

5 Cabinet Ministers Given Poor Grades in Kremlin Survey

By [The Moscow Times](#)

January 15, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

Five ministers in Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's Cabinet have failed to live up to the expectations of certain Kremlin administration officials, according to a survey conducted by Izvestia published Tuesday.

The lowest rating went to five Cabinet members: Far East Development Minister Viktor Ishayev, Education Minister Dmitry Livanov, Regional Development Minister Igor Slyunyayev, Transportation Minister Maxim Sokolov and Labor Minister Maxim Topilin.

The respondents to the survey conducted by the pro-Kremlin newspaper were advisers to President Vladimir Putin and heads of departments in the presidential administration.

Pundits have said hard-liners in Putin's administration are attempting to undermine the liberal-leaning Medvedev and his government, including through damaging media reports. The current Cabinet has been working only since May but has already seen the firing of two

ministers and the development of open conflicts with Kremlin officials.

But at a news conference last month, Putin said he was satisfied with the work of the Cabinet.

"We shouldn't forget that the current prime minister fulfilled the duties of the head of state for four years. That is a huge responsibility and brings colossal experience," he said.

Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said Tuesday that the rankings published by Izvestia were entirely subjective and that "no official system for assessing the effectiveness of the work of Cabinet members has been created yet," Interfax reported. He said such a system is being developed.

Medvedev's spokeswoman, Natalya Timakova, also weighed in on the report, saying that assessments of the ministers' work can be given only by the president himself.

"As for the high-ranking officials in the administration [the survey's respondents], if they actually exist and weren't thought up by journalists, considering that not a single surname was cited in the notes to the survey, their duties are specific: protect the activity of the head of state," she told journalists, Interfax reported.

Among the ministers who received the highest ranking in the survey were those responsible for the country's security services: Interior Minister Vladimir Kolkoltsev, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Emergency Situations Minister Vladimir Puchkov.

Strong assessments were also given to Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Justice Minister Alexander Konovalov, Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov and Finance Minister Anton Siluanov.

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