

Russia Launches Criminal Case Against Independent RBC Media

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A man walks towards the RBC media group office building in Moscow.

Russia's Interior Ministry has launched a criminal case into alleged fraud by the RosBusinessConsulting (RBC) media holding, the Kommersant newspaper reported on Wednesday.

The case was launched following claims that shareholders were deprived of their stock. Alexander Panov, a former stockholder of one of the media holding's companies "Byte Telecom," told police that he was deprived of stock from his 12.5 percent shares. He also claimed that another stockholder, Yaroslav Karetsky, had also been deprived of stock from his 12.5 percent shares.

Panov said that Russia's police will investigate the RBC's general director Nikolai Molybog, his deputy Yekaterina Kruglova, financial director Igor Selivanov, deputy director Alexander Kononenko, and deputy head of board of directors Derk Sauer — who also founded The

Moscow Times — among others, according to RNS news agency.

RBC holding is owned by ONEXIM Group, a private investment fund belonging to Russian billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov. In mid-April, Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) raided the ONEXIM Group's premises in Moscow, the Dozhd television channel reported. The channel also reported claims that Mikhail Prokhorov was under pressure to sell the media holding.

RBC is one of the most successful private media companies in Russia. The holding's business news portal was established in 1995 and had an audience of 12.5 million users in 2014, according to the company's website. RBC launched Russia's only business television network in 2003, which broadcasts around the clock to over 90 million viewers in Russia, Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. The channel's monthly audience in Russia stands at 18 million viewers.

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