

Angry Drivers Called Threat to Health of Police Force

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow's traffic jams are not only an annoyance for drivers but a health hazard for the traffic police officers who have to deal with the "negative energy" generated by drivers, a top government doctor said.

"They are losing their health on the roads, in our traffic jams," Gennady Onishchenko, head of the state consumer protection watchdog, said on Ekho Moskvyy [radio](#).

"And all the negative energy from the drivers who are standing in traffic jams is falling on them," he said in a lengthy interview Monday.

The health of the traffic police might be the last thing on the minds of drivers, who tend to despise them and whose interactions with them often involve paying of bribes for real or perceived traffic violations.

But Onishchenko's worries found some support Tuesday from human rights veteran Lyudmila Alexeyeva.

"I totally agree with the statement that the traffic police need special conditions for work and a worthy salary," she said, according to Interfax. "They work in an environment of overall hate."

"But I don't think that the traffic police need special protection," she said. "Our authorities have a tradition of protecting bureaucrats. But we have to protect all citizens. We especially need to protect those who criticize the authorities, who are trying to establish a civil society."

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