in recent years indicated that a strategic bomber developmental program was underway, and, therefore, this aircraft was not unexpected. In June 1980, an area in the east parking area across from the Tupolev area was graded, and construction of a uniquely shaped hangar (item 5, Figure 2 and Table 1) began. By late summer 1981, the Tupolev hangar was externally complete (Figure 6). Based on size and configuration, the hangar was thought to be related to a new aircraft program, either bomber or transport. This hypothesis was supported by the introduction of the BLACKJACK

19. (S/WN) Snow melt from engine run-up and numerous observations of vehicles around the aircraft suggest that the BLACKJACK A was undergoing flight testing. Another significant activity related to the BLACKJACK A occurred in March 1982 at Akhtubinsk FTC , where footings for a hangar, which will be similar in size to the one housing the BLACKJACK A at Ramenskoye, were observed. Akhtubinsk is the main weapons testing/integration facility for aircraft in the USSR. The BLACKJACK A will probably be flight tested for at least 2 years at Ramenskoye before going to Akhtubinsk for weapons systems tests.

20. (S/WN) The BLACKJACK A will probably be produced at Kazan Airframe Plant Gorbunov 22 , where the BACKFIRE B and C are currently in production. A large assembly hall under construction at Kazan could be completed by the summer of 1983.

BACKFIRE Bomber Fuselage Section

21. (S/WN) The center fuselage section of a BACKFIRE bomber was identified on (Figure 8). It had been identified as an aerodynamic object and designated the RAM-N when first observed on a barge at the pier on the southern side of the airfield on (Figure 9). The BACKFIRE fuselage section was not seen at the FTC after 25X1

RAM-M Aircraft

22. (S/WN) An aircraft section on a barge at the pier on has been designated the RAM-M (Figure 10). The final aircraft configuration could not be determined until by which time the nose and wings had been attached to the aircraft. The RAM-M has a high-aspect-ratio wing with a 40-meter span (Figure 11).[3]

23. (S/WN) The RAM-M wings were first seen without a canvas covering on and civilian markings were evident (Figure 11). The aircraft was again observed on two small, white, unidentified objects were on the apron in front of the aircraft (Figure 12). The objects, long with apparent fins on one end, could be underwing fuel tanks.

24. (S/WN) Frequent observations of vehicles and equipment near the RAM-M indicated that an active test program was underway. Two functions for this aircraft are possible. First, because of the civilian markings, the RAM-M may be an earth-resources exploitation platform. The Soviets have no modern aircraft, such as NASA's U-2, to perform this task. Second, it may be a high-altitude battlefield reconnaissance platform such as the US Air Force's TR-1. The determination of these possible functions was based primarily on the long, high-aspect-ratio wing. A narrow fuselage and wings of this type have typically been associated with high-altitude aircraft.

25. (S/WN) Portions of a fuselage, similar in configuration to the RAM-M, were on the main apron in the LII area from to A portion of another probable RAM-M fuselage has been in the engine test area near this apron since

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FULCRUM A Fighter Aircraft

26. (S/WN) Activity associated with the FULCRUM A (formerly known as the RAM-L) continued at the FTC during this period (Figure 13). A FULCRUM A tail section was frequently seen protruding from the quonset-type hangar.

27. (S/WN) Although aerodynamic flight testing of the FULCRUM A will probably continue at Ramenskoye, most flight testing will probably be conducted at Akhtubinsk FTC, where weapons test and integration exercises have been in progress.

RAM-K Fighter Aircraft

28. (S/WN) The RAM-K flight test program continued at Ramenskoye. The RAM-K was usually parked outside the LII area on a designated spot on the crossover taxiway. However, on [redacted] a RAM-K was involved in pre- or postflight activity in the crossover parking area (Figure 14).

29. (S/WN) Although RAM-K flight test activity continued at the FTC during this period, the observation of a highly modified RAM-K at Komsomolsk Airframe Plant Ordzhonikidze 126 [redacted], a production facility, on [redacted] was of greater significance (Figure 15).

30. (S/WN) The modifications consisted of repositioned vertical stabilizers, the addition of possible wingtip pylons, and an extension to the tail section. The vertical stabilizers appear to have been placed on the edges of the fuselage rather than in their usual position, centered over the engine bays, and were not canted outward, as on previous models. The presence of possible wingtip pylons would not be unusual for this type of aircraft. The pointed tail extension was in the area where the parabrake housing is usually located. A similar modification on US aircraft houses a spin chute for spin testing.

31. (S/WN) Highly modified aircraft are usually seen at an FTC rather than at a production facility. Although one or more of these modified aircraft may have been at the FTC, the RAM-Ks observed there have all had vertical stabilizers in the usual location.

32. (S/WN) One RAM-K fuselage, which may have a tail extension, was in the Sukhoy area on [redacted] but a canvas covering precluded confirmation. This fuselage was still present on [redacted] but very little activity was associated with it. 25X1 25X1

FROGFOOT A Ground Attack Aircraft

33. (S/WN) Moderate activity was associated with the FROGFOOT A, formerly known as the RAM-J, during this period. FROGFOOT A aircraft were seen in the aircraft shelter (item 13, Figure 2) in the crossover parking area and in the Sukhoy area. Wing tanks were usually attached to the aircraft, and, on several occasions, unidentified stores were also attached. 25X1

RAM-H and RAM-E Aircraft

34. (S/WN) The RAM-H has been at the FTC since the early 1970s. During the reporting period, it was removed from its usual parking location in the LII area and placed in the Sukhoy area. By [redacted] portions of the RAM-H, including the vertical stabilizer and wing sections, had been removed from the aircraft and were on the ground next to the fuselage (Figure 16). 25X1 25X1

35. (S/WN) Between [redacted] the RAM-H fuselage, wings, and vertical stabilizer were removed from the Sukhoy area. The RAM-H has been inactive for a long period, and the program has probably been terminated. On [redacted] the RAM-H was assembled and on static display in the aircraft museum at Moscow/Monino Airfield ([redacted] 25X1 25X1 25X1

36. (S/WN) The RAM-E was also at the Moscow/Monino museum on [redacted] this program probably has also been terminated. 25X1

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Unidentified Aircraft

37. (S/WN) Three unidentified, probable fighter aircraft were seen at the FTC during this reporting period. One aircraft, seen on [redacted] was just outside the LII area, on the crossover taxiway (Figure 17). The aircraft, which somewhat resembled an L-39 trainer, may have delta wings. The overall length was approximately [redacted] and the fuselage length was approximately [redacted] An accurate wing span could not be determined. The aircraft could be a trainer because of its size and long forward fuselage section.

38. (S/WN) Another aircraft (not shown because of extremely poor interpretability of imagery), seen on [redacted] was just outside the Sukhoy/Mikoyan areas. The overall fuselage length was approximately [redacted] meters, and the wing span was approximately [redacted] The length is comparable to that of the FULCRUM A; however, the aircraft appeared to have only a single vertical stabilizer. The wings appeared to be swept; however, the presence of a crane that appeared to be emplacing or removing a canvas covering precluded an accurate analysis of wing shape.

39. (S/WN) The third unidentified aircraft was seen on [redacted] in the crossover parking area (Figure 18). The wing span of the aircraft was approximately [redacted] which is comparable to that of the Mikoyan-designed FLOGGER, but wing tips, wing sweep, and overall appearance indicate that it is not a FLOGGER. The crossover parking area is primarily for Sukhoy-designed aircraft. Little else could be determined regarding this aircraft because of the poor interpretability of the imagery.

[redacted] Airframe

40. (S/WN) The [redacted] airframe was seen on [redacted] on a BACKFIRE B in the Tupolev area (Figure 19). No particular activity could be associated with the airframe, and no new details of its configuration could be determined.

BACKFIRE Bomber

41. (S/WN) The usual level of BACKFIRE activity continued throughout this period. By [redacted] the BACKFIRE B in the test and derelict area had been removed. By [redacted] a BACKFIRE B had been returned to the test and derelict area; it had a finlike object on the top of the fuselage just behind the cockpit area (Figure 20). The function of this object is not known, and it had apparently been removed by mid-March 1982. A BACKFIRE C had been returned to the FTC by [redacted] after having been absent since December 1980. This aircraft has probably been undergoing intensive flight testing since vehicles and fuel trucks have usually been nearby. Two or three BACKFIRE Bs and one BACKFIRE C have usually been seen in the Tupolev/east parking areas.

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BEAR F Variant Aircraft

42. (S/WN) The BEAR aircraft usually seen at the FTC were a BEAR A Mod, BEAR B, BEAR B Mod, BEAR C Mod, BEAR F, and BEAR F variants (mainly numbers 6 and 8). The BEAR A Mod has not been seen since December 1981. A new BEAR F variant (number 10) was identified at the FTC during this period. Variant 10 has several unique features. Although it has the high-lift wing common to most BEAR F variants, it does not incorporate a forward fuselage extension, no pods are on the vertical or horizontal stabilizers, and no pods or blisters are on the fuselage (Figure 21). This aircraft has a solid nose with a small, chin-mounted radome; all previously identified BEAR F variants have a greenhouse nose.

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43. (S/WN) Analysis of imagery of BEAR F Variant 10 when at Akhtubinsk FTC suggests that this aircraft may be capable of carrying air-to-surface missiles (ASMs). Only BEAR B and C aircraft have been equipped to carry ASMs; both of these aircraft have large radomes. The presence of a radome on Variant 10 may indicate an ASM capability. Further, Variant 10 has not been seen at Kirovskoye

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Airfield [redacted] the primary Soviet naval aviation test and development center, where antisubmarine warfare testing is conducted. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the aircraft is not associated with antisubmarine warfare.

Modified CANDID Aircraft

44. (S/WN) Several developments involving CANDID aircraft occurred at the FTC during this period. Two CANDIDs (bort numbers [redacted] had previously been modified with a [redacted]-long tail extension. These aircraft, when at the FTC, have almost always been parked in the transient parking area. In the spring of 1981, however, CANDID [redacted] was returned to Tashkent Airframe Plant B Chkalov 84 ([redacted] where the tail extension was removed. This aircraft was subsequently returned to the FTC.

45. (S/WN) In mid-February 1982, CANDID [redacted] again had a tail extension (Figure 22), but the tail extension on CANDID [redacted] had been removed. The reason for this is not known, but it is possible that equipment on CANDID [redacted] had malfunctioned and that the tail extension was reattached to [redacted] in order to continue the test program. CANDID [redacted] was observed in the transient parking and old Ilyushin parking areas.

46. (S/WN) A CANDID with a tail extension has been at Arkhangelsk/Kholm Airfield

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when missile tests were being conducted at Nenoksa Naval Missile Test Center . One CANDID has also been at Akhtubinsk FTC when missile tests were being conducted at Kapustin Yar Cruise Test Complex D Site 1 . Both aircraft have probably been involved with the flight test phase of a cruise missile test.

47. (S/WN) CANDID had been modified with a new engine by (Figure 22). This engine, within a diameter nacelle, is over 6 meters long and is probably a prototype of a large, fuel-efficient, high-bypass-ratio turbofan engine. It is probably designed to power a very large transport aircraft.[4] It is not unusual to mount a new engine on an operational aircraft in order to obtain test data not available through static bench testing.

CLOBBER A Transport Aircraft

48. (S/WN) On a CLOBBER A with a conical tail extension just above the rear exhaust nozzle was in the old Ilyushin area. This modification was not seen again until the spring of 1982, when an aircraft with this modification was in the Yakovlev area (Figure 23). The purpose of this modification is not known.

CUB Transport Aircraft

49. (S/WN) A CUB modified with a finlike structure on the top of the fuselage, just aft of the wing, was first observed in the Antonov area on (Figure 24).

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50. (S/WN) A CUB modified with a pedestal-mounted dome on the top of the fuselage and a tail extension was in the old Ilyushin area between [redacted] and in the transient parking area from [redacted] the aircraft was probably being backed into its temporary parking position in the old Ilyushin area. This aircraft has usually been parked in the Antonov area; little activity has been associated with it.

Modified COOT Transport Aircraft

51. (S/WN) On [redacted] a COOT modified with a high, T-shaped tail was in the new Ilyushin area. It was moved to the test and derelict area in mid-December 1981 (Figure 25). The purpose of the T-shaped tail modification is not known, although, in conjunction with other modifications, it suggests a short-takeoff-and-landing configuration.

Helicopter Lifting Exercise

52. (S/WN) On [redacted] a helicopter lifting exercise was underway on the crossover taxiway in front of the LII area. One HIP C helicopter was on each side of an aircraft fuselage section on a dolly (Figure 26). The two HIP Cs, with rotors turning, were connected by cable to the dolly and were probably preparing to lift the dolly and the fuselage. 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

53. (S/WN) A similar lifting exercise occurred in July 1981. The exercise was apparently training in lifting heavy objects using two helicopters. While the technique is potentially dangerous, such expertise would permit the use of medium-lift helicopters when heavy-lift helicopters are not available. 25X1

Aerospace Components

54. (S/WN) One of the more significant programs underway at the FTC involves aero- 25X1

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space components. Although this activity was observed during the previous reporting period, little was known of the program at that time.

55. (S/WN) The history of the aerospace components is complicated. It involves activity at two facilities besides Ramenskoye—Kuybyshev Aerospace Production Plant 1 and Tyuratam Airfield 3

56. (S/WN) The exact function of these aerospace components is not known; however, they are probably components of a space launch vehicle.

57. (S/WN) A large structure was first seen at the FTC in November 1980. By the spring of 1981, the structure, which served as environmental protection for a meter, bullet-shaped object (Figure 27) very similar in appearance to the external fuel tank of the US space shuttle, had been removed. By a 26-meter component was seen fully assembled (Figure 27). The 26-meter component was delivered by barge from Kuy-

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byshev to the FTC in November 1981. The [redacted] meter component was delivered the same way the previous year. A more detailed analysis of the [redacted] component and related activities at Ramenskoye, Kuybyshev, and Tyuratam may be found in a previous NPIC report.[5]

58. (S/WN) The aerospace components are so large that air is the only efficient means of transportation. Two BISON B aircraft (bort [redacted] were modified to carry the components (Figure 28). The empennage of each BISON B is highly modified; vertical stabilizers were mounted outward on the horizontal stabilizers to allow for undisturbed airflow when flying with a mounted component. The modified BISON Bs are loaded by moving under a gantry crane holding the component (Figure 27). The component is then lowered onto the fuselage of the aircraft. The pointed end of the component is mounted facing aft to reduce vortex

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disturbance at the rear of the aircraft. The components, gantry crane, and modified BISON Bs at Ramenskoye are probably only for flight testing and for development of flight parameters for flying the BISON B with a large object attached. The 26-[redacted] components will probably be removed from the FTC after these parameters have been determined.

59. (S/WN) The aerospace components are manufactured at Kuybyshev Aerospace Production Plant 1, where a gantry crane, identical to the one at Ramenskoye, has been constructed, and the runway is being extended. In addition, a new runway is being built at Tyuratam Airfield 3, where another identical gantry crane has been built. The components will be mounted on the BISON Bs at Kuybyshev and flown to Tyuratam, where they will be removed and taken by transporter (Figure 27) to their designated assembly areas.

60. (S/WN) On [redacted] BISON [redacted] was seen with a V-shaped support bracket mounted just in front of the empennage (Figure 29). It is not known what this bracket was designed to hold. Subsequent coverage showed the 26-meter component on [redacted] however, the bracket may also have been designed to carry some other, as yet unseen, component. The support bracket had been removed when the BISON was again observed in May and June 1982. 25X1 25X1 25X1

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Unidentified Object

61. (S/WN) On [redacted] an unidentified object was on the apron in the LII area. This object has been seen at various locations on the apron and strongly resembles the upper forward fuselage section of an aircraft, primarily the flight deck area. While the object is probably only a mock-up or a fuselage skin, two depressions give the appearance of being window shaped (Figure 30). 25X1

62. (S/WN) It is possible that, because of the other space-related activity in the LII area, this object is also space related. It is not comparable in size or configuration to any known Soviet aircraft.

Telemetry Collection and Processing Center

63. (S/WN) The Telemetry Collection and Processing Center is on the northern side of the Yakovlev area (Figure 2). Although the Center has been present for some time, it has not been discussed in any previous NPIC report.

64. (S/WN) The Center consists mainly of two buildings and telemetry collection equipment (Figure 31). A large, probable telemetry processing building consists of a four-story, L-shaped wing and a two-story, rectangular wing. The telemetry collection equipment is usually on the access road in front of the probable processing building and usually faces the two runways. The equipment usually comprises four or five SHIP WHEEL radar sets. A small, rectangular building with a roof-mounted, movable dome is near the parking area. This dome probably houses a theodolite. A square building of unusual design is next to this building. Three large, circular patterns are on three sides of this building. It is not known if this building is part of the processing center.

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REFERENCES

IMAGERY

(S/WN) All available satellite imagery acquired from [redacted] was used in the preparation of this report. 25X1

MAPS OR CHARTS

DMAAC. US Air Target Chart, Series 200, Sheet 0167-5, scale 1:200,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

DOCUMENTS

1. NPIC. Z-20035/81, RCA-09/0005/81, *Ramenskoye Flight Test Center (S)*, May 81 (SECRET/[redacted] 25X1
   [redacted] 25X1
2. *Jane's All The World's Aircraft, 1981-82*, p 454 (UNCLASSIFIED)
3. FTD. Drawing 82E1015, *RAM-M (S/WN)*, 12 Mar 82 (SECRET/[redacted] 25X1
4. NPIC. Z-14571/82, IAR-0058/82, *Large Transport Aircraft Development Program in the Soviet Union (S)*, May 82 (SECRET/[redacted] 25X1
5. NPIC. Z-20180/81, IAR-0223/81, *Activity Related to a Soviet Aerospace Component (S)*, Nov 81 (SECRET/[redacted] 25X1

*Extracted information is classified SECRET/[redacted] 25X1

REQUIREMENT

COMIREX J02
Project 542058J

(S) Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted] 25X1
Warsaw Pact Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted] 25X1

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