

Investigators File More Charges in Oboronservis Case

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Investigators have opened a criminal case into the transfer of a plot of Defense Ministry land to Valery Puzikov, former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov's brother in law, Kommersant reported Monday.

The case, concerning the transfer of land in the prestigious Black Sea resort area, has been opened on charges of fraud, investigators said.

The crime is punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Investigators say that the land, which was supposed to host an early warning station, was sold to a private developer for 110 million rubles (\$3.5 million) — 57 million rubles less than the market price.

Puzikov then began the development of an elite housing complex on the land.

Puzikov himself has been located overseas since February, when he left following reports in the press of his involvement in the Oboronservis case.

Puzikov already faces charges of abuse of office, which carry a maximum punishment of 10 years in prison.

Serdyukov, who was questioned earlier in the case as a witness, said the ministry's involvement in Puzikov's projects was an "operational necessity."

Several high-ranking officials have been arrested in the Oboronservis case, including Yevgenia Vasilyeva, former head of the Defense Ministry's property relations department. In the wake of the unfolding corruption probe, President Vladimir Putin dismissed then Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov on Nov. 6, 2012. The former defense minister was later questioned as a witness in the case.

The total loss to the budget in the Oboronservis case is estimated to reach 4 billion rubles.

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