

# Investigative Committee to Crack Down on Corruption During Coming Privatization

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The head of the powerful Investigative Committee said Thursday that preventing corruption during a planned privatization of state assets would be a top priority for his agency this year.

The government recently announced plans for an ambitious three-year program running up to 2016 to privatize a wide array of state property, from energy to agriculture and banking to transportation. The program is expected to yield the state 1 trillion rubles (\$31 billion).

Investigative Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin said his agency will focus in particular on preventing the theft of state assets and warned against transferring state property to private parties to prices below market value.

Bastrykin said the damages from corruption last year amounted to more than 13 billion rubles (\$360.5 million). However, 11 billion rubles have been recovered in the form of property seized

from people convicted of corruption, he said.

More than 28,000 anti-corruption cases were launched last year, compared with 18,000 cases in the previous year. Out of them, some 9,000 corruption related crimes were solved, up from 6,000 in 2012, Bastrykin said.

Bastrykin has come to prominence in recent years off the back of a string of high-profile investigations, including one into the massive Oboronservis fraud case, which involved the sale of hundreds of millions of dollars of Defense Ministry real estate assets.

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