

Air Safety Violations Up 16% in 2011

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Wreckage at the site of a June plane crash outside Petrozavodsk in which 44 were killed.

The number of air safety violations in 2011 went up 16 percent, from 124,000 in 2010 to 144,000 last year, due in part to higher numbers of checks by watchdogs, a Prosecutor General's Office official said in an interview published Wednesday.

The increase in inspections came partly as a result of a rise in airline accidents, from 24 in 2010 to 34 last year, said Yelena Glebova, the head of transportation and customs oversight in the prosecutor's office, in an interview with legal magazine Prokuror, RIA-Novosti reported.

Russia ranked as the most dangerous country in the world in which to fly in 2011, with nine crashes claiming 140 lives, surpassing even the Democratic Republic of Congo for aircraft-related fatalities.

The top reason for airplane crashes in Russia is errors made by airline personnel, which are to blame in 80 percent of cases, Glebova said.

She said an investigation showed that pilots were flying who had not had the necessary

training and that flight schools do not have adequate numbers of teachers, planes or flight simulators.

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