

# Traffic Police Could Gain Power to Disqualify Diplomats From Driving in Russia

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Interior Ministry has drawn up a draft decree that would empower police to ban diplomats from driving if they break Russian traffic laws.

Traffic police will be able to breathalyze diplomats, tow their cars away, confiscate their license plates and disqualify them from driving if the draft decree is approved by the government, Kommersant reported Tuesday.

If a diplomat is drunk behind the wheel, traffic police must take measures to stop the car and inform the consulate where the offender works and the Russian Foreign Ministry about the incident.

The culprit's colleagues will also have to come and take the drunk driver away and the

ministry will keep a list of diplomats who are barred from getting behind the wheel, according to the draft decree, published on the unified government legislation portal.

The consulate could also be fined over the offense.

The motivations behind the decree are unclear, though it is likely a response to the perceived unfair treatment of Russian diplomats abroad.

A source familiar with the development of the decree said that a lot of countries are hard on Russian diplomats and treat them no differently than they treat locals.

Police in Washington "don't pay any attention to diplomatic plates," an unidentified U.S.-based Russian diplomat said. "If you don't pay a fine before the deadline, you get a letter asking for diplomatic immunity to be removed and a summons to appear in court. If there are a lot of violations, the U.S. State Department annuls the driving license and bans the diplomat from driving in the U.S. until the end of their stay."

Neither ministry has provided a specific example that convinced them of the need to draw up the decree, however.

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