

Another State Land Fraud Case Surfaces at Defense Ministry

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A new corruption scandal has emerged involving the sale of military property via a subsidiary company of the Defense Ministry.

Investigators found that the ministry's accommodation department canceled a contract with Stroimpuls construction company — which was owned by late businessman Sergei Amelin — and is trying to get back 9 billion rubles (\$274 million) in advanced payments, Kommersant reported Wednesday.

However, part of this money has already been spent on facilities that belonged to the Oboronservis defense company, the report said.

Amelin, who died of a heart attack on Jan. 20, had been investigated in connection with large-scale fraud at Oboronservis.

Stroiimpuls was one of the provisions department's main contractors and has built or repaired more than 100 Defense Ministry facilities.

The company received 17.2 billion rubles in advance payments between 2010 and 2012, but 10.2 billion rubles of that money is unaccounted for.

Another company controlled by Amelin, Teorema, received 2.4 billion rubles in loans from Stroiimpuls, which were used to buy property previously owned by the ministry, the report said.

A 7-billion-ruble lawsuit has been opened against Stroiimpuls at Moscow's Arbitration Court, while in St. Petersburg, Teorema is being sued for 2.5 billion rubles.

On July 1, the department's loan agreements with Stroiimpuls and Teorema were canceled.

The department also asked the court to seize all 15 facilities bought by Teorema in the Moscow region as material evidence of criminality in Oboronservis.

Stroiimpuls' trustee manager Anna Markova said the company's former CEO, Maxim Bobrov, concluded more than 170 contracts totaling 2.6 billion rubles. The money was then transferred to contractors using an intermediary firm created by Stroiimpuls, she added.

Although Bobrov was fired by the company, no criminal case has been opened against him.

More than 10 cases are linked to Oboronservis investigation into Defense Ministry land sales at below market prices.

Former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov became the most noteworthy casualty when he was fired last November by President Vladimir Putin, but so far there have been few convictions.

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