

Sochi Launches Massive Security Offensive Ahead of Olympics

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A massive security operation began in Sochi on Tuesday, a month before the opening of the Winter Olympic Games amid heightened security concerns over two recent suicide bombings in the nearby southern region of Volgograd.

All units dispatched to ensure security at the Games will be put "on combat alert" starting Jan. 7, Emergency Situations Minister Vladimir Puchkov said, Itar-Tass reported. Russia will also survey the city from space, he said.

"All the facilities will be monitored, a space monitoring system will be initiated," Puchkov said.

Puchkov added security around the Games was being conducted at the "highest international level".

Starting Jan. 7, entry into the city of Sochi will also be restricted to vehicles that are registered with the municipality or accredited by the Interior Ministry, emergency vehicles and trains.

The entry restrictions will remain in place until Mar. 21.

A total of 37,000 police officers, along with military units, will patrol the Black Sea resort, news reports said. The Federal Security Service has also installed surveillance equipment to monitor phone and internet communications in the city.

The recent bombings that killed at least 34 people in Volgograd, 700 kilometers away from Sochi, have increased concern about the possibility of terrorist attacks. The explosions followed an earlier deadly suicide bombing on a bus in Volgograd in October, underscoring the difficulties of thwarting terrorist attacks, despite tightened security.

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