

Building and Utilities Agency Head Resigns With 5 Deputies

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Deputy Regional Development Minister Vladimir Kogan, the head of the Federal Agency for Construction and Utilities and a close ally of President Vladimir Putin, has resigned from the agency with at least five of his deputies amid a large-scale reshuffling that would see some of the agency's powers handed over to newly appointed Regional Development Minister Igor Slyunyayev, news reports said Monday.

Kogan reportedly submitted a resignation letter earlier in December after Slyunyayev, who was appointed by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, reinstated the departments of construction and utilities in the Regional Development Ministry and stripped Kogan's agency of some of its powers, Vedomosti reported Monday, citing an unidentified source in the ministry.

The reshuffling of Kogan's agency is officially set to begin Jan. 1, and it is expected to culminate in either the replacement of the agency's leadership or subordination of the

leadership directly to the government, Kommersant said Monday, citing unidentified government sources.

On Dec. 19, Kogan reportedly asked Mevedev and Putin to make his agency directly subordinate to the government instead of the Regional Development Ministry so that he could concentrate on housing construction and utilities, Kommersant reported.

At that time, Kogan said he would be forced to leave the agency and take five of his deputies with him if his request was not granted.

Kogan took the reins of the agency earlier this year at the request of Putin, who wanted a “reliable” person on the job to handle relocating people from dilapidated buildings during his third term, Vedomosti said, citing an unidentified federal official.

The previous regional development minister, Oleg Govorun, who abolished the construction and utilities departments within the ministry and handed their powers to Kogan’s agency, resigned in late October after falling out with Kogan, another unidentified government official told Vedomosti.

Slyunyayev has already signed Kogan’s resignation, Vedomosti reported, while Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has promised to sign it only on Dec. 29. Kogan’s name was absent Monday from the list of deputy ministers on the ministry’s website, along with the name of another deputy minister.

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