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Police Colonel General Replaces Russian Deputy Defense Minister, Reports Say

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Vitaly Shulika. **mvdmedia.ru**

Oleg Savelyev has stepped down as deputy defense minister, Russian media reported Monday, with sources identifying police Colonel General Vitaly Shulika as his replacement.

Savelyev vacated his post "due to a transfer to another position," sources familiar with the matter told Kommersant and RBC.

Neither news outlet reported an official reason for the personnel change. Russia's Defense Ministry has not confirmed the reports.

Savelyev, who assumed the role of deputy defense minister in 2024, has long-standing professional ties to Defense Minister Andrei Belousov.

From 2008 to 2014, Savelyev served as deputy minister of economic development, partly under Belousov's leadership. His career in government also includes stints as minister for Crimean affairs, deputy chief of the government staff and auditor of the Accounts Chamber.

His reported successor, Vitaly Shulika, has a background in both the military and domestic law enforcement. Shulika served in the Russian military before transitioning to the Interior Ministry in 2009.

Russia's Defense Ministry has undergone regular personnel changes since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In May 2024, Belousov, a Kremlin economist, replaced Sergei Shoigu as defense minister, a move that was followed by a wave of arrests and corruption charges against high-ranking military officials.

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