

Traffic Police to Get Helicopter Support in Patrolling Moscow Streets

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow drivers will have to start watching the skies as well as the roads to avoid traffic police.

The Russian capital is getting a new police unit that will patrol the city streets looking for reckless drivers and suspicious vehicles. The new unit will be equipped with the latest technology — including helicopters.

The unit, which will be made up of 30 teams, will mostly use Skoda Octavia sedans with specially installed turbo engines that will allow the cars to reach speeds of 245 km per hour. The new unit will also have trained dogs and OMON riot police attached to it as back up.

The OMON troops will help the policemen "feel that they have strong physical support," said Anatoly Yakunin, head of the Interior Ministry in Moscow, which oversees the police force, speaking at a business breakfast at government daily Rossiyskaya Gazeta.

According to Yakunin, the new unit will not be limited to one part of the city, but will rotate among them. "For instance, one day we will patrol the central district, for about a day or two, day and night. Then after having caught a wave of lawbreakers, their numbers decrease and we move onto the next district," Yakunin said.

The special unit will have two main functions: ensuring security on Moscow's roads and looking for suspicious vehicles that could be transporting drugs, explosives or other contraband.

The introduction of the unit is part of a broader reform to improve road safety in the capital, Yakunin said.

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