

# Russian Deputy Transport Minister to Head State Rail Monopoly

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev (L) speaks with Russian Railways President Oleg Belozеров during their meeting at the Gorki state residence outside Moscow, Aug. 20, 2015.

Russian Deputy Transport Minister Oleg Belozеров has replaced Vladimir Yakunin, a long-time ally of President Vladimir Putin, as head of Russian Railways, TASS news agency reported Thursday, citing Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

“I have decided to appoint you head of Russian Railways while simultaneously releasing you from the post of deputy minister of transport,” TASS quoted Medvedev as telling Belozеров.

Yakunin announced his plan to leave the post to become a senator in the upper chamber of the Russian parliament on Monday in a rare and unexpected reshuffle in the Kremlin's inner circle. Yakunin had headed the state rail monopoly for 10 years.

Belozеров's appointment to the post was earlier predicted by several sources in Kommersant

newspaper. Vedomosti newspaper also included Belozarov in a list of possible candidates for the new head of Russian Railways, citing a source at the company.

Belozarov, 45, graduated from the St. Petersburg University of Economics and Finance. He had been deputy transport minister since March 2009. Prior to that, he headed the federal agency tasked with building roads, Rosavtodor.

*(Reuters, MT)*

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