

Over \$150M Embezzled in Construction of Russia's Far East Spaceport – Prosecutors

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Marina Lystseva / Roscosmos

Russian prosecutors have said that over \$150 million was embezzled during construction of the country's new \$5-billion spaceport in the Far East.

Russia sees the Vostochny Cosmodrome project, plagued by scandals and prosecutions of some of its contractors for fraud, as vital to secure the country's independent access to space. Currently, space launches take place from the Soviet-era cosmodrome of Baikonur in Kazakhstan, which itself has been [blighted](#) by failed launches.

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“Prosecutors have uncovered more than 17,000 violations of law since construction [of

Vostochny] began in 2014," Alexander Kurennoy, a spokesman for the Prosecutor General's Office, said in a televised interview Tuesday.

The violations amount to 10 billion rubles (\$152 million) in losses, Kurennoy said, up from 7.5 billion rubles the prosecutor general estimated in 2015.

More than 140 criminal cases have been brought against an estimated 1,000 officials and contractors who have been brought to justice since 2014, Kurennoy said.

He noted that prosecutors have already recouped 23.4 million rubles.

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