

Serdyukov and Aide Refuse to Cooperate With Investigators

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Investigators said Wednesday that former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and his aide Yevgenia Vasilyeva have refused to cooperate in the investigation into illegal property development by the former minister's brother-in-law.

The investigation concerns Serdyukov's brother-in-law Valery Puzikov, who is suspected in the illegal privatization and development of more than 9,000 square meters of land in southern Russia.

Investigators say Puzikov used equipment and personnel supplied by the Defense Ministry to develop the land and build elite construction there.

Serdyukov and Vasilyeva, who are suspected of being romantically involved, both cited Article 51 of the Constitution, which prohibits people from testifying against themselves or their close relatives.

"The position taken by Serdyukov and Vasilyeva doesn't contribute to establishing the truth in this criminal case," the Investigative Committee said in a statement posted on its official website Wednesday.

"But even without the testimony of these two individuals, the investigation has a mass of other legitimate ways to gather and process evidence," the statement said.

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