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Taxi Call-Buttons Could Appear on Moscow's Streets

By The Moscow Times

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Hailing a taxi in Moscow could become more convenient for locals and visitors to the city. **A. Makhonin**

Getting around Moscow could become even easier if the city's transport department accepts plans to install terminals with buttons for calling taxis at pedestrian crossings and busy junctions.

The Pedestrians Union last month proposed setting up terminals to help people contact the police and ambulance services in case of an emergency. Taxi companies and commercial tow-truck services got on board with the idea and proposed adding buttons for their services as well, M24.ru reported Thursday.

"Buttons for ordering taxis and tow-trucks are necessary in case a person needs to get somewhere quickly or has been in a car crash and doesn't have access to a telephone or the Internet to help them find contact numbers," the union's chairman Vladimir Sokolov said.

The union is currently preparing the proposal and the transport department said that it will consider the it as soon as they get the details.

The cost of equipping one terminal will cost at least 100,000 rubles (about $3,000), but budget funds won't be needed as taxi and tow-truck companies have offered to stump up the cash.

Sokolov said that about 800 terminals should be set up in Moscow and beyond the Moscow Ring Road, but that some of them will only allow people to contact the emergency services.

Calling a taxi in the city center is not difficult and such services would be more useful in residential and industrial areas, he said.

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