

Government Could Make Mobile Operators Responsible for Disaster Alerts

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Communications and Press Ministry is preparing to make mobile operators responsible for urgently informing their customers of emergency situations, a news report said Monday.

The ministry's proposal says that "the possibility of making providers of telecommunications services responsible for transmitting emergency alerts on a free and compulsory basis" should be studied and this duty should be included in the companies' licenses, Izvestia reported.

The ministry expects the project to be ready by the end of this year.

Spokesmen for Russia's top mobile operators VimpelCom and MTS told the paper that their companies are already voluntarily cooperating with Russia's emergency services to alert customers about disasters and other threats.

The issue of alerting people about potential threats came into the spotlight after the deadly 2012 floods in South Russia, which left more than a hundred people dead. Regional emergency officials, who had at least three hours advance knowledge of the impending disaster, said they had broadcast flood warnings on local television and radio, despite the fact that torrential rains had cut power to much of the area.

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