

Passenger Jet 'Diverted' by Putin's Plane

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Moscow drivers are used to being delayed because of President Vladimir Putin's motorcade. But now a planeload of passengers might be able to blame Putin for their late arrival in St. Petersburg.

A passenger jet operated by state-owned airline Rossia was forced to reroute to Helsinki on Wednesday after its arrival to St. Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport clashed with Putin's flight itinerary, St. Petersburg news site Fontanka [reported](#), citing an unidentified airport official.

Rossia Flight FV242 was supposed to arrive in St. Petersburg from Berlin at 3:25 p.m. But after the last-minute re-rerouting to Helsinki, its expected arrival was pushed back by about two hours, according to the flight board at the airport.

Putin flew to St. Petersburg to celebrate the May 1 holiday by [handing out Hero of Labor awards](#), a revival of a Soviet-era tradition.

In recent months Putin has taken to flying a helicopter from his residence outside Moscow

to the Kremlin in order to avoid snarling traffic and further inflaming the anger of drivers.

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