

Putin Hikes Top Officials' Wages Despite Budget Crunch

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin has ordered significant salary raises for the heads of the country's law enforcement agencies and prosecutor general, as well as for federal ministers, despite the government's current drive to curb salary increases for civil servants.

As of last month, Prosecutor General Yury Chaika and Investigative Committee head Alexander Bastrykin each get a monthly bonus worth 55 percent of their salary, and will get monthly bonuses worth 151 percent of their salary starting next fall, according to separate presidential decrees published Tuesday.

Chaika's base monthly salary was 86,500 rubles (\$2,670) last year, according to previous Kremlin decrees. Bastrykin was earning 81,600 rubles a month.

The heads of the Defense Ministry, Emergency Situations Ministry, the police, Federal Security Service, or FSB, and anti-drug and migration services, as well as the Federal Guard

Service and the Foreign Intelligence Service, will see their monthly bonuses hiked 110,500 rubles (\$3,420) to 364,000 rubles (\$11,270) starting next September, according to another decree on the Kremlin's website.

A separate decree established new base salaries for other top officials, including federal ministers, who will get 51,800 rubles a month (\$1,600) as of last month and 81,500 rubles (\$2,520) from next fall. Base salaries are the foundation for calculating various bonuses, which, for top state officials in Russia, are usually several times larger than the salary. It is common practice for Russian state employees to be paid monthly bonuses to supplement official salaries.

The Russian government is planning a 5-percent budget crunch in 2014-16, with one of the new sources of revenue to be a freeze of annual inflation-related hikes of salaries for state officials in 2014.

First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov said in mid-September, speaking about the budget crunch, that "the government is justly raising the question of starting with ourselves." However, top governmental officials are formally a separate employee category from rank-and-file officials in Russia.

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