

Russian State News Agency Deletes Quiz on Ill-Fated MH17 Plane

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Какого числа под Донецком разбился Boeing 777?

☐ 16 июля 2014 года

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A screenshot from RIA Novosti website.

State-run Russian news agency RIA Novosti launched an online quiz Friday about Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, exactly a year after the plane was downed over war-torn eastern Ukraine, but deleted it the same day after being swamped with comments about its insensitivity, the Lenta.ru news website reported.

The quiz consisted of 15 questions including when the incident occurred, what the flight number was and how many passengers were on board, Lenta reported. Participants also had to guess who was behind several quotes about the tragedy.

Correct answers were rewarded with a picture of burnt fragments of the plane popping up with the caption: "Congratulations! Your answer is correct," the report said.

By noon on Friday, the quiz was heading the list of media materials most popular in social

networks, according to the Mediametrics news rating service, and was eliciting outrage among Internet users and bloggers who accused the agency of being insensitive over the tragedy, in which 298 people were killed, Lenta reported.

Shortly after the quiz was deleted from the website, the management of the Rossiya Segodnya media holding that owns RIA Novosti publicly apologized, characterizing the quiz as an “obvious stupidity and unprecedented absurdity,” Lenta reported. The holding said the editors responsible had been suspended pending an investigation.

Flight MH17 — a passenger jet flying from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur — crashed over eastern Ukraine on July 17, 2014, killing all on board, after apparently being shot down by a missile. Pro-Russian separatists fighting Ukrainian troops in the region have each accused the other of being behind the tragedy. An investigation is ongoing.

Last year the opposition-leaning TV channel Dozhd was widely criticized for publishing a poll asking readers whether they thought the Soviet Union should have surrendered the city of Leningrad to Nazi Germany in order to prevent the siege that followed, possibly saving hundreds of thousands of lives.

An investigation was launched by the prosecutor's office in St. Petersburg into that incident, and local parliamentary deputies called on Russia's Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika to “punish” Dozhd by shutting it down. The channel was later ordered to pay a fine of 200,000 rubles (\$3,500) to two Petersburg pensioners who had sued Dozhd over the poll.

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