

Global Automakers Accuse Russian Courts of Graft

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Major automakers are accusing courts in southern Russia of using consumer protection claims to scam them out of 200 million rubles (\$3 million) in 2016–2018, the RBC news website reported Tuesday.

Hyundai, Kia, Mercedes and Jaguar Land Rover filed a complaint with Russian authorities alleging that Krasnodar judges abuse the consumer protection system to seek inordinate levels of compensation for car owners, RBC [cited](#) a Moscow-based law firm that represents the automakers as saying.

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The automakers allege that a handful of Krasnodar courts order compensations averaging three times the vehicles' original price. The same regional consumer protection bureau represents the plaintiffs and the same experts find manufacturing defects in the vehicles for

each of the claims, RBC reported.

Maxim Titarenko, a partner at the law firm that represents the automakers, estimates damages from the alleged scheme at hundreds of millions of rubles. The automakers' complaint says that the courts have ordered them to pay out more than 200 million rubles between 2016 and 2018 alone, RBC cited him as saying.

The automakers sent the complaint to President Vladimir Putin's anti-corruption council, the Federal Security Service (FSB), the General Prosecutor's Office and a panel of Russian judges, RBC reported.

The Krasnodar region consumer protection committee at the center of the claims told RBC that it helps protect the rights of consumers that seek its help.

Krasnodar region has become a hub for wealthy Russians' lawsuits, a Moscow Times investigation has [revealed](#), through a scheme that allows them to move their cases outside Moscow and get their lawsuits in front of friendly judges.

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