
Chief of regional fire service charged with negligence in Khakassia wildfire investigation



The Main Investigations Directorate of the Russia's Investigative Committee continues investigating a criminal case over mass fires that broke out on 12 April 2015 and killed 31 people in Shira, Ust-Abakan, Beya and Ordzhonikidze Districts. In addition, over 1.5 thousand victims applied for medical aid, over 1.5 thousand houses were burned down, over 50 houses were damaged by the wildfires and 1.6 thousand other buildings were burned down.

Chief of fire service of Khakassia Anatoly Zayarny was detained on 6 May 2015. He was charged with a crime under part 3 of article 293 of the RF Penal Code (negligence). Restraint is under discussion at the moment.

According to investigators, while heading the republican fire service between 2010 and 2015, Zayarny failed to provide enough fire equipment (the republic was over 30% short of equipment) and enough people under the current regulations. The said resulted in the fact that the fire service was no ready to mass wildfires and there was not enough equipment to contain and put out the ones that raged on 12 April 2015. During the probe the investigators are going to find out what the money allocated to buy fire equipment had been spent on.

Chief of a department of the Shira District fire service Viktor Zenkov was arrested on suspicion of negligence earlier. He was charged with a crime under part 3 of article 293 of the RF Penal Code (negligence).

Zenkov, aware of spreading wildfires and that it was necessary to declare 3rd level of danger failed to attend the site in person or organize evacuation of people and their property, did not order a dispatcher of the fire service to inform the central fire communication unit about the class of the fire

and request additional forces for firefighting operations.

A lot of investigative operations have been carried out since the probe started. More than 200 searches and seizures have been conducted in the Government of Khakassia, civil defense, emergency situations and fire safety divisions of the republican Government, fire service, divisions of the Emergencies Ministry Main Office for Khakassia, other agencies, administrations of districts and rural settlements. More than 1,000 people have been recognized victims and questioned, forensic medical inquiries have been assigned or are being run for the injured and those treated in hospitals. The work with the victims goes on constantly. More than 150 people from among officials of executive authorities and local government have been questioned.

At present the following forensic inquiries are underway: fire, chemical, commission medical ones. In addition a fire technical forensic inquiry is underway to find out the reasons for wildfires, their swift spreading and why there were troubles with putting them out and evacuating the people.

The investigators are also checking if the facts of misapplication or inefficient use of funds allocated for fire control measures had taken place.

The investigation is ongoing.

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