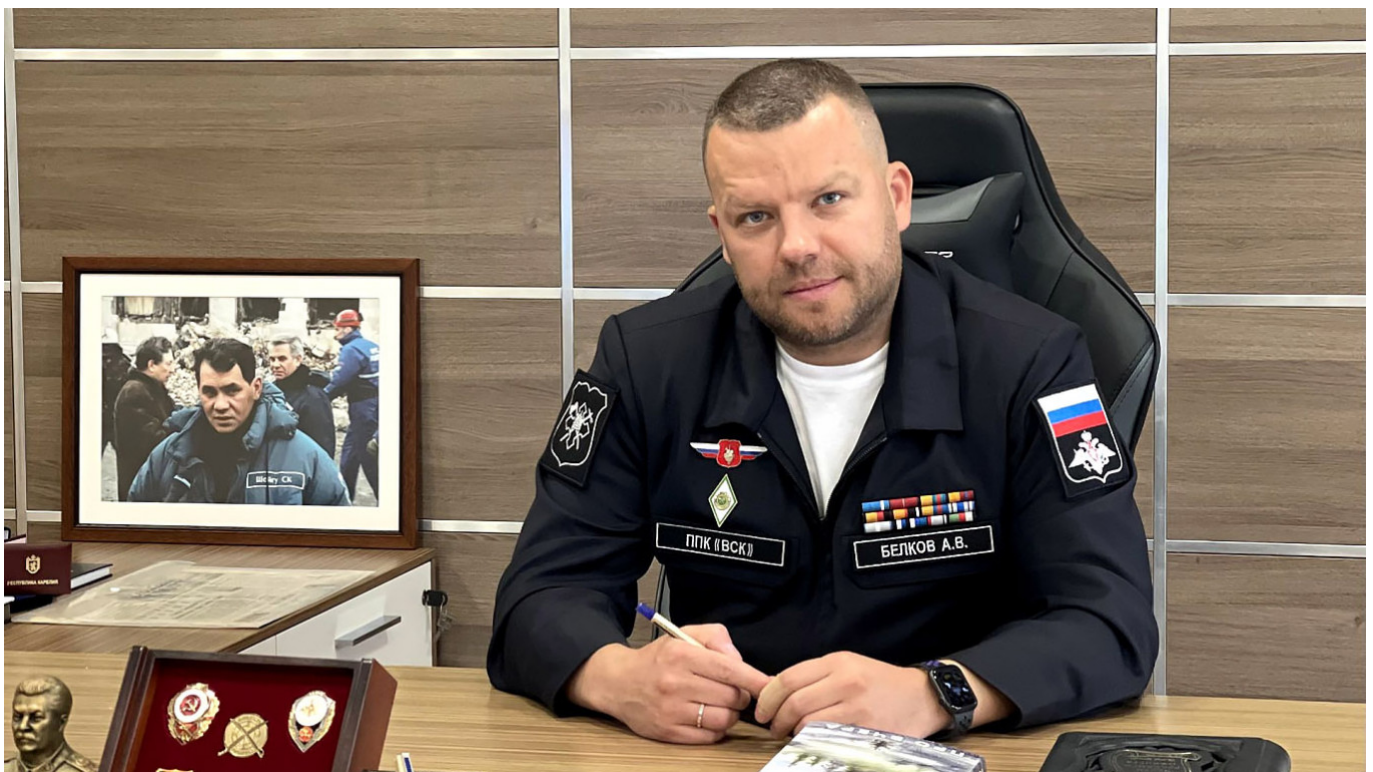


Ex-Russian Military Construction Head Arrested for Abuse of Power – Kommersant

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Andrei Belkov. vskmo.ru

The former head of the Russian military's construction company has been arrested on abuse of power charges, the Kommersant business daily [reported](#) late Wednesday, citing anonymous government sources familiar with the matter.

Andrei Belkov headed the Defense Ministry's chief military construction authority for special facilities until 2021, when he was picked to head the newly established military construction company. Washington [sanctioned](#) the company last year over its involvement in the reconstruction of occupied Mariupol.

According to Kommersant's sources, investigators accuse Belkov of devising a scheme in 2019 to buy an MRI scanner for a military clinic from an unnamed German manufacturer — which would not have been able to sell the scanner directly due to Western sanctions.

Belkov is reportedly accused of awarding a state contract through a fake tender to his acquaintance, who delivered the MRI scanner for 121 million rubles (\$1.4 million), while its actual cost totaled 76 million rubles (\$890,000). The acquaintance and her accountant were said to have been arrested for fraud in October of last year.

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Investigators are now scrutinizing Belkov's contracts, personal earnings and other connections during his time as head of the military construction company. Kommersant notes that Belkov's job is "under a microscope" because of a high-profile bribery investigation into former Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov, who oversaw military construction and was seen as an ally of former Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu.

President Vladimir Putin dismissed Shoigu from his post this spring and appointed him as the head of Russia's Security Council. Observers linked the reshuffle to Russia's slow-moving military campaign in Ukraine.

According to Kommersant, Belkov was fired from the military's construction company after his arrest over the abuse of power case surrounding his previous job. A judge is expected to rule on placing him in pre-trial detention on Thursday.

The state-run Interfax news agency later [reported](#) that one of its sources confirmed that Belkov was placed under arrest for abuse of power.

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