

\$50,000 Embezzlement in Armed Forces Uncovered

By [The Moscow Times](#)

January 24, 2013

The  Moscow Times

Police uncovered the embezzlement of at least 1.5 million rubles (\$50,000) in budget funds meant for a branch of the armed forces, news reports said Thursday.

The scheme concerns 500 million rubles allocated by the Defense Ministry in 2008 for the Strategic Missile Forces and designated for the reclamation of rocket launcher silos from their operational sites throughout Russia, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

After an audit into the spending, "illegal schemes were revealed, in which officials from the Defense Ministry and representatives of a range of commercial firms are suspected to have taken part," the Interior Ministry's press service said.

In particular, the head of one branch of the Strategic Missile Forces reportedly concluded a 10 million ruble contract with a private company run by one of his former subordinates called PromSpetsStroi to reclaim 11 rocket launchers in the Orenburg region.

The head of PromSpetsStroi demanded a 1.5 million ruble kickback for the work, and the transfer of the money was documented by police.

The work performed by the company on reclaiming the rocket launchers was done intermittently and inadequately, despite having been paid for in full by the Defense Ministry and officials from the Strategic Missile Forces.

Several criminal charges have been filed over the incident, including large-scale fraud (with a maximum punishment of 10 years in prison), premeditated bribery accompanied by racketeering (with a maximum punishment of 12 years in prison) and abuse of office with especially severe consequences (with a maximum punishment of 10 years).

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