

Russian Railways Could Be Forced to Pay \$295M for Unfinished Sochi Housing

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian Railways might have to pay 10.4 billion rubles (\$295 million) as punishment for not keeping to apartment construction timetables for the Olympics, Vedomosti reported Tuesday.

An amendment ordered by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak to the venue construction program was published on the Olimpstroy web portal and proposes to give Russian Railways 2,200 unfinished apartments, in exchange for the funds being paid to . The money would wind up back in the state budget, as Olimpstroy will be liquidated after the games.

The rail monopoly's subsidiary RZhD Stroy was the main contractor for building housing for Olympics workers and volunteers. A total of 3,500 apartments were planned, of which 1,300 were completed.

"We only missed by a little — we needed another two weeks to do the finishing works," a source said.

RZhD Stroy, headed by the rail monopoly's vice president for construction Oleg Toni, is also an 's contractor for all other Olympic venues, with the exception of stadiums and security facilities in Krasnaya Polyana.

The government has already approved a list of new owners for Olympics facilities after the Games, including the administration of Krasnodar region, the Sochi municipal administration, various sports organizations, Gazprom and grid operator Rosseti. In all cases Olimpstroï will transfer ownership rights for the venues for free, the news report said.

Originally, the plan called for turning all housing for personnel over to municipal authorities after the Olympics, to be distributed among local residents waiting to improve their housing conditions, an official said. But now Sochi will get only 1,300 apartments with the rest going to Russian Railways, which could distribute them to its employees or sell them on the open market, a source said.

The idea to stuff Russian Railways with the unfinished apartments was discussed at a meeting with Kozak late Monday. Olimpstroï and Russian Railways have declined to comment. A Kozak's spokesman also declined to comment on the situation, while a representative of the Olympics organizing committee said that all temporary personnel and volunteers for the Games are provided with proper housing.

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