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Teenager Fined $7 for Blinding Pilot

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The parents of a teenager who nearly caused a major air disaster in September by shining a laser into the cockpit of a passing A-320 jet have been ordered to pay a measly 200 ruble ($6.60) fine, RIA-Novosti reported Wednesday.

The pilot of the Aeroflot jet — which had flown from Moscow to Altai's capital, Barnaul, with 120 passengers and eight crew members on board — said the laser left him temporarily blinded.

Altai transportation police tracked the beam to the boy's house the next day. The 15-year-old perpetrator, whose name was not made public, told authorities that he had been home alone, could not sleep and decided to entertain himself by shining a laser pointer at a plane passing overhead.

Attacks involving laser pointers have mushroomed, with about 50 already reported this year. The State Duma is considering legislation making it a crime punishable by up to 10 years in prison, but no action has yet been taken.

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