

Deputies Eye Crackdown on Duty-Free Booze After Brawls on Flights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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After a spate of brawls involving drunken passengers, authorities may soon crack down to stop boozy flights.

State television Monday broadcast amateur footage of several alcohol-soaked punch-ups after a plane made a forced landing in Uzbekistan on the way to Thailand on Sunday because a Russian had attacked other passengers.

The footage included shots of a man butting a flight attendant during one flight and a fight among passengers lining up for the restroom during another. In a third incident, a man was tied to his seat and his mouth taped shut after passengers got fed up with him.

A senior State Duma deputy said parliament could soon draw up legislation to ban duty-free liquor and cigarettes from being brought on board planes, even in sealed bags.

“We would like to prepare it [the legislation] before the end of this session,” said Vitaly Yefimov, the first deputy chairman of the Duma’s Transportation Committee, Interfax reported.

“Changes are needed to end such uproar on planes. It’s a direct threat to flight security,” he said, without giving any other details of the Duma’s plans.

In November, state newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported that the Transportation Ministry was urging passage of amendments to the Aviation Code to stop passengers from carrying alcohol on board to help prevent violence.

The amendments that are being backed would allow passengers to drink alcohol served on board, but alcohol bought by passengers before boarding would be collected by flight attendants and returned to them at the end of the flight.

National television said that only in one recent case had a Russian passenger faced criminal charges for violent behavior on board a plane. Several others had been fined, it said.

Alcohol consumption per capita in Russia is the fourth highest in the world, according to World Health Organization figures for 2011, and passengers often enjoy an onboard drink.

✉(Reuters, MT)

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