

Sobyanin Shuffles Staff, Gets Help on Traffic

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As Mayor Sergei Sobyanin appointed new staff to key positions Monday, he got a boost from the Kremlin and the Audit Chamber in his efforts to tackle Moscow traffic jams.

The new mayor has promised to make fighting corruption and the city's catastrophic traffic a hallmark of his tenure.

On Monday, the Audit Chamber said it had started an examination into the efficiency of Mosenergo, the company overseeing the city's heating and electricity supply.

The examination will be carried out jointly with an ongoing one into public transportation, which includes buses, trams and the metro, Audit Chamber chief Sergei Stepashin said, Interfax reported.

Sobyanin has said the cost of metro construction should be significantly reduced.

Also Monday, President Dmitry Medvedev issued a host of decrees aimed at easing the

capital's transportation woes.

Among them are plans to further limit access to city roads for vehicles carrying goods and passengers, City Hall said in a [statement](#).

Medvedev's decrees are the result of decisions made at an Oct. 28 meeting with Sobyanin and senior city officials at the Gorki presidential residence, the statement said.

Sobyanin continued to appoint new staff Monday, naming Deputy Defense Minister Vera Chistova as head of the city's finance department with the rank of minister, Interfax reported.

A former Finance Ministry official, Chistova had overseen the Defense Ministry's finances since 2008.

The city's previous finance chief, Yury Korostelyov, was appointed as mayoral adviser, Interfax said.

Sobyanin also fired the head of the city's education department, Olga Larionova, his press service said in a [statement](#). Larionova will be replaced with Deputy Education Minister Isaak Kalina.

Sobyanin also replaced former Mayor Yury Luzhkov's chief secretary, Alexander Novikov, with Alexander Zel, who served as his deputy secretary in the White House, Interfax reported. Sobyanin was Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's chief of staff before becoming mayor on Oct. 21.

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