

# Moscow Metro Union Chief Complains of Understaffing

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow metro drivers are overworked and underpaid, putting passengers' safety at risk, the head of the independent underground workers' trade union, Svetlana Razina, said at a press conference Wednesday.

"They give train drivers five days to learn how to operate a train. Is it possible to become acquainted with a new machine which is stuffed with electronics in five days? It is impossible," Razina said, RIA Novosti reported.

The union's head also pointed out various violations of labor laws by the metro's management. Instead of the prescribed six hours of work with five-minute breaks every 2.5 hours, the drivers work 7.5-hour shifts, which significantly increases their stress levels and puts them under heightened pressure.

Other metro workers, such as those monitoring the escalators from their cubicles, are also

forced to work additional shifts for no extra pay because of insufficient staffing.

While there have been no reported accidents caused by inadequately trained metro drivers as of yet, the capital's underground recently experienced a series of technical difficulties that caused significant havoc during the city's peak-hour traffic.

Among the incidents were a power cable fire on the red line on June 5 and the disjuncting of train cars on the gray line on Sept 12. No injuries or fatalities were reported.

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