

Ministry Seeks to Cut Domestic Flight Prices

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Transportation Ministry drafted measures commissioned by President Vladimir Putin and aimed at reducing the price of domestic flights, Vedomosti reported Wednesday.

The document is based on the proposals presented to Putin by the head of state-owned carrier Aeroflot, Vitaly Savelyev, during a meeting at the end of last year.

The proposals address a spate of issues, including the use of nonrefundable tickets, overbooking, fees for personal baggage under 10 kilograms and hiring foreign pilots.

Airlines may also not be required to provide free meals to passengers on flights lasting less than three hours, Vedomosti said.

The Transportation Ministry also proposes that the government relax the recently implemented rule requiring airlines to have at least eight planes with more than 50 seats

on regular routes.

Andrei Shnyrev, deputy director of the Transportation Ministry's state policy department, said the requirement effectively constituted an entry barrier for new companies, especially low-cost carriers.

He suggested that it be replaced with mandatory compensation to passengers in case of delayed or canceled flights, which is in line with European standards.

Aeroflot has not commented on the possible abolition of the requirement to have a minimum number of planes on regular flights, the report said.

The ministry announced that new proposals will now be discussed on the interagency level to assess additional steps targeting the cost of domestic flights.

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