

Police Officer Busted for Extorting Money From TV Psychics

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Russian police officer faces jail and a fine of up to 1 billion rubles (\$30 million) for allegedly taking a bribe from a fraud ring that promised psychic healing via telephone.

The self-proclaimed "psychics" themselves stand accused of relieving the gullible public of 200 million rubles (\$6 million) by fraudulent means, RBC Daily online newspaper reported.

The group, which targeted the elderly, advertised on cable television, offering remote "magical" healing, curse lifting and magical solutions to personal problems, the newspaper said.

A criminal case was opened last November against 11 suspects in the case.

However, a Moscow police investigator offered the ringleader to help close the case against him in exchange for 15 million rubles (\$450,000), the Investigative Committee said, RBC

reported.

The officer was detained when accepting the bribe and now faces up to 15 years in jail.

Under Russian legislation, bribe-takers can be fined up to 70 times the size of the bribe.

The rule has seen some practical application: In December, a district official in the Moscow region was slapped with a fine of 950 million rubles (\$28.5 million) for real estate-related bribery.

The occult services and alternative medicine business in Russia has a \$2 billion annual turnover and 800,000 employees, Russian lawmakers claimed in 2010.

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