

Thieves Get Railways Documents

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A manhunt was under way Thursday for five burglars who had made off with a safe full of documents from a Russian Railways subsidiary.

Five men wearing medical masks broke into the Federal Passenger Company's office at 4 Ulitsa Verzemneka around 3 a.m. Wednesday, Interfax reported, citing a source in the company.

After entering through a first-floor window, the burglars tied up a security guard, a driver and a female supervisor they encountered inside. They beat the guard so badly he needed to be hospitalized.

The robbers ransacked 11 offices on the second floor. They uncovered "nothing of value," Interfax reported, but stole a safe containing "company documents."

A Russian Railways spokesman later told Gazeta.ru that the theft could have been a "mistake."

But neither police nor Russian Railways has publicly commented on the content or significance of the missing documents.

The Federal Passenger Company runs Russian Railways' long-distance passenger services. Repeated calls to the company went unanswered Thursday.

In 2009, a thief stole 150,000 rubles (\$4,500) and personal documents from the car of a Russian Railways manager in the center of Moscow.

Document theft is not uncommon amid business disputes in Russia.

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