

Russia Could Relax Ban on Liquids on Flights

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Transportation Ministry has said that items proven to be safe would be exempt from new rules banning liquids in carry-on bags on flights from the country's airports.

Regulations banning liquids in carry-on luggage were announced by the Federal Air Transport Agency on Wednesday ahead of the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Sochi, sparking a debate about their strictness.

The agency said earlier that medicines and personal care items considered essential to a passenger's health would be exempt from the ban, provided they had been shown to airport security personnel and inspected.

Transportation Minister Maxim Sokolov said Thursday that the exemption might also cover such items as baby food.

"Air safety officials will have the right to open [an item] and make sure there is really medicine inside," Sokolov told reporters. "If the official has any doubts, he won't let that liquid" on board a plane, he said.

Sokolov said that the new security measures, which were prompted by the recent suicide bombings in Volgograd, southern Russia, would be in force until the terror threat eased.

Two suicide bombers killed 34 people and injured more than 100 late last month in attacks on Volgograd's main train station and on a trolleybus. The city is about 700 kilometers from Sochi.

Media reports linked the ban on liquids on planes to the Olympics and Paralympics, which begin on Feb. 7.

Russia launched the largest security operation in Olympic history this week in a bid to deter terrorism, particularly from the neighboring North Caucasus which has been plagued by an Islamist insurgency.

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