

Russia's Kommersant Faces Fines for Disseminating State Secrets – Reports

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Yekaterina Shlyushin / TASS

Russia's Kommersant business daily, plagued by a censorship scandal that led to a mass walkout of its reporters, is now facing fines under a law that punishes media for disseminating state secrets.

Under the law prohibiting “abuse of the freedom of mass media,” the disclosure of state secrets by a news outlet is punishable by fines between 400,000 rubles (\$6,100) and 1 million rubles (\$15,300).

Related article: [200 Russian Journalists Protest 'Clampdown on Free Speech' After Kommersant Firings](#)

The civil case [registered](#) against Kommersant on May 21 could be the first case where the clause against disclosing state secrets is applied, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#) Monday.

A judiciary source quoted by TASS did not say which state secrets were allegedly disclosed by Kommersant.

Kommersant's editor-in-chief Vladimir Zhelonkin [said](#) he will withhold from commenting on the report until after court documents arrive, the RBC news website reported.

Kommersant's entire political desk [resigned](#) on May 20 in solidarity with two veteran colleagues who said they had been forced to step down for reporting on an alleged government reshuffle. The mass resignations highlighted tensions between publishers and newspaper staff in Russia's closely controlled media landscape, which is dominated by pro-Kremlin state outlets.

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