

Normal Service Resumes on Metro, 20 Still in Hospital

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Normal service resumed on the Moscow Metro's Red Line on Thursday, while around 20 people remained hospitalized as a result of the cable fire that wreaked havoc on a number of the city's central metro stations.

Twenty cables were replaced during repair work carried out overnight Wednesday to Thursday in tunnels on the Red Line. Transit service was fully restored as of 10 a.m. Thursday morning, the metro's press service said.

Emergency crews evacuated 4,500 commuters from the Okhotny Ryad and Biblioteka Imeni Lenina metro stations after a high-voltage wire caught fire in the tunnel that runs between the two stations at about 8:20 a.m. Wednesday. The accident snarled traffic in the metro and on central streets as people scrambled to change their routes to work after the Red Line shut down.

A Health Ministry representative said a total of around 80 people had sought medical assistance for injuries sustained in the fire, Interfax reported. More than 20 had been hospitalized.

None of the victims were in critical condition.

As well as suffering from smoke inhalation, many of those hospitalized had problems with their cardiovascular systems due to stress.

In the wake of the accident, some observers predicted a shakeup in the metro's administration. An unidentified transportation official told Interfax that the metro's head engineer, head electrician and top safety official were all at risk of being fired.

A joint commission of metro authorities and metro police will investigate the cause of Wednesday's accident, city police told RIA Novosti.

Dmitry Galochkin, a member of the Public Chamber's citizen safety commission, said he thought that the Moscow metro needed to upgrade its fire-prevention system and to improve communication with Muscovites about such incidents.

"I think the metro did a poor job of informing people that the entrance was closed," Galochkin told RIA Novosti. "There should be notices outside, notices posted at the entrance with complete information, perhaps in the form of a screen with information about what [alternative] forms of transportation could be used, how to get where you're going, and where and what is open."

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