

VTB, Smoking Ban, Space Program: Business in Brief

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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VTB to Keep U.S. Clients

VTB 24 president Mikhail Zadornov told Interfax that the Russian bank will not stop servicing its U.S. clientele, contrary to an announcement last month that VTB planned to "phase out" U.S. clients.

Moreover, VTB remains open to potential U.S. account holders, he said.

The bank's earlier decision to abandon U.S. clients was an attempt to avoid running afoul of the U.S. Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act — legislation requiring the bank to provide information on American account holders to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, or IRS, which would have been in violation of Russian law.

However, President Vladimir Putin on Friday signed a law allowing Russian banks to comply

with FATCA.

VTB 24 has already registered with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and will transfer information to the IRS accordingly, Zadornov said. *(MT)*

Smoking Ban Strikes Terraces

Russia's state consumer protection agency, Rospotrebnadzor, has banned smoking on summer terraces at restaurants and cafes, a press release said.

The ban will crack down on smoking in outdoor seating — which has been the favorite, albeit seasonal, workaround for venues unhappy with the ban on indoor smoking that went into effect on June 1.

The press release specifies that the smoking ban applies to any artificially constructed area where customers are seated and served — including porches, tents, terraces and balconies.

Rospotrebnadzor collected more than \$500,000 in smoking fines between January and March this year, the agency said last month in a press release. *(MT)*

Krikalyov to Head Manned Space Program

Former cosmonaut Sergei Krikalyov, who recently left his post as head of the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center, is to head up a new manned space program for the Federal Space Agency after returning from vacation, Roscosmos chief Oleg Ostapenko said on Monday.

Earlier it was reported that Krikalyov would take up a position with the Central Research Institute for Machine Building, or TsNIIMash, and potentially worked in Moscow Mission Control.

Krikalyov is a living legend, having racked up a total of 803 days in space over the course of six flights — an absolute world record for time spent in orbit. During that time he conducted eight space walks.

Krikalyov became the head of the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in 2009 and left the position in March after his contract with Roscosmos expired. *(MT)*

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