



Russian General Officer Guide

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Introduction

This is a guide to the current command structure of the Russian Armed Forces at the General Staff, Military District, and Army/Corps levels. It includes key officers in the Russian General Staff and identifies the commander, chief of staff, and deputy commander for Russia's four main military districts and their subordinate army and corps-level formations. The current officers occupying each of those roles are included, as well as their biography and verifiable career history.

This document is not exhaustive, and ISW will update it over time—both to fill information gaps and to expand its coverage to other key structures in the Russian military. This document was assembled using entirely open sources. We have confirmed all of the information herein to the best of our abilities, though there are necessarily gaps—including both unknown officers at different command positions as well as gaps in the biographies of individual officers. We will periodically update this document as new information becomes available and when the occupants of the currently included positions change. We will also expand this document over time to cover other echelons and components of the Russian military. As of now, this document notably does not include Russia's Northern Military District (previously known as the Northern Fleet), officers at the division echelon and below, the heads of the Russian military's various Directorates, and branch chiefs.

We intend this publication as a resource for the military, government, and other researchers. This guide does not include analysis of the implications of Russian career paths, the skills of individual officers, or forecasts of changes in the Russian command structure. We offer it as a resource to policymakers, military researchers, the media, and other NGOs both as a reference and ideally as a springboard for future research – such as identifying the officers responsible for Russian atrocities in Ukraine. We welcome suggestions on use cases or further improvements. We intend to produce updated editions in the future.

Acronyms

CAA- *Combined Arms Army*

WMD- *Western Military District*

EMD- *Eastern Military District*

SMD- *Southern Military District*

CMD- *Central Military District*

LNR- *Luhansk People's Republic*

DNR- *Donetsk People's Republic*

CSTO- *Collective Security Treaty Organization*

GUR- *Ukraine's Main Intelligent Directorate*

KIA- *Killed in Action*

Russian Military Districts



Russian General Officer Ranks

Russian general officer ranks do not align with their US equivalents. Brief notes on each rank and their US equivalents are as follows:

Marshall of the Russian Federation is equivalent to a US five-star general of the Army

- No Russian officers currently hold this rank, and the only post-Soviet officer to hold this rank was Minister of Defense Igor Sergeev from 1997 to 2006.

Army general/general of the army is equivalent to a US four-star general

- Defense Minister Shoigu, Chief of the General Staff Gerasimov, and Gerasimov's two most-likely successors—SMD Commander Dovrnikov and Aerospace Forces Commander in Chief Surovikin—hold this rank.
- The title of “army general” is not connected to the ground forces, as evidenced by Aerospace Forces Commander in Chief Surovikin.

Colonel general is equivalent to a US three-star lieutenant general

- Military district commanders and more-experienced army commanders typically hold this rank.

Lieutenant general is equivalent to a US two-star major general

- Army commanders and chiefs of staff (typically under colonel generals) typically hold this rank.

Major general is equivalent to a US one-star brigadier general

- Army chiefs of staff and division commanders typically hold this rank.

Russian General Staff

Chief of General Staff: Army General Valery Vasilyevich Gerasimov

Gerasimov graduated from the Kazan Suvorov Military School in 1973.¹ Gerasimov then graduated from the Kazan Higher Tank Command School in 1977. From 1977 to 1982, Gerasimov served as a platoon commander, company commander, and battalion chief of staff in the 80th Tank Regiment of the 90th Guards Tank Division of the Northern Group of [Soviet] Forces in Poland. From 1982 to 1984, Gerasimov served as the chief of staff and then commander of an unspecified battalion in the 29th Motorized Rifle Division of the 5th CAA. He then graduated from the Malinovsky Military Armored Forces Academy in 1987.² Gerasimov served as chief of staff of an unspecified tank regiment from 1987 to 1993. Gerasimov then commanded the 144th Guards Motorized Rifle Division of the 20th Guards Army in Talin, Estonia, from 1993 to 1995.

From 1995 to 1997, Gerasimov attended Russia's Military Academy of the General Staff.³ He then served as first deputy commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army in the Moscow Military District from 1997 to 1998. Gerasimov served in the 58th CAA of the North Caucasus Military District from 1998 to 2003, including as deputy commander in 1998, chief of staff in 1999, and overall commander of the army in 2001. During his time in in the 58th CAA, he oversaw operations in the Second Chechen War. Gerasimov served as chief of staff of the Far Eastern Military District from 2003 to 2005, where he was reprimanded for mass illness outbreaks among conscripts.⁴ From April 2006 to December 2006, Gerasimov headed the Main Directorate of Combat Training and Service of the Russian Armed Forces and then served as chief of staff of the North Caucasus Military District from December 2006 to December 2007.⁵ Gerasimov was promoted to Military District command in 2007, commanding the Leningrad Military District from 2007 to 2009 and the Moscow Military District from 2009 to 2010. Gerasimov served as deputy chief of the general staff of the Russian Armed Forces from 2010 to 2012. Gerasimov then briefly commanded the Central Military District from April 2012 to November 2012. Putin appointed Gerasimov chief of the general staff in November 2012, the position he has held ever since.

First Deputy Chief of General Staff: Colonel General Nikolai Vasilyevich Bogdanovsky

Bogdanovsky began his career stationed in Hungary from 1978 to 1987 as a reconnaissance platoon commander, company commander, chief of staff of a motorized rifle battalion, and commander of a motorized rifle tank battalion.⁶ From 1987 to 1994, he served as chief of staff of a fortified area, commander of a motorized rifle regiment, and chief of staff of a motorized rifle division. In 1996, he was appointed head of the 392nd Pacific Center for the Training of Junior Specialists of Motorized Rifle Troops. He served as chief of staff and then commander of the 35th CAA from 1996 to 2006. From 2006 to 2008, Bogdanovsky served as deputy commander of the Far Eastern Military District. From 2008 to 2009, he served as first deputy commander-in-chief of the Ground Forces.⁷ Bogdanovsky commanded the Leningrad Military District from 2009 to 2011. In 2011, he was appointed head of the Main Directorate of Combat Training of Ground Forces.⁸ Bogdanovsky commanded the Central Military District from December 2012 to June 2014 and was appointed the first deputy chief of the General Staff in 2014.⁹ Bogdanovsky reportedly participated in negotiation efforts with the Israeli Defense Forces during Russia's operation in Syria.¹⁰

Chief of the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff: Colonel General Sergey Fyodorovich Rudskoy

Rudskoy graduated from the Minsk Suvorov Military School in 1977.¹¹ ISW cannot verify his specific assignments from 1977 to 1995, though he likely moved through the standard promotion path of Soviet/Russian Motor Rifle officers. Rudskoy participated in both the First Chechen War from 1994 to 1996 and the Second Chechen War from 1999 to 2009. Rudskoy commanded the 255th Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 20th Guards Motor Rifle Division in 1995, but his other assignments are unknown. His exact activities between the Chechen

campaigns and 2015 are also unknown. In 2012 he was awarded the rank of lieutenant general. Rudskoy was appointed head of the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff on November 24, 2015, and reportedly took part in the Russian military operation in Syria in an unspecified role in 2015.¹² Rudskoy has become the Russian Ministry of Defense's main spokesperson throughout the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, releasing daily video briefings on the Kremlin's framing of the war.

Ground Forces of the Russian Federation

Commander-in-Chief of Russian Ground Forces: Army General Oleg Leonidovich Salyukov

Salyukov began his career moving up the ranks (platoon commander, company commander, battalion chief of staff, and battalion commander) in the Kyiv Military District of the Soviet Union from 1977 to 1982.¹³ From 1985 to 1994, Salyukov served as deputy commander of an unspecified training tank regiment, commander of an unspecified tank regiment, and finally deputy commander of the 4th Guards Tank Kantemirovskaya Division of the Moscow Military District, though the exact dates are unknown for these three positions. Salyukov graduated from the Military Academy of the General Staff in 1996. From 1997 to 1998, Salyukov commanded the 121st Motorized Rifle Division commanded the 81st Motorized Rifle Division from 1998 to 2000. He then served as chief of staff of the 35th CAA from 2000 to 2003 and chief of staff of the Far Eastern Military District from 2005 to 2008. Salyukov then commanded the Far Eastern Military District from 2008 to 2010—an unusual change, as Russian officers typically change military districts when moving from chief of staff to Commander. President Medvedev appointed him deputy chief of the Russian General Staff in 2010. Putin appointed Salyukov commander-in-chief of the Russian Ground Forces in 2014.

First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Russian Ground Forces: Colonel General Vasily Petrovich Tonkoshkurov

Tonkoshkurov began his career as a platoon commander in an unknown unit of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany and then served as company and deputy battalion commander of the 371st Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment from 1983 to 1985.¹⁴ He took part in the Soviet action in Afghanistan with an unknown unit, where he was wounded. After graduating from the Mikhail Frunze Military Academy in 1990, he served as commander of an unspecified motorized rifle regiment and deputy commander of an unspecified guards motorized rifle division in the Far Eastern Military District. His specific assignments between 1990 and 2004 are unknown. Tonkoshkurov participated in Russian operations in Chechnya from February 2000 to July 2000 with an unknown unit. He commanded the 19th separate motorized rifle division of the North Caucasus Military District from 2004 to 2008. Tonkoshkurov became first deputy commander of the 41st CAA of the Siberian Military District in 2008. He then went on to serve as commander of the 41st CAA from 2009 to 2013 and received the title of lieutenant general in 2013. Tonkoshkurov then served as chief of the Main Organizational and Mobilization Directorate of the Russian General Staff from 2013 to 2018. He was awarded the rank of colonel general in 2015 and has been the first deputy commander-in-chief of Russian Ground Forces since May 16, 2018.

Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Russian Ground Forces: Lieutenant General Alexander Anatolyevich Matovnikov

Matovnikov is the son of a former KGB deputy Directorate head.¹⁵ Matovnikov entered service in the anti-terrorist unit "A" of the KGB (now special unit "Alpha" of the FSB) in 1986. He took part in operations in northern Afghanistan from 1986 to 1987. He took part in security operations for political events in 1987 and 1988, including a trip to the US with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and providing security for UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher when she visited Armenia in 1988. He additionally took part in several operations in the North Caucasus, Chechnya, and North Ossetia. Matovnikov reportedly served over 30 years in unit "A," including rising to deputy commander in 2007. He transferred to the Russian Ministry of Defense in 2014 and was appointed as deputy commander of the Special Operations Forces. From 2015 to 2018, Matovnikov commanded various special operations, including unspecified operations in Syria. In 2018, he was appointed to the position of plenipotentiary representative of the president of the Russian Federation in the North Caucasus Federal District and became a member of the Russian Security Council. Putin appointed Matovnikov deputy commander-in-chief of the Ground Forces in 2020.

Western Military District

District-level Officers

Commander of the Western Military District: Colonel General Alexander Alexandrovich Zhuravlyov

Zhuravlyov joined the Soviet Army upon completion of secondary school in 1982 and graduated from the Chelyabinsk Higher Tank Command School in 1986.¹⁶ Zhuravlyov was a platoon commander of the 15th Guards Mozyr Tank Division in Czechoslovakia from 1986 to 1991 and commanded an unspecified “high readiness” formation of the 21st Guards Motorized Rifle Division in Belogorsk in the mid-2000s. His other postings in the 1990s are unknown. Zhuravlyov graduated from the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff and became Chief of Staff of the 58th CAA in 2008 and took part in Russian operations in Georgia the same year. From 2010 to 2015, Zhuravlyov commanded the 2nd Red Banner CAA and then became deputy commander of the CMD in 2015. He served as the first chief of staff of Russian forces in Syria from September 2015 to July 2016 before taking over as commander of Russian Forces in Syria from Aleksandr Dvornikov from July 2016 to December 2016.¹⁷ Zhuravlyov became deputy chief of the Russian General Staff in 2017 and then commander of the EMD later that year, during which time he returned to command Russian forces in Syria for a second tour from December 2017 to September 2018. In November 2018, he was appointed to the position of commander of the WMD.

Chief of Staff of the Western Military District: Lieutenant General Alexey Vladimirovich Zavizion

Zavizion worked his way from platoon commander to regimental chief of staff in the Trans-Baikal Military District from 1986 to 1997.¹⁸ He then served as chief of staff and then commander of an unspecified motor rifle regiment in the 2nd Guards Motor Rifle Division from 1997 to 2001. He commanded the 15th Shavlinsky Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment in the Second Chechen War for 7 months from 2000 to 2001. From an unspecified date (likely in 2001) to 2006, Zavizion was chief of staff of the 4th Guards Tank Division of the 20th Army of the Moscow Military District. From 2006 to 2009, he commanded the 201st Military Base in Tajikistan. In June of 2009, Zavizion entered the Military Academy of the General Staff. After his graduation, Zavizion took command of the 136th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade.¹⁹ He served in this capacity until 2014, when he became the Chief of Staff of the 41st CAA.²⁰

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) reports that Zavizion oversaw Russian military operations in Donbas in 2015.²¹ Zavizion reportedly commanded the First Army Corps (the Donetsk People’s Republic’s Armed Forces) of the SMD in 2015 under the pseudonym Alexei Vladimirovich Pivelin in Donbas.²² Zavizion was also reportedly the deputy commander for the border territories in Khmeimim airbase, Syria, in 2016.²³ Zavizion rose to commander of the 41st CAA of the CMD from 2016 to 2018. It is unclear if he retained his role as chief of staff of the 41st CAA during his deployments to Ukraine and Syria. Zavizion became deputy commander of the WMD in November 2018 before taking on his current position of chief of staff of the WMD in February 2019.

Deputy Commander of the Western Military District: Lieutenant General Vladimir Anatoliyevich Kochetkov

Kochetkov entered military service upon his graduation from the Novosibirsk Higher Military-Political Combined Arms School in 1988.²⁴ Between 1988 and 1999, Kochetkov served in an unspecified capacity with the 242nd Training Center for Junior Specialists of the Airborne Forces, as well as other unconfirmed positions. Kochetkov graduated from the Combined Arms Academy in 1999 and became deputy commander of the same 242nd Training Center he previously served in. He additionally served as deputy commander of the 51st Airborne Regiment for an unspecified time between 1999 and 2003. Kochetkov served as commander of the 104th Airborne Assault Regiment of the 76th Airborne Assault Division from 2003 to 2005. Kochetkov commanded the 31st Separate Guards Airborne Brigade from 2005 to 2007 and participated in Russian operations during the Second Chechen War.²⁵ He commanded the 7th Guards Air Assault Mountain Division from 2007 to 2010, during which time he participated in the Russo-Georgian War.²⁶ Kochetkov became the temporary commander of the

106th Guards Airborne Division in 2010 before his formal appointment from 2011 to 2013.²⁷ Kochetkov then served as deputy commander of Russian Airborne troops from 2015 to 2020.²⁸ He became deputy commander of the WMD in 2020.

Army-level Officers

1st Guards Tank Army

Commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army: Lieutenant General Sergey Alexandrovich Kisel

[POSSIBLY REMOVED AS OF MARCH 25]

Kisel entered military service in 1990 after graduating from the Tashkent Higher Tank Command School.²⁹ He began his career commanding an unspecified tank platoon and held various unspecified command positions from 1990 to 2009. Russian media reported Kisel gained combat experience in the First and Second Chechen Wars and the 2008 Russo-Georgian war during service in these unspecified units.³⁰ Kisel served as commander of the 19th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment beginning in 2010 and entered the Kutuzov Academy of the Russian General Staff at an unspecified date. After graduating, Kisel became chief of staff of the 20th Guards Combined Arms Army. Kisel took command of the 1st Guards Tank Army in April 2018 and stayed in this position through the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24.³¹ The Ukrainian GUR reported on April 18 that Kisel was fired on March 25 for his “indecisiveness and cowardliness” when commanding Russian units in Sumy and Kharkiv oblasts in Ukraine, though ISW cannot independently verify this report or who may have succeeded Kisel as commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army.³²

Chief of Staff of the 1st Guards Tank Army: Colonel Ivan Mikhailovich Shkanov

Shkanov rose from the rank of platoon commander to division chief of staff while serving in combat units of the 2nd Guards Motor Rifle Divisions and 4th Guards Tank Division for unspecified dates in the 2000s.³³ Shkanov became chief of staff of the 1st Guards Tank Army on December 5, 2021.³⁴ The remainder of Shkanov’s career is not well-documented and available sourcing is limited.

Deputy Commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

6th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 6th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Vladislav Nikolayevich Yershov

[POSSIBLY REMOVED AS OF APRIL 22]

Yershov entered military service in 1992 after graduating from the Moscow Suvorov Military School and likely pursued the standard promotion path for Russian Motorized Rifle officers in the 1990s.³⁵ Yershov graduated from the Combined Arms Academy of the Russian Armed Forces in 2003 and the General Staff Military Academy in 2012. Yershov’s activities between those two graduations are not publicly documented. Yershov commanded the 21st Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade in Totskoye in Orenburg Oblast from 2012 to 2014, lectured at the Russian Military Academy of the General Staff from 2014 to 2017, and served as chief of staff of the 49th CAA from 2017 to 2019.³⁶ Yershov took command of the 6th CAA in February 2019 and remains in this position as of publication.³⁷ Ukrainian sources reported that Yershov was dismissed and placed under house arrest on March 22, 2022, due to losses suffered by the 6th CAA during the invasion of Ukraine; the Ukrainian GUR reported on April 22 that Yershov had been removed from his post, but ISW cannot independently confirm these reports.³⁸

Chief of Staff of the 6th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current Chief of Staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 6th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current Deputy Commander is not publicly available.

20th Guards Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 20th Guards Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Andrey Sergeevich Ivanaev

Ivanaev entered military service in 1992 upon his graduation from the Chelyabinsk Higher Tank Command School.³⁹ Ivanaev began his career as a tank platoon commander in the 409th Motorized Rifle Regiment (part of the Group of Russian Forces in Transcaucasia) and commanded the 27th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade for an unspecified period, and likely rose through the standard Russian promotion path in the 1990s and early 2000s. Ivanaev became deputy commander of the 1st Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment after graduating from the Combined Arms Academy on an unknown date prior to 2006 and commanded this regiment from 2006 to 2008. Ivanaev then served as deputy commander of the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division (the parent unit of the 1st Guards Motor Rifle Regiment) from 2008 to 2009. He was promoted to major general in 2011. Ivanaev commanded the 205th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2011 to 2012 and the 392th District Training Center from 2013 to 2014.⁴⁰ Ivanaev served as the deputy commander of the 36th CAA from 2015 to 2017. Ivanaev commanded the “Euphrates group,” an unspecified structure within the Russian deployment to Syria, in 2017. Ivanaev took command of the 20th Guards CAA in 2018.

Chief of Staff of the 20th Combined Arms Army: Major General Andrey Yuryevich Pyataev

Pyataev graduated from the St. Petersburg Higher Combined Arms School in 1997 and went through a likely standard career progression, including commanding the 2nd Guards Motor Rifle Division at an unspecified time.⁴¹ He graduated from the Russian Combined Arms Academy in 2009 and the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff in 2020; he was awarded the rank of major general in December of 2021, at which time he was serving in his current position as chief of staff of the 20th CAA, though ISW cannot confirm when he assumed this position.⁴²

Deputy Commander of the 20th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

Navy-level Officers

Baltic Sea Fleet

Commander of the Baltic Sea Fleet: Vice Admiral Victor Nikolaevich Liina

Liina graduated from the Leningrad Higher Naval School in 1990.⁴³ After graduation, he worked as an engineer on a submarine in the Northern Fleet, moving up to a navigation engineer by 1999. Liina commanded a nuclear submarine missile cruiser from the 11th submarine division of the Northern Fleet from 1999 to 2004. He continued to rise through the ranks of the Northern Fleet from 2006 to 2010, serving for unspecified dates as chief of staff, then commander of a submarine division, and eventually deputy commander of the Northern Fleet’s submarine forces. In 2010, he took command of the White Sea Naval Base in Severodvinsk and was promoted to vice admiral in 2012. Liina was the commander of the Kamchatka Military Flotilla from 2012 to 2014.⁴⁴ After graduating from the Military Academy of Russian General Staff in 2016, he became first deputy commander of the Black Sea Fleet from 2016 to 2019. Liina was appointed deputy chief of the General Staff in August 2019. In this capacity, he notably oversaw combat readiness exercises and strategic staff and command exercises of the Black Sea Fleet during the Kavkaz-2020 exercise. Ukrainian reports claim that Liina participated in the Kerch Strait incident in November 2018 and that the Kremlin blamed Liina for disorganized interactions between the Navy and the border service in 2018.⁴⁵ Liina took command of the Baltic Fleet in 2021.

Chief of Staff of the Baltic Sea Fleet: Vice Admiral Sergey Vladimirovich Lipilin

Lipilin graduated from the Pacific Higher Naval School and began his naval career in 1987.⁴⁶ He served in the 173rd Missile Ship Brigade of the Pacific Fleet for an unspecified period, and his other early positions are unknown. In the 1990s, Lipilin served as senior assistant commander on the *Chevronka Ukraine* missile cruiser, which was transferred to the 36th Division of the Primorsky Flotilla of the Pacific Fleet. He served in a variety of leadership positions in the 36th Division and became commander in 2008.⁴⁷ In 2009, he took command of the 30th Division of surface ships of the Black Sea Fleet. His activities between 2009 and 2012 are unknown due to limited sources from this time, during which he may have studied at a staff academy. Lipilin then became chief

of Forces in the North-East (an unclear position within the Pacific Fleet) in 2012. Lipilin then led a detachment of ships of the Pacific Fleet in the Russo-Chinese military exercises “Peace Mission-2014” and became the commander of the Forces in the North-East in 2014. Lipilin served as the deputy commander of the Black Sea Fleet from 2018 to 2021. Sergey Lipilin was appointed chief of staff of the Baltic Fleet on October 5, 2021.

Deputy Commander of the Baltic Fleet: Vice Admiral Sergei Stanislavovich Eliseev

Eliseev entered into military service after graduating from the Kaliningrad Naval School in 1983.⁴⁸ He served in various positions in the Pacific Fleet before joining the Ukrainian Navy in 1993.⁴⁹ He went on to attend the Ukrainian National Defense Academy in 2004 and was appointed first deputy commander of the Ukrainian Navy in 2010. During the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea, Eliseev defected from the Ukrainian Navy and was appointed as deputy commander of the Russian Baltic Fleet in July 2014.⁵⁰

Southern Military District

District-level Officers

Commander of the Southern Military District: Army General Aleksandr Vladimirovich Dvornikov

Dvornikov entered military service in 1978 after graduating from the Ussuriysk Suvorov Military School.⁵¹ Following graduation, he served as platoon commander, company commander, and chief of staff of a battalion in the Far Eastern Military District throughout the 1980s.⁵² From 1991 to 1994, Dvornikov served as deputy commander, and eventually commander, of a motorized rifle battalion operating out of the Western Group of Forces in Germany. From 1995 to 2000, Dvornikov served as chief of staff and then commander of an unspecified motorized rifle regiment of the Moscow Military District. He then served as chief of staff and commander of another motorized rifle regiment in the North Caucasian Military District until 2003, during which time he likely participated in the Second Chechen War. From 2005 to 2008, Dvornikov served as deputy commander and then chief of staff of the 36th Army of the Siberian Military District. Dvornikov commanded the 5th Red Banner CAA of the Far Eastern Military District from 2008 to 2010. Dvornikov served as deputy commander of the EMD from 2010 to 2012, then as chief of staff of the CMD from April 2012 to 2015. Dvornikov served as the first commander of Russia’s deployment to Syria from September 2015 to July 2016. He has commanded the SMD since September 20, 2016, and was awarded the rank of army general in 2020.⁵³ Dvornikov took overall command of Russian operations in Ukraine around April 8, 2022.⁵⁴

Chief of Staff of the Southern Military District: Colonel General Sergey Yurevich Kuzolyev

Kuzolyev began his career in 1990 after graduating from the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School.⁵⁵ He moved up the ranks from platoon commander to battalion commander in various Airborne units in the 1990s and commanded an unspecified motorized rifle regiment after graduating from the Combined Arms Academy in 2001. Kuzolyev graduated from the General Staff Academy in 2010, after which he commanded the 18th Motorized Rifle Brigade until 2012. He then served as chief of staff of the 58th CAAA from 2012 to 2014. Ukraine’s GUR reported that Kuzolyev commanded the 2nd Army Corps (the armed forces of the Luhansk People’s Republic) from fall 2014 to spring 2015, operating under the alias “Sergey Yuriyovuch Ihnatov.”⁵⁶ Kuzolyev then commanded the 20th Guards CAA from 2015 to 2016 and commanded the 58th CAA from 2016 to 2017.⁵⁷ He became chief of staff of the SMD in 2019.⁵⁸ Kuzolyev additionally commanded the Group of Russian Forces in Syria from November 2020 to February 2021.⁵⁹

Deputy Commander of the Southern Military District: Lieutenant General Alexey Yuryevich Avdeev

Avdeev began his career in unspecified command positions in the North Caucasus Military District from 1988 to 1996.⁶⁰ He graduated from the Combined Arms Academy in 1999, fought in Chechnya while holding unspecified positions in the early 2000s, and graduated from the General Staff Academy in 2008. Avdeev then commanded an unspecified Motorized Rifle Division in the Siberian Military District from 2008 to 2010. He subsequently served as deputy chief of staff of the Siberian Military District from 2010 to 2011, deputy commander of the 41st CAA from 2011 to 2012, and chief of staff of the 6th CAA from 2012 to 2014. Avdeev served as Commander of the

29th CAA from 2014 to 2017 and Commander of the 1st Guards Tank Army from 2017 to 2018. Avdeev then became the head of Combined Arms Academy of the Russian Armed Forces between 2018 and 2019 before taking his current role as deputy commander of the SMD in 2019.⁶¹

Army-level Officers

58th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 58th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Mikhail Stepanovich Zusko [POSSIBLY ARRESTED AS OF MARCH 31]

Zusko's career prior to 2007 is unknown, though he reportedly gained combat experience in the First Chechen War.⁶² He served as deputy commander of the 11th Separate Air Assault Brigade from 2007 to 2011 and Commander of the 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 49th CAA from 2011 to 2014.⁶³ Ukraine's GUR reported that Zusko commanded the 1st Army Corps (the armed forces of the Donetsk People's Republic) for several months in 2014.⁶⁴ Zusko then served as Deputy Commander of the 49th CAA from 2015 to July 2019, when he took command of the army—a rare direct elevation from deputy commander to commander of the same CAA.⁶⁵ Zusko took command of the 58th CAA in August 2020.⁶⁶ Zusko was reportedly removed from his post and arrested due to combat losses in Ukraine as of March 31, 2022, but ISW is unable to independently verify this claim.⁶⁷

Chief of Staff of the 58th Combined Arms Army: Major General Vyacheslav Nikolaevich Gurov

Gurov served in the Second Chechen War from 1999 to 2000 and participated in fighting in Grozny, though his exact positions are unknown.⁶⁸ Gurov commanded the 6th Tank Brigade of the 20th Guards CAA from 2010 to 2012 and commanded the 74th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2012 to 2017.⁶⁹ Gurov commanded the 90th Guards Tank Division for an unspecified period beginning in 2017. Gurov additionally served as commander of the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the CSTO at least during the “Indestructible Brotherhood-2019” exercises in October 2019, though his total tenure in this role is unknown.⁷⁰ Gurov served as deputy commander of the 2nd Guards CAA from 2019 to 2021 before taking his current role as chief of staff of the 58th CAA in May 2021.⁷¹

Deputy Commander of the 58th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

49th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 49th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Yakov Vladimirovich Rezantsev

[KIA IN UKRAINE MARCH 24]

Rezantsev entered military service in 1994 and moved from platoon to brigade commander in various unspecified motorized rifle units in the 1990s and early 2000s.⁷² He served as Commander of the 57th Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade from 2010-2011 and Commander of the 7th Military Base from 2011-2013, after which he was promoted to the rank of Major General. Rezantsev commanded the 20th Guards CAA from 2013 to 2016 and commanded the 41st CAA from 2018 to 2020.⁷³ Rezantsev reportedly served in the Russian deployment to Syria in an unspecified role.⁷⁴ Rezantsev took command of the 49th CAA in August 2020 and rose to the rank of Lieutenant General in 2021.⁷⁵ Ukrainian officials claimed that Ukrainian forces killed Rezantsev at the Chornobaiivka aerodrome, Kherson Oblast, on March 24.⁷⁶

Chief of Staff of the 49th Combined Arms Army: Major General Valery Plohotnyuk

Plohotnyuk served as the 49th CAA's Chief of Staff during the joint Russian-Pakistani “Friendship-2021” military exercises in September-October 2021 and likely remains in this role.⁷⁷ We cannot verify any other details of his career.

Deputy Commander of the 49th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

8th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 8th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Andrey Nikolayevich Mordichev

[CLAIMED KIA IN UKRAINE ON MARCH 18 BUT POSSIBLY ACTIVE AS OF MARCH 28]

Mordichev's career prior to 2010 is unknown.⁷⁸ Mordichev became Deputy Commander of the 5th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade in 2010 and commanded the 4th Separate Tank Brigade of the WMD from 2011 to 2012. Mordichev served as the commander of the 28th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2012 to 2014 and likely attended the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff between 2014 and 2017. Mordichev briefly commanded the 68th Army Corps of the EMD in 2017 before becoming chief of staff of the 41st CAA until 2019. Mordichev served as the chief of staff of the 8th CAA beginning in 2020 before taking command in November 2021.⁷⁹ The Ukrainian GUR reported that Mordichev commanded Russian operations in Mariupol and ordered operations to create a humanitarian catastrophe in the city.⁸⁰ Ukrainian media reported that Ukrainian forces killed Mordichev on March 18, though he later appeared in an undated video with Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov on March 28.⁸¹ ISW cannot currently confirm his status.

Chief of Staff of the 8th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current chief of staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 8th Combined Arms Army: Major General Vladimir Petrovich Frolov

[KIA IN UKRAINE ON UNSPECIFIED DATE BEFORE APRIL 16]

No biographical information is available online regarding Frolov's career and previous combat experience.⁸² Saint Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov confirmed that Frolov died during the Russian invasion of Ukraine on an unspecified date and was buried with military honors on April 16, 2022.⁸³ Kremlin-sponsored media stated that the information about Frolov's death is highly confidential, and falsely claimed that he is the only high-profile commander to die in Ukraine since the start of the war.⁸⁴

22nd Army Corps

Commander of the 22nd Army Corps: Major General Arkady Marzoev

Marzoev began his military career in 1987 in the Black and Baltic Sea Fleets before enrolling in the Novosibirsk Higher Command School in 1988.⁸⁵ We cannot confirm specific dates for the majority of Marzoev's career. Marzoev served with an unspecified GRU Spetsnaz unit in 1992, during which time he fought in the First Chechen War. Marzoev then commanded a company of the 45th Guards Special Purpose Brigade and a separate motorized rifle battalion of the 58th CAA and fought in Second Chechen War. Marzoev later graduated from the Combined Arms Academy and returned to Chechnya as chief of staff of an unspecified regiment. In August 2008, Marzoev commanded an unspecified motorized rifle regiment that deployed to South Ossetia. Marzoev then served as the chief of staff of a separate motorized rifle brigade in North Ossetia, deputy commander of an unspecified "combined group of forces" (possibly in the Russo-Georgian War), and finally deputy chief of staff of the 58th CAA. Marzoev then graduated from the General Staff Academy before commanding a motorized rifle division in the 58th CAA (likely the 42nd) and serving as deputy commander of the 49th CAA. Marzoev commanded the 138th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 6th CAA beginning in 2014 and participated in combat in Donetsk Oblast.⁸⁶ Marzoev took command of the 22nd Army Corps in Crimea on November 1, 2021.⁸⁷

Chief of Staff of the 22nd Army Corps: Unknown

Information about the current chief of staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 22nd Army Corps: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

Navy-level Officers

Russian Black Sea Fleet

Commander-in-Chief of the Black Sea Fleet: Admiral Igor Vladimirovich Osipov

[POSSIBLY ARRESTED AS OF APRIL 22]

Osipov began his career commanding a small anti-submarine ship in the Pacific Fleet after graduating from the Higher Naval Diving School (now the St. Petersburg Naval Institute) in 1995.⁸⁸ Osipov served as commander of an MPK-61 ship of the 11th Division of Surface Ships based in Vladivlastok from 1995 to 1998. From 2000 to 2001, he served as chief of staff of the 11th Division, and then as commander until September 2002. From 2004 to 2007, Osipov served as chief of staff of the 165th Brigade of Surface Ships and then commanded it from 2007 to 2011. He then graduated from the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff in 2012, after which he served as chief of staff of the Baltic Naval Base in Kaliningrad from 2012 to 2015.⁸⁹ Osipov then served as chief of staff of the Pacific Fleet from September 2016 to August 2018. Osipov served as the deputy chief of the Russian General Staff from August 2018 to May 2019 before accepting his current role as commander of the Russian Black Sea Fleet.⁹⁰ He was awarded the rank of admiral by presidential decree in 2021.⁹¹ The Ukrainian GUR reported on April 22 that Osipov was removed from his position and arrested for the loss of the *Moskva*, though ISW cannot independently confirm this report.⁹²

Chief of Staff of the Black Sea Fleet: Vice Admiral Sergey Mihailovich Pinchuk

Pinchuk graduated from the Leningrad Nakhimov Naval School in 1988 and then attended the Black Sea Higher Naval School in Sevastopol.⁹³ He served as an officer on the destroyer *Nastoychivy* from 1993 to 1999, rising from commander of an anti-aircraft missile battery, to commander of a surface missile battery, and finally to senior assistant to the commander of the ship. Pinchuk graduated from the Higher Special Officer Class of the Navy of 1999. His activities between 1999 and 2004 are unknown; he graduated from the Kuznetsova Naval Academy in 2004 before serving unspecified command positions at the Leningrad Military Base. From 2004 to 2010, Pinchuk commanded the 105th Brigade of the Baltic Fleet and commanded the Kronstadt garrison. He served as chief of staff of the Leningrad Naval Base of the Baltic Fleet from 2010 to 2011, commander of the Novorossiysk Naval Base of the Black Sea Fleet from 2011 to 2014, and lectured at the Russian Military Academy of the General Staff from 2014 to 2016.⁹⁴ Pinchuk has unspecified combat experience in the Russian military operation in Syria. He commanded the Caspian Flotilla from 2016 to 2021 and became chief of staff of the Black Sea Fleet in October 2021. The Ukrainian GUR reported on April 22 that investigative actions were underway against Pinchuk, though ISW cannot independently confirm this report.⁹⁵

Deputy Commander of the Russian Black Sea Fleet: Captain of the First Rank Andrey Nikolayevich Paly

[KIA IN MARIUPOL MARCH 20]

Paly is a Ukrainian national who graduated from Kyiv Higher Naval Political School in 1992.⁹⁶ Paly refused to take a Ukrainian military oath in March 1993 and left for Russia's Pacific Fleet, where he served as a psychologist on the destroyer *Fearless* and later as the deputy commander for educational work of a combat communications unit.⁹⁷ From 1994 to 1999, Paly served on the rescue ship *Georgy Titov*, the heavy nuclear missile cruiser *Peter the Great*, and served as the deputy commander of the Belomorsk Naval Base.⁹⁸ Paly then worked as a psychologist on the cruiser *Kerch* and deputy commander of the patrol ship *Inquisitive*.⁹⁹ Paly became the Deputy Commander of the radio-technical unit on the large anti-submarine ship *Ochakov* in August 2004.¹⁰⁰ In May 2005, Paly was appointed deputy commander for educational work of the 11th Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet. Paly has served as the deputy commander for work with personnel on numerous Black Sea Fleet ships in the Mediterranean Sea since 2004 and participated in naval exercises as part of Zapad-2009, Vostok-2010, and the Russian-Italian exercise "IONEX-2011."¹⁰¹ Paly participated in the Russo-Georgian War in South Ossetia from August to September 2008. Paly headed the Black Sea Fleet Department for Work with Personnel from 2011 to 2014. He then served as the deputy head of the Admiral Nakhimov Higher Naval School in Sevastopol—a position he held until accepting his most recent role as the Black Sea Fleet deputy commander in 2019.¹⁰² Paly notably acted as a liaison between the Black Sea Fleet and the so-called "Sevastopol self-defense" forces during the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, with his main task being to convince Ukrainian servicemen to violate

their oath and join the Russian Navy.¹⁰³ Several Kremlin media outlets confirmed on March 20 that Paly was killed by Ukrainian shelling in Mariupol.¹⁰⁴

Eastern Military District

District-level Officers

Commander of the Eastern Military District: Colonel General Aleksandr Yuryevich Chaiko

Chaiko began his military career after graduating from the Moscow Suvorov Military School in 1988.¹⁰⁵ He additionally attended the Moscow Higher Combined Arms Command School in 1992. From 1992 to 1999, he served as commander of a reconnaissance platoon, commander of a company, deputy commander of a battalion, and commander of a battalion in various units in the Western Group of Forces in Germany and Moscow Military District. After graduating from the Combined Arms Academy in 2001, he became Chief of Staff of a motorized rifle regiment in the Moscow Military District and then commanded a regiment of the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division until 2005. In 2006, Chaiko commanded the 27th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Sevastopol Brigade. Between 2007 and 2009, he commanded the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division and in 2009 directed the 473rd District Training Center for Junior Specialists.

In 2012, Chaiko graduated from the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff, rose to the rank of major general, and became deputy commander of an unspecified army in the CMD.¹⁰⁶ Chaiko served as Chief of Staff of the 20th Guards CAA in 2013 and took command of the army in 2014. He remained in this position until 2017. Chaiko served as the first Chief of Staff of the Russian troops in Syria upon the initiation of Russian operations in Syria in 2015 and possibly into 2016. From 2017 to 2019, Chaiko served as Chief of Staff of the Russian Air Defense forces in Khabarovsk. Chaiko served as Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces from 2019 to November 2021 and returned to Syria to command the Russian deployment there from September 2019 to an unspecified date in 2020.¹⁰⁷ Putin awarded Chaiko with the rank of Colonel General in June of 2021.¹⁰⁸ Chaiko took command of the EMD on November 16, 2021.¹⁰⁹ Chaiko reportedly served in the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, possibly as commander of the failed Russian drive on Kyiv (which was predominantly conducted by EMD forces) and was observed in Kyiv Oblast on March 23, 2022.¹¹⁰

Chief of Staff of the Eastern Military District: Lieutenant General Evgeny Valerivich Nikiforov

Nikiforov entered military service in 1987 after graduating from the Ussuriysk Suvorov Military School.¹¹¹ He then graduated from the Kolomna Higher Artillery Command School in 1991. According to Ukrainian Intelligence, Nikiforov served in various positions in the 83rd Separate Assault Brigade of the Far Eastern Military District from 1991 to 2002, including command of an unspecified artillery platoon and unspecified anti-tank battery.¹¹² After a likely education in a higher command academy, Nikiforov commanded the 83rd Brigade from 2005 to 2010. He likely then attended the General Staff Academy from 2010 to 2012 before serving as the Deputy Commander of the 58th Army from 2012 to 2014 and Chief of Staff of the 20th CAA from 2014 to 2016. Nikiforov then commanded the 20th CAA from 2016 to 2017 and the 58th CAA from 2017 to 2019. Nikiforov served as the Deputy Commander of the WMD from 2019 to 2020 before his appointment as Chief of Staff of the EMD in February 2020.¹¹³ Nikiforov gained combat experience in First and Second Chechen Wars and commanded the Russian Group of Forces in Syria from June 2021 to October 2021.¹¹⁴

Deputy Commander of the Eastern Military District: Lieutenant General Mikhail Yakovlevich Nosulev

Nosulev's early career is unknown from open sources. Nosulev served as Deputy Chief of Staff of the 58th CAA during the Russo-Georgian War in 2008.¹¹⁵ Nosulev commanded the 473rd Guards District Training Center, the 29th CAA of EMD, and became the Chief of Staff of the 49th CAA between 2010 and 2017.¹¹⁶ Nosulev took command of the 36th CAA in 2017.¹¹⁷ He has served as Deputy Commander of the EMD since January 2020.¹¹⁸

Army-level Officers

5th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 5th Combined Arms Army: Major General Alexei Vladimirovich Podilov

The majority of Podilov's military career has not been well-documented. He received his military education at the Chelyabinsk Higher Military Tank Command School, Combined Arms Academy of the Russian Armed Forces, and the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff on unspecified dates.¹¹⁹ Podilov served as the chief of staff of the 27th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2008 to 2012, then commanded the 57th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 5th CAA until 2014.¹²⁰ Podilov served as Head of the 392nd District Training Center from 2016 to 2017 before becoming deputy commander of the 41st CAA from 2018 to 2019.¹²¹ Podilov briefly served as acting commander of the 41st CAA in 2019 until becoming chief of staff of the 41st CAA from 2019 to 2020.¹²² Podilov took command of the 5th CAA in January of 2021.¹²³ He reportedly received combat experience in the Second Chechen War in an unknown unit.¹²⁴

Chief of Staff of the 5th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current chief of staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 5th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

29th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 29th Combined Arms Army: Major General Andrey Borisovich Kolesnikov [KIA IN UKRAINE MARCH 11]

Records on the majority of Kolesnikov's military service are limited. Kolesnikov previously commanded the 4th Tank Division from 2015 to 2018.¹²⁵ He served as chief of staff of the 1st Guards Tank Army of the WMD from 2020 to 2021 and took command of the 29th CAA on December 7, 2021. Kolesnikov was reportedly killed in Ukraine on March 11.¹²⁶

Chief of Staff of the 29th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current chief of staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 29th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

35th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 35th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Alexander Semyonovich Sanchik

Records about the career of Lieutenant General Alexander Semyonovich Sanchik are limited. He graduated from the Tashkent Higher Tank Command School in 1989 and the Combined Arms Academy in 2000 and had a likely typical early career path in the SMD, though his exact positions cannot be confirmed.¹²⁷ Sanchik commanded the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division from 2014 to 2015, attended the General Staff Academy from 2015 to 2017, and served as deputy commander of the 58th CAA from 2017 to 2020.¹²⁸ He became commander of the 35th CAA in 2020.¹²⁹ Sanchik was reportedly seriously wounded in Ukraine on March 2, but ISW cannot confirm his current status.¹³⁰

Chief of Staff of the 35th Combined Arms Army: Major General Sergey Ilyich Nyrkov

Nyrkov began his military career in 1988 and graduated from Frunze Higher Combined Arms Command School in 1992.¹³¹ Nyrkov served in a typical progression of positions as a platoon commander, company commander, battalion commander, and chief of staff of an unspecified regiment in the 201st Motorized Rifle Division until

December 2006.¹³² A Belarusian Telegram channel reported that Nyrkov was wounded in the stomach and arrived in a Gomel Oblast hospital on March 1 after combat in northern Ukraine.¹³³

Deputy Commander of the 35th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

36th Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 36th Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Valery Nikolayevich Solodchuk

Solodchuk commanded the 7th Guards Mountain Air Assault Division from 2012 to 2014.¹³⁴ The GUR reported that Solodchuk commanded the 1st Army Corps (the armed forces of the Donetsk People's Republic) from fall 2014 to spring 2015.¹³⁵ Solodchuk served as the Deputy Commander of the 5th CAA from 2015 to 2017 and Chief of Staff of the 36th CAA from 2017 to 2020 before taking command of the CAA in January 2020.¹³⁶ Solodchuk received combat experience in the First and Second Chechen Wars and operations in Dagestan.¹³⁷

Chief of Staff of the 36th Combined Arms Army: Major General Andrey Anatoliyevich Seritsky

Seritsky commanded the 212th District Training Center for Tank Troops of the Siberian Military District in Zabaykalskiy Krai during an unspecified time period.¹³⁸ Seritsky took command of the 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade, part of the Northern Fleet, in 2015 after reportedly serving in Donbas in an unspecified role. Ukrainian media reported that Seritsky participated in a terrorist act against Mariupol residential districts on January 24, 2015. Seritsky also reportedly served in a Russian special military operation in Syria.¹³⁹ Ukrainian outlets claimed that Seritsky was reportedly seriously wounded in Ukraine in March 2022 while serving as Chief of Staff of the 36th CAA.¹⁴⁰

Deputy Commander of the 36th Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

68th Army Corps

Commander of the 68th Army Corps: Lieutenant General Dmitry Valerievich Glushenkov

Records about Lieutenant General Dmitry Glushenkov's career are relatively limited. Glushenkov previously served as the Deputy Commander of the 35th CAA from 2015 to 2017 and commanded the 106th Guards Airborne Division from 2013 to 2015.¹⁴¹ Glushenkov took command of the 68th Army Corps in 2017.¹⁴² Glushenkov served in the peacekeeping mission in Yugoslavia and has combat experience from the Second Chechen War.¹⁴³

Chief of Staff of the 68th Army Corps: Major General Vladimir Anatoliyevich Belyavsky

Belyavsky graduated from Minsk Suvorov Military School in 1986 and graduated from the Kharkiv Guards Higher Tank Command School in 1990.¹⁴⁴ Belyavsky commanded a tank platoon in the 126th Coastal Defense Division of the Black Sea Fleet from 1990 to 1992 and commanded a reconnaissance platoon in the 810th Separate Marine Brigade starting in August 1992.¹⁴⁵ In 1993, Belyavsky participated in an operation to rescue encircled Russian officers in Abkhazia while commanding this platoon. From March 1996 to 1999, Belyavsky served as the Chief of Staff of the 888th Separate Reconnaissance Battalion of the Black Sea Fleet. Belyavsky graduated from the Combined Arms Academy in 2001, after which he commanded the 1200th Separate Reconnaissance Battalion in the 77th Guards Separate Marine Brigade until 2005. Belyavsky commanded an unspecified Naval Infantry unit in the Second Chechen War. Belyavsky then served as the Deputy Commander of the Baltic Fleet's 336th Naval Infantry Brigade, and from December 2009 to June 2014 commanded the 810th Separate Marine Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet. From 2014 to 2016, Belyavsky attended the General Staff Academy and from June 2016 to September 2017 commanded the 40th Separate Marine Brigade in the Pacific Fleet. Belyavsky took his current position as Chief of Staff of the 68th Army Corps in 2018.

Deputy Commander of the 68th Army Corps: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

Navy-level Officers

Pacific Fleet

Commander of the Pacific Fleet: Admiral Sergei Iosifovich Avakyants

Avakyants was born in the Armenian SSR to a naval family.¹⁴⁶ He graduated from the Black Sea Higher Naval Order of the Red Star School in 1980, after which he served in the Northern Fleet of the Soviet Navy. From 1980 to 1985, Avakyants served as commander of the control group of the anti-submarine ship *Admiral Yumashev*. In 1985, he took command of the anti-aircraft missile battalion of a missile cruiser. In 1991, he became commander of a cruiser as captain 3rd Rank. From 1996 to 2001, Avakyants rose through the ranks of the 43rd Division of Missile Ships of the Northern Fleet, beginning as deputy commander, then chief of staff, then commander. Between 2004 and 2007, he was chief of staff of the 7th Operational Squadron of surface ships of the Northern Fleet. He then moved to the Black Sea Fleet, where he served as chief of staff of the Novorossiysk Naval Base. At the end of 2007, he moved to the Pacific Fleet and took command of the Primorsky Flotilla until 2010. He served as chief of staff of the Pacific Fleet until May 3, 2012, when he was promoted to his current position as commander of the Pacific Fleet.¹⁴⁷ He rose to the rank of admiral in 2014.¹⁴⁸

Chief of Staff of the Pacific Fleet: Vice Admiral Sergey Grigoryevich Rekish

Rekish entered naval service after graduating from the Caspian Higher Naval School in Baku in 1988.¹⁴⁹ Information on the specifics of his career is relatively limited. Rekish served as crew commander of a nuclear submarine and commander of a submarine division of the Pacific Fleet at an unspecified time. He attended and graduated from the General Staff Academy and took charge of the Pacific Fleet submarine forces in 2016. He became commander of the submarine forces of the Northern Fleet in 2017.¹⁵⁰ He has served as chief of staff of the Pacific Fleet since August 16, 2018.¹⁵¹ Putin promoted Rekish to the rank of vice admiral in 2019.

Deputy Commander of the Pacific Fleet: Vice Admiral Denis Valentinovich Berezovsky

Berezovsky's naval career includes experience in the Ukrainian and Russian navies. From 2002 to 2005, he commanded the Ukrainian Naval Flagship *Sahaidachny*.¹⁵² By 2009, he was awarded the rank of captain and became a rear admiral in 2012.¹⁵³ He became commander of the Naval Forces of Ukraine in 2014.¹⁵⁴ However, a day after he became Commander, Berezovsky confirmed his allegiance to Crimea and was removed from his post by the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense.¹⁵⁵ He subsequently faced a criminal case on the grounds of high treason and was stripped of all Ukrainian military awards in 2018.¹⁵⁶ Berezovsky was appointed deputy commander of the Russian Black Sea Fleet by Defense Minister Shoigu on March 24, 2014.¹⁵⁷ He became deputy commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet in 2018.¹⁵⁸ He was awarded the rank of vice admiral in 2020.¹⁵⁹

Central Military District

District-level Officers

Commander of the Central Military District: Colonel General Aleksandr Pavlovich Lapin

Lapin began his military career when he was drafted into the Soviet Army Air Defense in 1982.¹⁶⁰ He then went on to attend the Kazan Higher Tank Command School and graduated in 1988. After his graduation, he served as commander of a tank platoon, tank company, and battalion of the 26th Army Corps. He additionally served in the Leningrad Military District and Northern Fleet for an unspecified period in the 1990s. Lapin attended the Military Academy of the Armored Forces and graduated in 1997. After his graduation, Lapin served as commander of a tank battalion of the 58th CAA from 1997 to 1999. In 1999, he became chief of staff and then commander of the 429th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 19th Motorized Rifle Division, likely for a brief period. Lapin served as Chief of Staff of the 20th Guards Motor Rifle Division from 1999 to 2003 and commanded the 205th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2003 to 2006. Lapin then attended the General Staff Academy from 2006 to 2009 and became deputy commander of the 58th Army from 2009 to 2012. Lapin took command of the 20th Guards CAA from 2012 to 2014 and then served as chief of staff of the EMD from 2014 to 2017. He then served as chief of staff of the Russian Armed Forces in Syria from January 2017 to November 2017.¹⁶¹ Lapin took his current position as commander of the CMD on November 22, 2017. Lapin returned to Syria to command the Russian deployment from October 2018 to January 2019.¹⁶²

Chief of Staff of the Central Military District: Colonel General Mikhail Yuryevich Teplinskiy

Teplinskiy entered military service after graduating from the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School in 1991.¹⁶³ Between 1991 and 1996, he commanded an airborne infantry platoon, reconnaissance platoon, and the reconnaissance company of the 137th Parachute Regiment of the 106th Airborne Division. He participated in operations in Transnistria in 1992 and in Chechnya from 1994 to 1995. He then went on to hold various command positions in the 234th Parachute Regiment of the 76th Airborne Division between 1999 and 2003, eventually rising to the rank of deputy commander in 2002 and chief of staff from 2003 to 2005. After likely attending the General Staff Academy or another military higher education institution from 2005 to 2007, Teplinskiy served as the head of the 212th Guards Training Center from 2007 to 2009 and was the chief of staff of the 20th Guards CAA from 2009 to 2013. Teplinskiy's move from a career in the VDV to the Russian ground forces is unusual. Teplinskiy then commanded the 36th CAA from 2013 to 2015. Ukraine's Main Intelligence Directorate reported that Teplinskiy served as the chief of staff of the Territorial Troops in the SMD in 2015, the Russian command structure responsible for the military forces of the DNR and LNR.¹⁶⁴ Teplinskiy then served as the chief of staff of the SMD from 2017 to 2019 and has served as chief of staff of the CMD since 2021.¹⁶⁵

Deputy Commander of the Central Military District: Lieutenant General Yevgeny Valentinovich Poplavsky

Records on Poplavsky's military career are relatively limited. Poplavsky received combat experience in the Soviet-Afghan War, First and Second Chechen Wars, and the Russian military operation in Syria. Poplavsky served as deputy chief of staff of the 29th CAA from 2010 to 2017.¹⁶⁶ Poplavsky then commanded the 29th CAA from 2017 to 2018 before accepting his current position as deputy commander of the CMD in November 2018.¹⁶⁷

Deputy Commander for Military-Political Work: Major General Rustam Sakhbazarovich Minnekaev

Minnekayev's military career has not been well-documented in the open-source. He became deputy commander for military-political work of the CMD around 2020.¹⁶⁸ Russian media sources indicated that Minnekayev was still deputy commander for military-political work up as of February 2022.¹⁶⁹ On April 22, 2022, Russian media sources named Minnekaev as "deputy commander of the CMD" and widely quoted a briefing he gave on Russian objectives for the second stage of the invasion of Ukraine.¹⁷⁰ It is unclear if Russian media was misreporting Minnekaev's role, or if he took over as overall deputy commander from Poplavsky. Regardless, we are including Minnekaev's bio due to the media attention his speech received.

Army-level Officers

2nd Guards Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 2nd Guards Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Andrei Vladimirovich Kolotovkin

Kolotovkin entered military service in 1990 after graduating from the St. Petersburg Higher All-Arms Command School.¹⁷¹ He took command of a motorized rifle platoon of the North Caucasian Military District in 1994 and held a likely standard progression of command and chief of staff positions for the next 20 years. He reportedly participated in Russian operations in Chechnya and Dagestan. Kolotovkin commanded the 8th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade from 2015 to 2016 and served as the deputy commander of the Black Sea Fleet Coastal Troops (the Russian ground forces stationed in Crimea) from 2016 to 2017. Kolotovkin commanded the 22nd Army Corps of the Black Sea Fleet from 2017 to 2018 and served as chief of staff of the 8th Guards CAA from 2018 to 2020. He has served as commander of the 2nd Guards CAA since 2020.

Chief of Staff of the 2nd Guards Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current chief of staff is not publicly available.

Deputy Commander of the 2nd Guards Combined Arms Army: Unknown

Information about the current deputy commander is not publicly available.

41st Combined Arms Army

Commander of the 41st Combined Arms Army: Lieutenant General Sergey Borisovich Ryzhkov

Ryzhkov entered military service in 1989 after graduating from the Leningrad Higher Combined Arms Command School.¹⁷² After graduation, he served in unspecified motorized rifle units in the 1990s before graduating from the Mikhail Frunze Combined Arms Academy in 1999. Specifics of his career in the 2000s are unverifiable, though he commanded an unspecified regiment during that time, took command of the 39th Motor Rifle Brigade in 2011, and graduated from the General Staff Academy in 2015. Ryzhkov served as deputy commander of the 29th CAA from 2015 to 2017.¹⁷³ Ryzhkov served as deputy commander of the 58th CAA from 2017 to 2019. He was promoted to commander of the 58th CAA in February 2019 and remained in that position until August 2020, when he became commander of the 41st CAA.¹⁷⁴ Ryzhkov has combat experience in the First and Second Chechen Wars and the Russian military operation in Syria.

Chief of Staff of the 41st Combined Arms Army: Major General Vitaly Petrovich Gerasimov

[KIA IN UKRAINE MARCH 7]

Gerasimov (no relation to the chief of the General Staff) began his career in 1999 after graduating from the Kazan Tank Higher Command School.¹⁷⁵ In the 2000s, he served in a typical succession of roles in the North Caucasus, Far East, Southern, and Central military districts, moving from platoon commander to brigade chief of staff. He reportedly commanded the 15th Motor Rifle Brigade from October 2013 to September 2014 and participated in combat in Luhansk during this period. Gerasimov served as head of the Tactics Department of the Russian Combined Arms Academy from 2014 to 2017.¹⁷⁶ Gerasimov commanded the 90th Guards Tank Division from 2019 to 2020.¹⁷⁷ Gerasimov became chief of staff of the 41st CAA in 2020.¹⁷⁸ The Ukrainian General Staff reported on March 8 that the Ukrainian Armed Forces killed Gerasimov on March 7 during fighting near Kharkiv.¹⁷⁹

Deputy Commander of the 41st Combined Arms Army: Major General Andrey Alexandrovich Suhovetskiy

[KIA IN UKRAINE MARCH 3]

Suhovetskiy's career has not been well-documented. He commanded the 7th Airborne Assault Division from February 2019 to November 2021 before becoming deputy commander of the 41st CAA on November 19, 2021.¹⁸⁰ Russian sources reported that Sukovetskiy was killed in combat in Ukraine on March 3.¹⁸¹

Russian Airborne Forces (VDV)

Commander of the Russian Airborne Forces: Colonel-General Andrey Nikolaevich Serdyukov

Serdyukov entered military service in 1983 after graduating from the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School.¹⁸² From 1983 to 1986, he served as commander of a reconnaissance platoon, deputy commander of an airborne company, and commander of an airborne company.¹⁸³ Between 1986 and 1990, Serdyukov served as chief of staff and eventually commander of a paratrooper battalion.¹⁸⁴ Serdyukov then went on to attend the Mikhail Frunze Military Academy from 1990 to 1993.¹⁸⁵ In 1993, he served as the deputy commander of an unspecified parachute regiment, going on to become commander in 1995. Serdyukov served as deputy commander of the 76th Airborne Assault Division from 1998 to 2003 and served as deputy commander of the Brigade of Russian Peacekeeping Forces in Kosovo from 1999 to 2000 during this period.¹⁸⁶ Serdyukov became commander of the 138th Separate Guards Motorized Rifle Brigade in 2002 and then commander of the 106th Guards Airborne Division from 2004 to 2007. He attended the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff from 2007 to 2009. In 2009, Serdyukov became deputy commander of the Far Eastern Military District's 5th CAA. He took over as commander of the 5th CAA when it was transferred to the newly formed EMD in 2011. Serdyukov became deputy commander of the SMD in February 2013 before becoming chief of staff of the SMD in October 2013, where he served until 2015.¹⁸⁷ From 2015 to 2016, Serdyukov served as commander of the 12th Reserve Command (the Russian headquarters commanding the DNR and LNR's armed forces) until October of 2016, when he took over his current position as commander of the Russian Airborne Troops. Serdyukov additionally commanded the Russian deployment to Syria from April 2019 to September 2019.¹⁸⁸

Chief of Staff of the Russian Airborne Forces: Colonel-General Evgeny Alekseevich Ustinov

Ustinov entered military service after graduating from the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School in 1984.¹⁸⁹ He served as deputy commander of an airborne battalion in Afghanistan from 1985 to 1987.¹⁹⁰ His activities between 1987 and 1998 are unknown. Ustinov graduated from the Mikhail Frunze Military Academy in 1998 and the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff in 2005, holding various unspecified positions within the Airborne Forces between these dates. He went on to serve as deputy commander of the Leningrad Military District from 2009 to 2011 and commanded the 6th CAA from 2011 to 2013. Ustinov then served as deputy commander of the CMD from April 2013 to September 2016, and chief of staff of the CMD from 2016 to 2018. During this time, Ustinov served as chief of staff of the Russian group of forces in Syria from 2016 to 2017. He commanded the CMD from October 2018 to January 2019 and became chief of staff of the Russian Airborne Forces in May 2019.

Deputy Commander of the Russian Airborne Forces: Major General Anatoly Georgievich Kontsevoi

Kontsevoi entered military service after graduating from the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School in 1989.¹⁹¹ After graduation, Kontsevoi commanded an airborne platoon in the Leningrad Military District, commanded an airborne company from 1992 to 1994, served as deputy commander of an airborne battalion in 1994, and commanded a paratrooper training battalion from 1994 to 1998. Kontsevoi then attended the Combined Arms Academy Forces until 2000. From 2000 to 2003, he served as chief of staff of the 45th Guards Spetsnaz Brigade of the Airborne Forces before commanding it from 2003 to 2006. He served as deputy commander of the Guards Airborne Division from 2006 to 2008 and deputy head of the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School from 2008 to 2012. He became head of the Ryazan Command School in 2012 and held this position until 2017, when he began studies at the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff. After graduating, Kontsevoi was appointed deputy commander of the Russian Airborne Forces in 2019.

Russian Aerospace Forces

Commander of the Aerospace Forces: Army General Sergei Vladimirovich Surovikin

Surovikin entered military service after graduating from the Omsk Higher All Arms Command School in 1987.¹⁹² After graduation, Surovikin served in the Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan.¹⁹³ He then commanded a motorized rifle platoon in the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division and was stationed in Moscow until 1991. In 1991, Surovikin served as chief of staff and acting commander of the 1st Motorized Rifle Battalion of the 2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division, in which capacity he was involved in the August Coup of 1991. Units under his command fought protesters and killed three civilians. Surovikin was arrested, but the Moscow Prosecutor's Office ultimately dropped the charges against him. He was then promoted on the direct order of President Boris Yeltsin.¹⁹⁴ After the August Coup and the investigation against him, Surovikin went on to attend the Mikhail Frunze Military Academy and graduated in 1995, after which he served in the 201st Gatchina Motorized Rifle Division in Tajikistan (now the 201st Military Base in Dushanbe). After serving with the 201st Motor Rifle Division, he went on to attend the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff and graduated in 2002. From 2002 to 2005, Surovikin commanded the 34th Motor Rifle Division and the 42nd Guards Motor Rifle Division in Chechnya, though the exact dates of his service with both units are unverifiable.

Surovikin then served as deputy commander, chief of staff, and commander of the 20th Guards Red Banner Combined Arms Army from 2005 to 2008. He then went on to head the Main Operational Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces from 2008 to 2010. In 2010, he served as chief of staff of the Volga-Urals Military District, which was reformed into the CMD in September of 2010. In 2011, Surovikin took command of the new Main Directorate of the Military Police of the Russian Defense Ministry, after which he became chief of staff of the EMD in 2012. In 2013, Surovikin was appointed commander of the Eastern Military District. Surovikin notably commanded the Russian military grouping in Syria in 2017.¹⁹⁵ Surovikin took command of the Aerospace Forces on October 31, 2017, becoming the first Combined Arms commander to lead the air force.¹⁹⁶ Surovikin was promoted to general of the Army in 2021 and is a possible successor to Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov.¹⁹⁷

Chief of Staff of the Aerospace Forces: Lieutenant General Viktor Musavirovich Afzalov

Information regarding the specifics of Afzalov's career is not publicly available. Afzalov was reportedly chief of staff of the Aerospace Forces as of June 2020.¹⁹⁸

Deputy Commander of the Aerospace Forces: Colonel General Andrey Vyacheslavovich Yudin

Yudin entered military service after graduating from the Armavir Higher Military Aviation Pilot School in 1983.¹⁹⁹ Between 1983 and 1989, Yudin served as a pilot, senior pilot, and flight commander in the Baltic Military District. Yudin then commanded an unspecified fighter aviation regiment of the Western Group of Forces and became deputy commander of the aviation squadron of the 16th Air Army in December 1989. His activities between 1989 and 1996 are unavailable in the open-source, but he graduated from the Yuri Gagarin Air Force Academy in 1996.²⁰⁰ From 1996 to 2008, Yudin served as a squadron commander, deputy commander, and eventually commander of an unspecified fighter aviation regiment of the Far Eastern Military District, as well as a deputy commander and commander of a fighter aviation division of the Far Eastern Military District. From 2010 to 2011, he headed the Combat Training Directorate of the Air Force and went on to become deputy commander of the 3rd Air Force and Air Defense Command of the EMD from 2011 to 2012. He served as commander of the 4th Air Force and Air Defense Command of the SMD from 2012 to 2015 and was appointed deputy commander of the Aerospace Forces on August 1, 2015.

Deputy Commander of the Aerospace Forces: Commander of the Air Force: Lieutenant General Sergey Vladimirovich Dronov

Dronov entered military service after graduating from the Yeisk Higher Military Aviation Pilot School in 1983.²⁰¹ Until 1990, he served as a pilot in an unspecified fighter-bomber aviation regiment in the then-Belarusian Military District.²⁰² He entered the Yuri Gagarin Air Force Academy in 1990 and graduated in 1992. His activities up until 2007 are not available in the open-source. In 2007, he graduated from the Military Academy of the Russian General Staff and commanded the Ussuri Mixed Aviation Division of the Air Force and Air Defense in 2008. In 2009, he became deputy commander and then commander of the Red Banner Far Eastern Association of the Air Force and Air Defense. He was appointed deputy commander of the Aerospace Forces in 2015, after which he led the aviation group of Russian Aerospace Forces in Syria for an unspecified period. He rose to the rank of commander of the Air Force in 2019.

Deputy Commander of the Aerospace Forces: Commander of the Air and Missile Defense Forces: Lieutenant General Andrey Gennadievich Demin

Demin began his military career after graduating from the Yaroslavl Military School of Air Defense in 1986.²⁰³ Demin held various engineering positions at the Kapustin Yar training ground in Astrakhan Oblast from 1986 to 1989 and held unspecified command roles in the 1st Special Purpose Air Defense Army until 1994. From 1994 to 1997, Demin commanded the 411th anti-aircraft missile battalion equipped with S-300V air defense systems. Demin then graduated from Zhukov Air and Space Defense Academy in 1999, after which he commanded the 614th Guards Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment from 2000 to 2002. Demin served as the head of Anti-Aircraft Missile Forces of the Air Defense Corps from 2002 to 2004, deputy head of the Combat Training Directorate of the Air Force from 2004 to 2009, and commander of the 1st Aerospace Defense Brigade from 2009 to 2011; he graduated from the General Staff Academy in 2009. Demin later served as chief of staff from 2011 to 2013 and then commander from 2013 to 2015 of the Air and Missile Defense Command.²⁰⁴ Demin commanded the 1st Special Purpose Air and Missile Defense Army from 2015 to 2021 and accepted his current role as the deputy commander of the Aerospace Forces in 2021.²⁰⁵

Deputy Commander of the Aerospace Forces: Commander of the Space Forces: Colonel General Aleksandr Valentinovich Golovko

Golovko started his military service after graduating from the Kharkiv Air Force National University in 1986.²⁰⁶ Between 1986 to 1998, Golovko served as a department engineer, station chief, company commander, and department head at the Titov Main Test and Space Systems Control Centre in Kranoznamensk, Moscow Oblast. Golovko graduated from the Military Academy for Strategic Rocket Forces in 1992 and was promoted to head a separate command complex at the Titov Centre from 1998 to 2001. Golovko then attended the Military Academy

of the Russian General Staff from 2001 to 2003. Golovko served as the deputy chief of staff of the Space Forces between 2003 and 2004 before returning to the Titov Center as deputy chief of staff in 2003. He became chief of staff at the Titov Center in 2004 and became the Center's head in 2007, where he remained until 2011. Golovko served as the head of the First State Test Cosmodrome from June 2011 until Putin appointed him as the commander of the Russian Aerospace Defense Forces on December 24, 2012.²⁰⁷ Putin then appointed Golovko as commander of the Space Forces on August 1, 2015.²⁰⁸



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