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Putin Expands Rosgvardia's Role

February 12, 2026



Rosgvardia Director Viktor Zolotov. **Alexander Kazakov / POOL/ TASS**

President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree establishing a General Staff within the National Guard (Rosgvardia), expanding the force's role in operational planning and intelligence.

The move underscores Rosgvardia's broadening responsibilities as an influx of personnel and hardware accelerates the transformation of the force led by a close ally of Putin.

According to the decree, published on the official legal information portal, the new structure will be responsible for maintaining Rosgvardia's combat readiness, overseeing the "service and combat employment" of its troops and conducting intelligence activities.

The document says the headquarters will carry out intelligence work "for the purpose of fulfilling the tasks assigned to Rosgvardia troops."

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It will also be tasked with developing and implementing state policy within its remit,

including forecasting and assessing military threats and potential future conflicts and preparing proposals for strategic planning documents.

The headquarters will be led by Rosgvardia Director Viktor Zolotov, 72, a longtime Putin ally who served as the president's chief bodyguard during his first two presidential terms and while he was prime minister from 2000 to 2013.

Rosgvardia under Zolotov started receiving its first tank units last year.

It has also taken control of the Interior Ministry's Grom special forces unit in addition to its existing SOBR and OMON riot police units.

As of 2024, the force had around 370,000 personnel.

Zolotov has pledged to increase its size to maintain control not only within Russia but also in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine.

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