

Russia space agency 'bans foreign travel'

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They may be working to reach the final frontier, but employees of Russian space agency Roscosmos face going no further than Russia for their holidays.

Roscosmos' new chief Vladimir Popovkin has imposed a formal ban on managers and staff employed by its rocket-making subsidiaries taking holidays abroad, the Izvestia daily said, quoting an internal directive.

The Soviet-style edict applies to workers who are judged to have knowledge of particularly important or secret information connected to Russia's rocket industry.

It applies not only to subsidiaries of Roscosmos but also companies with which it has concluded contracts for work deemed to be of a sensitive nature, Izvestia said.

The only exception, it said, is if an employee can prove that they are in need of medical treatment abroad that is unavailable in [Russia](#).

"This is an official document and it is part of other official rules about questions of ensuring security," the head of [public relations](#) at Roscosmos Alexei Kuznetsov told the newspaper.

Izvestia said the ruling means the chiefs of Roscosmos agencies in the rocket industry will essentially be banned from leaving Russia, a prospect that has not been greeted with enthusiasm.

Their foreign travel passports will be kept by their company and only given out after a number of bureaucratic formalities are fulfilled.

The deputy head of a prominent [Roscosmos](#) agency told the paper that he planned to get a doctor's note which would allow him to travel abroad despite the change in rules.

"I'll be doing that next week. I want to go somewhere warm and in Russia in winter there is nowhere for me to take a holiday," said the official, who was not named.

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