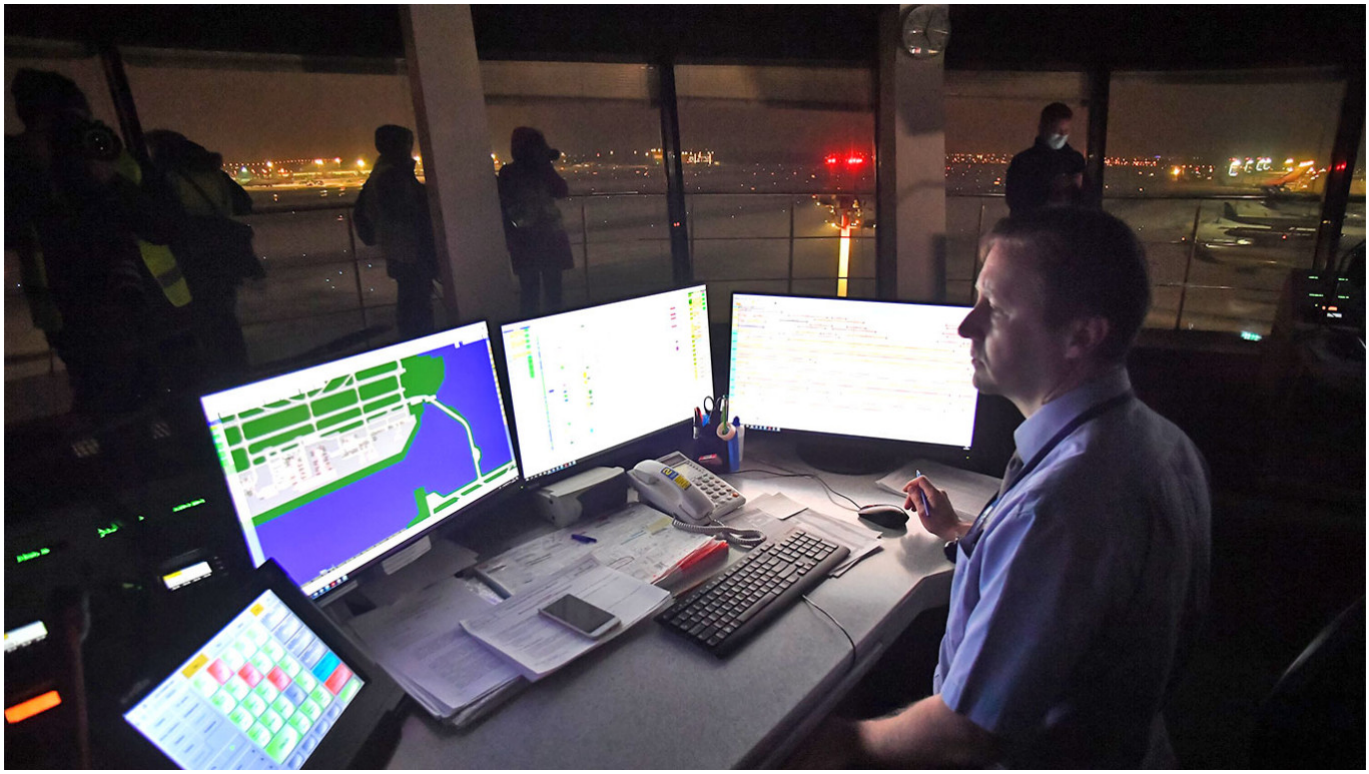
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Half of Russia's Air Traffic Control Staff Furloughed or Fired – Vedomosti

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Air traffic controller at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Up to half of Russia's country's air traffic control staff are currently on temporary leave or have been dismissed as the country's aviation industry contracts amid the war in Ukraine and international sanctions, Vedomosti newspaper reported Wednesday.

The State Air Traffic Management Corporation has laid off 2,000 employees including 600 air traffic controllers since the start of the fighting, according to a letter cited by Vedomosti that was sent this week from the head of the Federal Trade Union of Air Traffic Controllers to Russia's General Prosecutor's Office.

Another 20 percent of workers have been idled or moved to part-time shifts, according to the letter.

Most Western countries closed their airspace to Russian aircraft in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine, triggering reciprocal measures from Moscow.

In addition, Russian civilian airports in regions near Ukraine have been closed since the beginning of the fighting.

The Federal Trade Union of Air Traffic Controllers has repeatedly asked the government for support and wrote to President Vladimir Putin in May about layoffs in the sector.

The General Prosecutor's Office, the Federal Trade Union of Air Traffic Controllersand the State Air Traffic Management Corporation all declined to respond to Vedomosti's requests for comment.

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