

Serdyukov to Be Questioned in Arms Smuggling Case

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov is due to be questioned in connection with the illegal trafficking of arms across the Russian border, a news report said Tuesday.

Serdyukov will act as a witness in the case, Kommersant reported.

On Monday, law enforcement officials arrested Vladimir Fitsner, the director of the St. Petersburg-based design and production company Bars. Fitsner was charged with smuggling arms and military equipment across the Russian border from Kazakhstan. He faces up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

He was later released under a pledge not to leave town.

Investigators say Fitsner was involved in moving components for self-guiding missiles across the border, which he was able to do thanks to his membership in a working group charged

with "the regular certification of oxygen-powered torpedos and their service maintenance at facilities belonging to Oboronservis."

Investigators say Fitsner may have been appointed to the working group with help from the former defense minister's adviser, Adm. Gennady Suchkov, who headed the group at the time.

The creation of the working group was also authorized by Serdyukov at the time.

Earlier, Serdyukov was questioned in connection with another criminal case involving the illegal sale of Defense Ministry's property through the subsidiaries of Oboronservis. Although he was not officially charged, the investigation cost Serdyukov the top post at the Defense Ministry.

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