

# Putin Sacks Aerospace Forces General – State Media

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General Sergei Surovikin. **Russian Defense Ministry**

President Vladimir Putin has dismissed General Sergei Surovikin as head of Russia's Aerospace Forces, two months after a failed mutiny by the head of the Wagner mercenary outfit, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#) Wednesday, citing an anonymous source.

Surovikin was last seen on video urging Wagner fighters to stand down during their march toward Moscow to topple Russia's military leadership on June 23–24. His whereabouts since then remain unknown.

The Moscow Times' Russian service [reported](#) days later that Surovikin was arrested in the wake of the armed rebellion. Unidentified U.S. officials [told](#) The New York Times that Surovikin had prior knowledge of Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin's plan to launch the mutiny.

The Russian Defense Ministry and the Kremlin have not commented on the several reports of

Surovikin's arrest.

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“Former chief of the Russian Aerospace Forces Sergei Surovikin has now been relieved of his post,” RIA Novosti's source said.

The vacant role will be “temporarily” filled by his deputy, Colonel General Viktor Afzalov, the source added.

The editor-in-chief of the shuttered Ekho Moskvyy radio station, Alexei Venediktov, who has previously reported on Surovikin's circumstances, [said](#) Tuesday the dismissal came by presidential decree but did not name his sources.

The general was reassigned elsewhere and is currently on a “short vacation,” according to two anonymous sources quoted by the RBC news website.

Surovikin had long been seen as the main intermediary between Wagner and the Defense Ministry.

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