CHINESE AIR FORCE PUTS NEW TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT INTO SERVICE

News / Manufacturer

China's air force on Wednesday put into service a new, domestically-developed large transport aircraft, as part of the government's ambitious modernisation programme.

The Y-20 has a maximum takeoff weight of 200 tonnes and is ideal for carrying cargo and people over long distances in difficult weather conditions, the air force said in a short statement on its official microblog.

"The Y-20 entering service marks a crucial step for the air force in improving its strategic power projection capability," air force spokesman Shen Jinke said in the statement.

The air force needs more and better transport aircraft to help fulfil its military responsibilities, including safeguarding national security as well as rescue and relief work, Shen added.

China's development of the Y-20 is an important, breakthrough step in the country's aircraft development programme, the air force said.

The aircraft took its maiden flight in January 2013, Xinhua news agency added.

China has been ramping up research into advanced new military equipment, including submarines, aircraft carriers and anti-satellite missiles, which has rattled nerves regionally and in

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Washington as China takes a more muscular approach to territorial disputes in places like the South China Sea.

The air force is also developing stealth fighters.

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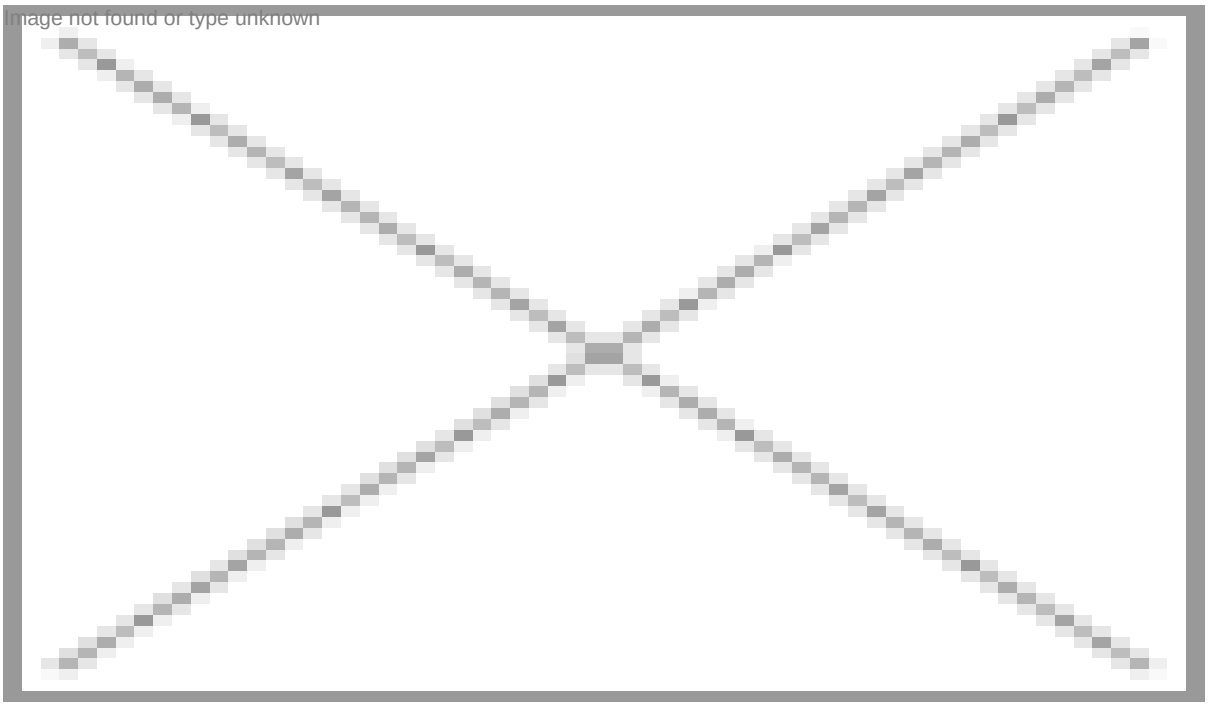

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