

Telecom Companies Complain of Price in Bringing Phone Service to Metro

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The heads of the "big three" mobile communication providers have complained in a letter to Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin that high costs of access to infrastructure have forced them to freeze efforts to build cellular communication networks in the Moscow metro.

Mikhail Slobodin, Andrei Dubovskov and Ivan Tavrín — the respective heads of Vimpelcom, MTS and Megafon — said in the letter that in July 2011 the metro's management ordered an increase in service tariffs for connecting mobile phone operators to infrastructure networks, Vedomosti reported Friday

The metro's administration reportedly introduced an additional payment of 1.16 million rubles (\$35,350) for the installation of one set of equipment for mobile networks on a metro station and 1.11 million rubles for laying one kilometer of cable.

Each set of equipment can provide cellphone service to three metro stations, an employee

in one of the operators said, therefore if all three operators decided to build their own networks in the metro currently consisting of 190 stations and 317 kilometers of track they would have to spend 1.3 billion rubles between the three of them.

Operators believe that the metro administration's prohibitive tariffs may stop the fulfillment of the city's development programs. Their opinion was supported by the city's audit chamber, whose study conducted at the request of the "big three" operators was also mentioned in their letter to Sobyenin.

A representative of the city's department of information technologies confirmed the receipt of the letter from the "big three," but declined to comment on it. The city government, meanwhile, recognizes the problems described in the letter, a City Hall employee said. The metro's representatives were not available for comment Thursday.

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