

Russian Investigative Committee Spokesman Vladimir Markin Resigns

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Pavel Bednyakov / TASS

Vladimir Markin, the spokesman for the Russian Investigative Committee, has resigned, Russian tabloid LifeNews reported Wednesday.

Markin, who holds the rank of Major General of Justice, has headed the press office of Russia's Investigative Committee since 2007. He is a former journalist, and hosted several television shows before becoming spokesperson for the investigative branch of Russia's General Prosecutor's Office. The branch was later established as a separate federal investigative authority.

Markin is also an aspiring writer, whose recent book on the murder of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya has come under intense scrutiny after accusations of plagiarism. At least two journalists from Russian opposition publications Novaya Gazeta and The New Times magazine said that Markin lifted several passages from their articles without their permission. Markin's publishing house, Eksmo Press, later took the fall, claiming that the failure to properly credit the sources in Markin's book was a technical error.

Markin refused to comment on his alleged dismissal when approached by reporters, but sources in the Investigative Committee later confirmed his resignation, the TASS news agency reported. Markin's next job will have nothing to do with his previous position, although he will tackle issues which are "no less ambitious or high-profile," the source said.

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