

In Error, Putin Replaces RusHydro Board Member

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The replacement of officials with independent directors on the boards of state-owned companies has started with a twist.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has replaced Andrei Shishkin, a deputy energy minister who represented the government on the board of electricity generator RusHydro, with Sergei Shishin, senior vice president of VTB bank and a Federal Security Services general.

But the catch is that Shishkin was not meant to be replaced. President Dmitry Medvedev's order to remove ministers and deputy prime ministers from 17 state companies, announced on March 30 and signed April 2, requires the removal of Energy Minister Sergei Shmatko from RusHydro's board.

Two members of the government administration acknowledged that the replacement of Shishkin by Shishin was not supposed to happen. One of them called the decision

a "technical error."

Shishin was to be made one of the company's independent directors in January, but there was a mix-up in the names, and the prime minister received a list of candidates that included Shishkin instead of Shishin.

A March 30 resolution signed by Putin was intended to correct that situation — but instead it also replaced Shishkin.

Shishkin is an energy industry professional who worked at electricity generator TSK-10 and was first vice president of KES Holding before becoming the Energy Ministry's electricity manager last year. Shishin is a career FSB official who served as deputy head of the agency's Krasnodar office before moving to Moscow. He was also a national judo champion.

A former FSB staff member said Shishin was dismissed from the FSB in August 2006 along with a number of other senior officers. The order to dismiss them was never published, but news reports connected the move with an investigation into the smuggling of Chinese goods at a military unit.

A source close to VTB said Shishin was supported at the bank by Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin.

Shishin called reports connecting him to smuggling "absurd." "I left for other reasons," he told Vedomosti. "And no one has ever associated me with Sechin."

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