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## **Investigation reopened against Omsk Region ex-minister of property relations**



The Omsk Region office of the Investigative Committee has reopened a case against former Minister of property Relations of Omsk Region Vadim Merenkov. He is charged with abuse of power that entailed transfer of plots of land in Kirovsky district of the city of Omsk (Part 3, item “c” and Part 1 of Article 286 of the RF Penal Code).

According to investigators, in 2008-201e, Merenkov while serving as first deputy director of the Omsk administration’s property relations department together with Yuri Gamburg who then was the director of the said department, committed a number of illegal actions to sell at understated prices 24 plots of land of total area of 5.5 ha to affiliated persons and a plot of land of 21 ha to OOO Krona, a limited liability company, to make there vegetable patches. To do that they illegally changed the type of land tenure of the said properties which basically were located in the area intended for apartment blocks construction. Later the lands were used to construct cottages on them. The illegal transfer of lands caused budget of Omsk Region and the city of Omsk a damage of more than 200 million rubles. Additionally, Merenkov, while serving as the director of the same department abused his power when he sold 2 more plots of lands to citizens in a similar manner, causing a damage of 10 million rubles.

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In March 2014, Merenkov escaped from a hospital in Moscow and was put on an international wanted list. Following a request filed by investigators, a court ruled to place him in custody in absentia.

Maybe understanding the gravity of the crime and the inevitability of consequences, Merenkov turned himself in today. At present he is being questioned about the crimes. The investigation is ongoing.

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