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## **In Stavropolskiy krai, members of an organized group are accused of cartel conspiracy**

The investigating authorities of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for Stavropolskiy krai finalized the investigation of the criminal case against two women and five men. Depending on the role of each, they are accused of committing crimes prescribed in Article 178 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (restriction of competition), Article 159 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (fraud), Article 174.1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (legalization of funds obtained by criminal means).

The investigation identified that in 2016 a resident of the Stavropol city built up an organized group, which included her acquaintances, friends and relatives. The purpose of the group was the theft of budgetary funds when concluding government contracts, limiting the competition of companies in Stavropolskiy krai, as well as legalizing funds obtained by criminal means.

The group included legal advisers, managers, a tender specialist and CEOs of Companies set up for participation in auctions.

Between 2017 to 2019, the above mentioned Companies, participating in the cartel agreement, have signed 18 state contracts for the supply of equipment and machinery for the needs of Stavropolskiy krai. At the same time, the contracts were concluded at an inflated cost. In addition, as a result of the restriction of competition, the criminal group participated in over 300 auctions for the supply, construction and improvement in the region.

As a result of restricting competition, members of the organized group generated income in the amount of more than a billion rubles, and also caused damage to the budget of the Russian Federation in the amount of more than 19.5 million rubles.

A criminal case was launched by the Investigative Committee of Russia based on the investigative files of the Economic Security Directorate and the the Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia for Stavropolskiy krai.

The investigator collected enough evidence, the criminal case against 7 defendants was submitted to the court with the approved indictment for consideration on the merits.

The organizer of the group is put on the wanted list.

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