

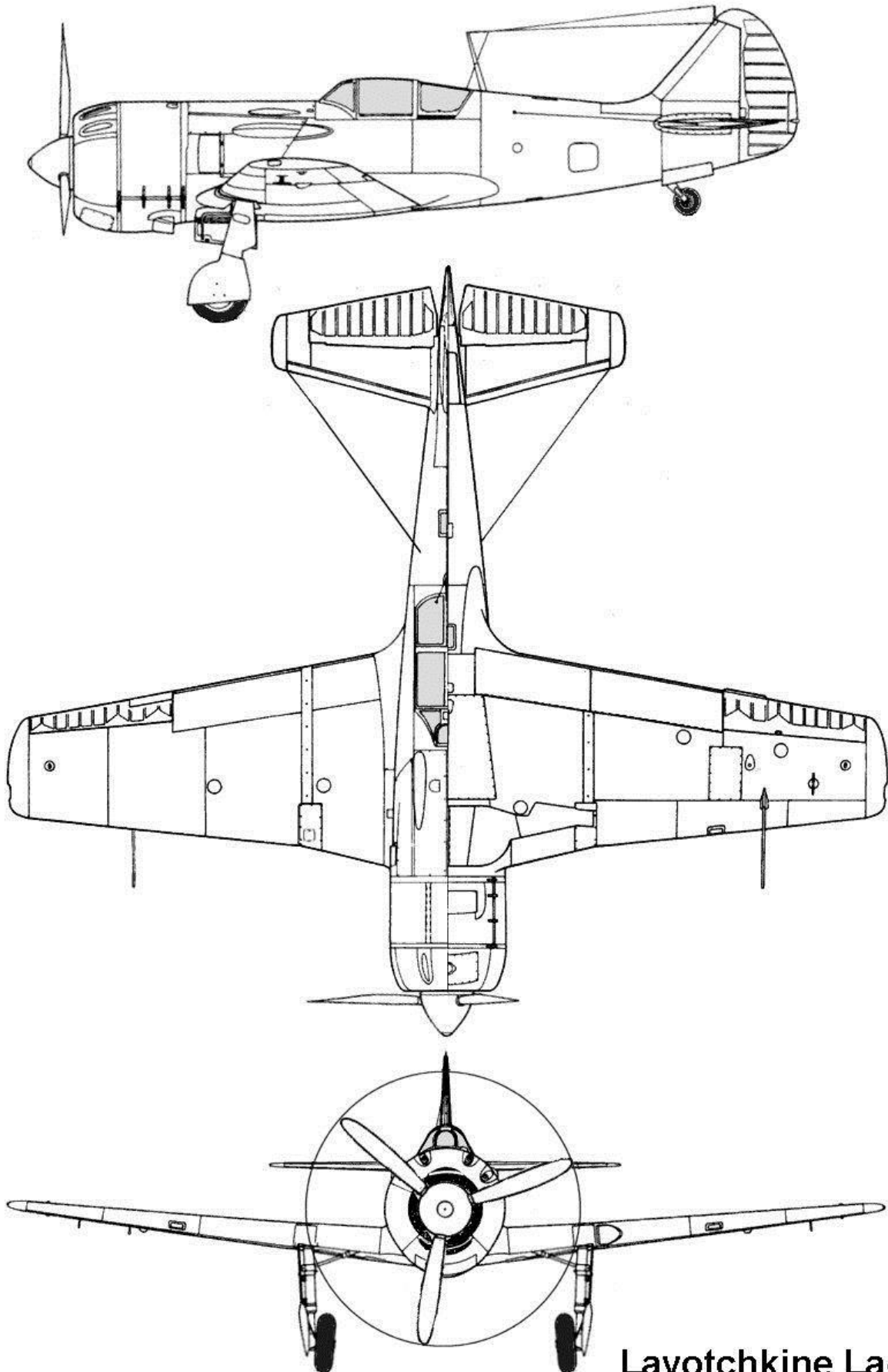
## Lavotchkine La-11 (OTAN : Fang)



[Lavotchkine La-11 Fang sur piédestal](#)

Lors des tests du prototype du La-9, le gouvernement soviétique recommanda d'en étudier une variante à long rayon d'action, destinée à escorter les Tu-4. Le prototype qui en résultait, le La-134 ou La-9M, voyait son armement réduit à 3 canons, mais sa capacité interne en carburant et huile augmenter. Il effectua son vol inaugural en mai 1947. Il fut suivi d'un second prototype, le La-134D, dont la capacité en carburant passait de 825 à 1100 litres, grâce à des réservoirs situés dans les ailes et des bidons largables. Son train d'atterrissage fut renforcé, ses pneus étaient plus larges et à haute pression, et le cockpit un peu plus confortable. Un système de radio-navigation fut également installé. A pleine charge de carburant, les capacités de combat étaient très amoindries, surtout au-dessus de 7000 m. Mais il redevenait comparable au La-9 lorsque le carburant baissait. 1182 exemplaires furent construits entre 1947 et 1951 à Gorky. Il fut le dernier chasseur soviétique à piston, et l'URSS le retira du service au début des années 1950. L'OTAN le surnomma *Fang* (croc). Il fut vendu à la Chine, à la Corée du Nord et à l'Indonésie (par les Chinois, dans le dernier cas). Le 7 mai 1948, 3 La-11 atterrirent sur une base au Pôle Nord pour s'y entraîner. Cette base était le meilleur moyen pour des bombardiers Tu-4 d'atteindre les villes états-uniennes. Des chasseurs de la 1ere division de chasse et du 53e régiment de chasse participèrent à de telles expéditions. La première victime du La-11 fut un PB4Y Privateer, descendu le 8 avril 1950 au-dessus de la Baltique. Il fut abattu par un La-11 du 30e régiment de la Garde. Un P2V fut abattu plus tard dans l'année. A l'été 1950, 60 La-11 du 351e régiment de chasse de nuit furent déployés en Chine et combattirent lors de la guerre civile. Le 2 avril 1951, Guzhov et son ailier descendirent 2 P-51 du *Kuomintang*. Ce régiment fut déployé en Corée du Nord le 13 juin 1951. Le La-11 fut également engagé lors de la guerre de Corée, s'opposant aux A-26 Invader et aux P-51.

En revanche, les tentatives d'intercepter des B-29 tournèrent court. Il fallait 26 minutes à un La-11 pour monter à l'altitude de croisière des B-29, et il n'avait un surcroît de vitesse de seulement 20 km/h. Il suffisait au bombardier de plonger pour échapper au La-11. Quelques exemplaires restent exposés en Chine et en Indonésie.



**Lavotchkine La-11**

The **Lavochkin La-11** ([NATO reporting name Fang](#)) was an early post-[World War II Soviet](#) long-range piston-engined [fighter aircraft](#). The design was essentially that of a [Lavochkin La-9](#) with additional fuel tanks and the deletion of one of the four 23 mm [Nudelman-Suranov NS-23](#) cannons. Like the La-9, the La-11 was designed to be a low to medium-altitude [general-purpose fighter](#), although the additional fuel tanks were added with the intent of employing the La-11 in the [escort fighter](#) role. In reality, the La-11 would go on to serve almost exclusively as an [interceptor](#), with the majority of its engagements during the [Korean War](#) seeing it pitted against [bomber](#) and [transport aircraft](#). While an improvement over earlier aircraft, the La-9 and La-11 retained the poor high-altitude performance that was common among many Soviet piston-engined airframes, with the La-11 enjoying only a 20 km/h (12 mph) advantage over the [Boeing B-29 Superfortress](#) at the latter's cruising altitude. This relatively poor high-altitude performance combined with the arrival of the [jet engine](#) led swiftly to the La-11s (and La-9s) in most frontline [Soviet Air Force](#) (VVS) units being replaced with early Soviet jets such as the [Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15](#). While quickly ousted from service with the VVS, the La-9 and 11 would both see service well into the 1950s and 1960s with the [Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force](#) and the [North Korean People's Army Air and Anti-Air Force](#), with the last La-11s being retired from the former in 1966.

## Development

One of the recommendations from the government testing of [Lavochkin La-130](#) ([Lavochkin La-9](#) prototype) was to further develop it into a long-range [escort fighter](#). The resultant **La-134** prototype (also sometimes referred to as **La-9M**) featured increased fuel and oil capacity. Armament was reduced to three cannons. The prototype flew in May [1947](#). The second prototype, **La-134D** had fuel capacity increased by an additional 275 L (73 US gal) with wing and external fuel tanks. The aircraft was fitted with larger tires to accommodate the increased weight and amenities for long flights such as increased padding in the seat, armrests, and a urinal. In addition, a full radio navigation suite was installed. Not surprisingly, combat performance with a full fuel load suffered. However, as the fuel load approached that of La-9, so did the performance. The aircraft was found to be poorly suited for combat above 7,000 m (23,000 ft). The new fighter, designated **La-11** (OKB designation **La-140**<sup>[1]</sup>) entered production in 1947. By the end of production in [1951](#), a total of 1,182 aircraft were built.

## Operational history

The first documented combat use of La-11 took place on April 8, 1950, when four Soviet pilots shot down a [United States Navy Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer](#) over the [Baltic Sea](#), with all 10 of the Privateer's crew lost. Later the same year, two La-11 pilots shot down a USN [Lockheed P2V Neptune](#) over the Sea of Japan near Vladivostok; one USN crew member was killed. From February 1950, the Soviet [106th Fighter Aviation Division](#) moved to [Shanghai](#) to defend it against bombing by the [ROCAF](#). The division included the 351st Fighter Regiment, equipped with the La-11. On March 7, the regiment claimed a [North American B-25 Mitchell](#) bomber, shot down near [Nanjing](#). On March 14, 1950, a [Martin B-26 Marauder](#) bomber was claimed in [Xuzhou](#). On March 20, 1950, five La-11 pilots encountered a group of [North American P-51 Mustangs](#) north-west of Shanghai, although the P-51 pilots immediately retreated. On April 2, 1950, two P-51s were claimed by La-11 pilots over Shanghai. After that, [MiG-15s](#) of the Soviet 29th Fighter Regiment took over the air defence role. The ROCAF stopped bombing Shanghai that June and the Soviet units left in October 1950. By July [1950](#), La-11s were flying [combat air patrol](#) missions over [North Korea](#). On November 30, 1951, 16 La-11 fighter pilots of the 4th Fighter Aviation Regiment, Chinese [People's Volunteer Army](#) (PVA) were escorting 9 [Tu-2](#) PVA bombers to bomb the South Korean island of [Taehwa-do](#) (대화도/大和島), in the [Pansong archipelago](#). They were attacked by more than 30 [F-86](#) fighters of the [United States Air Force](#): four Tu-2 bombers and three La-11s were shot down. The main target of La-11 pilots during the [Korean War](#) was the Douglas [A-26 Invader](#) night bomber, although numerous skirmishes with P-51s also took place. Attempts to intercept Boeing [B-29 Superfortress](#) bombers proved fruitless. An La-11 required 26 minutes to reach the B-29's cruising altitude, and, once there, had a speed advantage of only 20 km/h (12 mph).

On July 23, 1954, a [Douglas C-54 Skymaster](#) military transport aircraft, registration [VR-HEU](#), operated by [Cathay Pacific Airways](#) on a civilian passenger flight en route from [Bangkok](#) to [Hong Kong](#), was shot down by two La-11 fighters of the 85th Fighter Regiment, [People's Liberation Army Air Force](#) (PLAAF) off the coast of [Hainan Island](#), killing 10 people in an incident that has become known as the [1954 Cathay Pacific Douglas DC-4 shootdown](#). Although the four-engine propeller-driven Douglas (registered *VR-HEU*) was a C-54 Skymaster, the incident is known as "the DC-4 shootdown" because the C-54 is the military version of the [Douglas DC-4](#), and the aircraft was flying a commercial passenger run.<sup>[2][3][4][5]</sup> Three days later, near the same location, two La-11s of the same unit were shot down by 2 [AD-4](#) airplanes of the [US Navy](#). During 1954–55, La-11 fighters of the PLAAF took part in the [Battle of Yijiangshan Islands](#) escorting the ships of the [People's Liberation Army Navy](#) and [Tu-2](#) bombers.



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