
Four residents of Saint-Petersburg found guilty of VAT fraud

A court has recognized the evidence gathered by Saint-Petersburg Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee sufficient to convict Alexey Smirnov, Viktor Vitenko, Alexander Ratnikov and Svetlana Goryachikh. They were found guilty of a fraud committed by an organized criminal group on a very large scale and an attempted fraud (part 4 of article 159 of the RF Penal Code).

The court and investigators have revealed that in the period between 2011 and June 2012 the defendants prepared documents for registration of legal entities, found citizens ready to act as their founders and CEOs. After that they forged accounting documents which they filed with tax authorities on behalf of the said entities and got the right to compensate for VAT. They stole from the Russian federal budget over 214 million rubles. The defendants failed to steal another 315 million rubles as in June 2012 they were detained by law enforcement bodies.

Vitenko and Ratnikov have got suspended sentences of 5 years each, Goryachikh – 2.5 years. Smirnov, who has a previous conviction of mediation in bribery, was sentenced to 6 years to be served in a maximum-security penal colony.

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