

12,000 Debtors Barred From Traveling

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As rank-and-file court marshals hunted for debtors at the MAKS air show outside the capital, the chief of their agency's Moscow branch reported that more than 12,000 Muscovites have been banned from traveling abroad this year over debts.

Of this number, more than 3,700 had to cut short their summer travel because of unpaid debts, Ferdauis Yusupov, head of the Moscow branch of the Federal Court Marshals Service, told a new conference Friday, Interfax [reported](#).

The travel bans allowed court marshals to collect 368 million rubles (\$12 million) in debts, Yusupov said. By law, people who rack up a debt upward of 5,000 rubles (\$170) are banned from going abroad.

Moscow region court marshals said last week that they would check license plates of all cars at the MAKS air show in the town of Zhukovsky, looking to see whether any of them belonged to people in debt.

A similar campaign at the previous MAKS in 2009 allowed court marshals to collect 12 million rubles in debts in three days, Komsomolskaya Pravda [reported](#).

Some debtors caught in 2009 owed so much that court marshals confiscated their cars right at the air show, although all had the option of paying on the spot through cash machines — the same as travelers stopped by court marshals at airports.

This year, unlike in 2009, any MAKS visitor could approach court marshals voluntarily to check for possible debts, Komsomolskaya Pravda said. People might be unaware of their debts to the state because bills are sent to their officially registered residence, which is often not the place where they actually live.

Severely restricted by legislation, court marshals are known for their ingenious adaptability in pursuing debtors, many of whom submit false income declarations or simply go into hiding.

Media have reported instances of court marshals flirting with debtors on social networks under false names, asking them out on dates only to seize their property, and offering free movie tickets to those who pay up voluntarily.

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