[RU] New Criminal Code on Copyright and Computerised Information

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The Criminal Code of the Russian Federation that replaced the previous Criminal Code of 1962 and entered into force in January 1997, introduces criminal liability and more severe penalties in a number of offences that relate to the audio-visual and new media sectors.

Article 146 of the Code says that if an abuse of copyright or neighbouring rights, as well as plagiarism inflicts substantial damages, violators are subject to fines from 200 to 400 minimum monthly wages (at present: from approximately USD 2,800 to 5,600), or to forced labour of 180 to 240 hours, or to a jail term of up to two years. Same actions done repeatedly or by a group with advanced conspiracy, are punishable by fines of up to 800 minimum wages, or arrest of four to six months, of jail term of up to five years. Beforehand maximum fines could not exceed three minimum monthly wages (Article 141 of the 1962 Code).

Articles 272-274 the Code, for the first time in Russian law, deals with crimes in the sphere of computerised information. Illegal access to computerised information, if such access involves destruction, damaging, changes in or copying of information, disruption of the work of computers, computer systems and networks, is punishable by fines of 200 to 500 minimum monthly wages, or forced labour of 6 to 12 months, or a jail term of up to two years. The same actions performed by a group with advanced conspiracy are punishable by fines of up to 800 minimum wages, or forced labour of one to two years, or a jail term of up to five years (Article 272). Creating or distributing computer viruses is punishable by fines of 200 to 500 minimum monthly wages and a jail term of up to three years. In the case of severe but unintentional repercussions, the jail term is three to seven years (Article 273)

Ugolovnyi kodeks Rossiyskoi Federatsii, No 63-FZ. Sobranie zakonodatelstva Rossiyskoi Federatsii, 1996, No 25, 2954

Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. Adopted by the State Duma on 24 May 1996, signed by the President of the Russian Federation on 13 June 1996, entered into force on January 1997. Sobranie zakonodatelstva Rossiyskoi Federatsii, 1996, No 25, 2954

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