

Lockerbie Aviation Lawyer Takes on Putin in MH17 Case

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Debris of Malaysia Airlines passenger jet crashed in Ukraine in pro-Russian rebel-held territory last July.

An American-born aviation lawyer best known for winning compensation after the 1988 Lockerbie aircraft bombing is to take on Russia for its alleged role in the shoot-down of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, Reuters reported Monday.

Lawyer Jerry Skinner is leading a legal team from Australian law firm LHD to seek \$330 million for the families of 16 crash victims from Malaysia, New Zealand and Australia. Twenty-eight of the 298 passengers and crew on the flight were Australian citizens. The firm has filed a lawsuit with the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) seeking \$10 million in damages for each of the 33 relatives of the passengers represented by LHD in the case.

The group is also asking the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to declare Russian President Vladimir Putin as liable in the case, since “nothing happens in Russia that he doesn't approve of,” Skinner told Reuters. The lawyer said there was plenty of evidence to

support the \$330 million damages claim, “even without the Russians' contribution.”

“I am confident in saying it was the Russians who caused this event to occur,” said Skinner, who made a name for himself representing 200 of the 270 victims of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing. The Libyan government was found liable for the downing Pan American Flight 103 over Scotland and paid settlements of \$10 million for each person aboard the aircraft.

Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov responded to Skinner’s announcement by claiming that the suit did not yet exist as Russia had not received any notification from the ECHR that the suit has been accepted.

Last year, the Russian legislature adopted a new law to allow the government to ignore ECHR rulings. The move was justified by claiming that some ECHR rulings could stand in violation of the Russian constitution.

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