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Putin Gives Duma More Cars with VIP Flashing Lights

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Dmitry Grishkin / Vedomosti

Vladimir Putin has signed a decree giving the Duma access to more cars with flashing lights (known in Russian as "migalki"), which allow them to bypass traffic. The current Duma will be able to use 12 cars with the emergency lights, up from 8 in the previous Duma.

The Russian traffic code states that an emergency vehicle can be given priority if it is furnished with a flashing blue light and an accompanying siren, both of which must be turned on. "VIP" vehicles cannot sound a siren but Russian government officials are nevertheless given priority on the road thanks to the "migalki."

Back in 2010, a protest movement emerged in Russia as a response to the self-serving use of emergency rotating blue flashers by public servants. Known as the "Society of Blue Buckets," its member used blue toy buckets and installed them on their cars during flash-mobs as a protest against the misuse of emergency lights.

Here's a 2010 video by Russian performance art collective Voina of a man with a blue bucket

on his head charging at a VIP vehicle with a flashing blue light.

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