

Gaz Chief Andersson Tipped to Run AvtoVAZ

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 17, 2013

The  Moscow Times

The board of the country's largest carmaker, AvtoVAZ, has suggested that the head of bus and truck maker Gaz, take over from its outgoing chief executive, AvtoVAZ said Thursday.

Bo Andersson held a high-level position at General Motors, responsible for the Detroit-based carmaker's global purchasing, logistics and supply operations, before joining Gaz as chief executive in 2009.

He would replace AvtoVAZ chief executive Igor Komarov, who has run the company since 2009. Franco-Japanese alliance Renault-Nissan plans to take control of the carmaker, maker of the famous Lada cars, in mid-2014.

AvtoVAZ said in a statement that board members including chairman Carlos Ghosn, the head of Renault and Nissan Alliance, would propose Andersson as a potential candidate for the job at the next board meeting.

Gaz declined immediate comment.

Andersson, of Swedish origin, has been credited with turning around Gaz, with a cost-cutting drive, which increased profits. Gaz is part of tycoon Oleg Deripaska's Basic Element group.

Several sources close to AvtoVAZ said Wednesday that Komarov was leaving to join a division of Russia's space agency, confirming an earlier story in Kommersant newspaper. Komarov declined comment.

Oleg Lobanov, the company's vice president for finance, will be acting CEO until the board of directors appoints a new head, AvtoVAZ said Wednesday. A source close to one of AvtoVAZ's shareholders said Wednesday that the new CEO would likely be a representative of the Renault-Nissan Alliance.

AvtoVAZ this month reported that it swung to a first-half net loss as a slowdown in Russia's \$2 trillion economy took a heavy toll on demand.

Russian car sales have fallen for six months in a row.

The Association of European Businesses lobby group recently cut its sales forecast for the full year to 2.8 million vehicles, a fall of 5 percent year on year.

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