

Russian Paratroopers Refuse to Build St. Petersburg World Cup Stadium

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Russian Airborne Troops (VDV) have refused to help finish building St. Petersburg's World Cup Stadium, the TASS news agency [reported](#) Thursday.

The elite fighting force do not have the time to assist the St. Petersburg authorities in the construction of the arena, TASS reported, citing a VDV press office statement. "Paratroopers have no time for construction work. Not even of stadiums."

St. Petersburg Vice Governor Igor Albin was quoted by the Interfax news agency asking a VDV colonel about the possibility of his troops finishing the stadium, with the colonel allegedly replying "just get me the commander in chief's order."

The head of the new stadium contractor, Vadim Alexandrov said St. Petersburg residents would be invited to work on the project.

“Do you remember how great it used to be [in the Soviet era]? Toward the end of a project, we used to get the whole city involved, students as well, anyone at all,” he said at a [press conference](#).

The 69,000 capacity Zenit Arena in St. Petersburg has been under construction since 2007 and its current budget of 39.2 billion rubles (\$605 million) is over five times original estimates, TASS reported.

The stadium must be operational before the end of the year in order to host matches at next summer’s Confederations Cup, a warm-up tournament for the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

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