

Russian Post Audited Over Alleged Misuse of Pension and Benefit Funds

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Vasily Kuzmichenok / Moskva News Agency

Russia's national postal service is under scrutiny following allegations that it misused public funds intended for pension and social benefit payments, according to an audit by the Accounts Chamber and a letter [reviewed](#) by the Vedomosti business daily.

The letter, dated July 18 and authored by Valery Gartung, chairman of the State Duma's Safeguarding Competition Committee, outlined concerns that Russian Post may have temporarily placed government-allocated welfare funds into interest-earning bank accounts — a practice that could violate regulations governing the timely distribution of benefits to millions of recipients.

Auditors flagged 136 instances of delayed pension deliveries between 2020 and 2024, with some deliveries late by as many as 20 days, according to Russia's Social Fund.

While Russian Post insists that 98.6% of pensions are delivered on time, it attributed the delays to factors such as recipient absences, regional logistical challenges and emergency

conditions.

The audit also revealed that Russian Post spent more than 1.5 billion rubles (\$19 million) on sponsorships and donations to sports and other organizations over the past four years.

It also spent over 600 million rubles (\$7.6 million) on media and social network advertising.

Auditors said that Russian Post should instead invest its resources into infrastructure improvements.

The findings were presented at a May joint session of the Duma's Safeguarding Competition Committee, Vedomosti reported.

Lawmakers discussed the possibility of revoking Russian Post's exclusive authority to deliver pensions and introducing compensation mechanisms for recipients affected by delayed payments.

Under current law, fines for misuse of others' funds accrue at a small daily rate and require affected individuals to file court claims — a barrier that experts say makes large-scale redress unlikely.

Pavel Katkov, founder of law firm Future Legal, told Vedomosti that criminal liability could apply under Russia's Labor Code in severe cases, but a more likely consequence would be internal disciplinary actions or the cancellation of management bonuses.

The audit adds to mounting pressure on Russian Post.

In December, Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matviyenko criticized the company's growing debt and what she called a lack of strategic direction. She also took aim at Maksut Shadayev, head of the Digital Development Ministry, which oversees the postal service.

Russian Post has struggled financially amid international sanctions and disruptions to global logistics. The company reported net losses of 30.3 billion rubles (\$385 million) in 2022, 7.2 billion (\$91.5 million) in 2023 and 20.5 billion (\$260 million) in 2024.

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