The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Aeroflot Revokes Frequent Flyer's Privileges Over Instagram Insult

January 15, 2019



Moskva News Agency

Russia's flag carrier Aeroflot has terminated the platinum status of its second customer in as many months after he criticized the airline on social media.

The latest incident follows rule changes giving Aeroflot the right to cancel customers' frequent flyer accounts if they are judged "denigrating the honor and dignity of a person" working for Aeroflot through "feedbacks and publications in the internet." Popular photographer and activist Mitya Aleshkovsky became the first known victim of the new rules in November after criticizing Aeroflot's CEO on Twitter for introducing the rules.

This week, businessman Alexander Sokolovsky said Aeroflot revoked his status after he posted videos on Instagram in December accusing the airline of bad service.

"They, simply speaking, told me to butt off and I began to post everything that was happening on Instagram, obviously accompanying my indignation with Russian obscenities,"

Sokolovsky wrote on his Facebook page Monday. "How can you do otherwise in such situations?"

Related article: Flying with Dostoevsky

According to Sokolovsky, he was among a group of passengers on a flight traveling from Moscow to Nice, France who declined Aeroflot's return tickets to Moscow when the plane made an emergency landing in Vienna. The group instead demanded to be boarded on the next flight to Nice.

"I understand that you have a monopoly and everything is permitted, but are you yourselves not ashamed of your actions?" Sokolovsky wrote, addressing Aeroflot.

An unnamed Aeroflot press service official confirmed to the Kommersant business daily on Monday that the airline had revoked Sokolovsky's frequent flyer status and pledged that it would maintain its controversial policy.

"Aeroflot's customers are never terminated from the bonus program for criticizing the airline," the official was quoted as saying. "But for coarse and insulting remarks, the company will continue to consistently ban customers."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/01/15/aeroflot-revokes-frequent-flyers-privileges-over-instagram-insult-a64141