

---

## **Interview of the Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Russia to the news agency "RIA Novosti"**



### **Mr. Alexander Bastrykin: The Investigative Committee is waiting for intensive work in the new territories of Russia**

*In the lead-up to the Day of the Forensic Service establishment, Mr. Alexander Bastrykin, Chairman of the Investigative Committee of Russia, spoke in an interview with RIA Novosti about some of the investigative results of the terrorist attack on Crimean bridge, about the role of Forensic Directorates in resolving especially serious crimes, developing new methods and software, and also about he spoke about the progress on the investigation of past crimes.*

**– Alexander Ivanovich, first of all, could you be so kind to tell us about the latest results related to the investigation of the terrorist attack Crimean Bridge?**

---

– To date, persons directly related to the commission of a terrorist act have been identified. They are citizens of Ukraine, Russia, Armenia and Georgia. Among them are defendants who provided a transit channel for the transportation of various goods to the territory of the Russian Federation for the purpose of subsequent movement of a mined truck across the state border. Eight persons were detained, investigative actions were carried out with them, and on the motion of the investigation, the court imposed a restraint as custody on them. In total, 12 involved individuals have been identified so far.

Within the criminal investigation, technical expertise has been appointed and is being carried out to detect the initiating device of the fuse and the mechanism for activating the explosive.

The investigation confirmed that the planning and organization of the terrorist act on Crimean Bridge was carried out by the Ukrainian Special Services.

**– As you noted earlier, forensic groups work in the Donbas, Zaporozhye and Kherson Oblasts. What are their tasks?**

– What we see in Donbas is the unprecedented destruction of residential buildings and civilian infrastructure committed by Ukrainian armed groups. The task of our Officers is to document the traces of these crimes within the criminal investigations, assess the damage, and take measures to protect the victims. Despite the scale of what is happening, we must examine everything in great detail for a further legal assessment.

And in this work, forensic divisions, experts of the Investigative Committee of Russia, who take part in inspections of buildings and structures in various settlements, study other objects, conduct searches, and analyze information contained on electronic media, provide great assistance to the investigation. We have established effective and close cooperation between our divisions when inspecting large areas. Clear algorithms have been developed that allow detailed and prompt conduct of such investigative actions. Existing practice is constantly being summarized, and a number of manuals have already been prepared for more effective work in this direction. Among them is a manual on the peculiarities of investigating crimes related to the use of banned means and methods of warfare under the conditions of a special military operation. Standard algorithms have been developed for conducting inspections of crime scenes during explosion, hitting rocket and cannon artillery shells, determining the direction of shelling, damage to multi-storey residential buildings, large areas of the residential sector. There are algorithms for interrogating certain categories of persons in the investigation of such crimes. Based on the collected files, our experts determine the amount of damage caused to destroyed buildings and infrastructure, and for this, an appropriate algorithm has also been developed, taking into account the current situation and market prices. At the moment, it has been established that the replacement cost of the evaluated objects in Mariupol is over 176 billion rubles, in Rubezhnoye - almost 17 billion rubles and in Severodonetsk - at least 29.5 billion rubles.

---

**– Recently, the Department announced the formation of four new divisions. How is the manning process going? Who is supposed to be hired? What could be the difficulties?**

– I have signed the relevant orders, and at present, new investigative units are being formed in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, as well as Zaporozhye and Kherson Oblasts. Officers with experience in investigative work, forensic experts will go to work in new regions. I have always said that in addition to legal skills, human, moral qualities are important, it is necessary to hear people who come to us for help and advice. This is especially important in the current situation and changes in legislation. There will be intensive work with citizens to clarify the competence of our Department and, if necessary, other structures, and the specifics of legislation. I am sure there will be many questions. In terms of systematization of unsolved crimes of past and their finalization, a lot of work remains to be done, especially in Zaporozhye and Kherson Oblasts, which only recently seceded from Ukraine. And these tasks will also be resolved by our investigators and forensic specialists. In addition, the professionalism of the Officers of the supporting Directorates will also be required, since at first we will have to solve logistical issues related to the placement of our Directorates, transport and other organizational issues of the functioning of Directorates.

**– Often in the statements of the Investigative Committee it is said that you send Forensic Experts of the Main Directorate to provide assistance to a particular region. What is the impact of this practice?**

– In the current year, the staff of the Main Investigative Directorate (FC) studied more than 4.5 thousand criminal cases and 800 files of procedural inspections on applications for the disappearance of citizens, on the facts of murders, the discovery of corpses without external signs of violent death and on sexual crimes, including in relation to juveniles. As a result of providing practical and methodological assistance in the criminal investigation, in cooperation with the Territorial Investigative Directorates of the Investigative Committee of Russia and the Internal Affairs Bodies, more than 480 grave and especially grave crimes were resolved. With the help of subdivisions of forensic support of the investigation in the Federal districts, the Regional Investigative Directorates conducted more than seven thousand investigative actions. All this not only improves the professional level of colleagues, but also produces concrete results.

For example, in August of this year, a woman was murdered in Orenburg oblast. She was a local doctor of general practice. Along the route of the victim and the alleged offender, video cameras were identified where information was recorded and later it was seized. It was done with the participation of a Forensic Specialist. During the analysis of the videos, it was detected that the alleged perpetrator followed the victim, and after the murder he returned to his house. Next, during the conduct of investigative actions and investigative search activities, a resident of the above house were identified, similar in appearance to the alleged criminal. The examinations made it possible to identify the suspect's genotype based on an Olympian jacket found at the crime scene. He was later arrested and charged. The case will soon go to trial.

---

Here, on the positive side, it is worth noting forensic technology, which greatly helps us in detecting and probing traces at the scene of crimes. These include various high-intensity expert light sources, cyanoacrylate cameras, sonars, thermal imagers, metal detectors and much more.

**– Mr. Alexander Ivanovich, it is no secret that a number of sanctions are currently in effect against Russia, which are also related to technical means. Tell me please; is there a shortage of the necessary equipment in the work of Forensic Specialists of the RF IC?**

– When the Investigative Committee was established, almost all the equipment necessary for the work of Forensic Specialists was foreign-manufactured. But over the past, we have systematically purchased domestic samples, and now a significant part of the forensic equipment used by our divisions is of domestic production. Often, Russian equipment allows us to work more efficiently at the scene of incidents rather than foreign counterparts. Therefore, the sanctions imposed by the West did not affect the work of our Officers in any way.

**– How is the disclosure of crimes of past going?**

– Our Department has been paying high attention to resolving such crimes since its inception. For nine months of this year, more than 4.9 thousand crimes were investigated, including 739 murders. More than 4,000 examinations have been carried out on these cases. Such successes have been achieved thanks to the initiative and coordinated actions, analytical abilities of Officers. Within the work of interdepartmental analytical groups, which is regulated by joint orders of Law Enforcement Agencies, systematic work is being carried out. It includes the development of additional investigative-search measures and investigative actions with specific deadlines for execution in criminal cases on crimes of past among other things. There is also a regular study of criminal cases on such crimes. In many cases, physical evidence is preserved, and with the help of new research, we can analyze it and get a result.

For example, in Omsk Oblast, a series of rapes committed between 2010-2012 was uncovered. The man chose apartments on the ground floors of buildings, entered them through the windows and raped the victims. From the scenes, trace-samples were seized, from which it was possible to identify the genetic profile. All women noted the quick and quiet speech of the Suspect. There have been no attacks for 10 years, but this year in Omsk money was stolen from an office on the ground floor. The scissors used to open the lock of the safe-box were left at the crime scene, and traces were found on them, and the genotype was isolated, which coincided with the genotype of the Suspect in a series of rapes mentioned above. The Suspect was soon arrested. It turned out that he served a sentence in another country for several years for theft, and then he returned back to Omsk. A repeated molecular genetic examination confirmed that the detainee is the same “window man”. During subsequent investigative actions, he was identified by the victims not only by his appearance, but also by his voice. In September, the person involved in the criminal case was arrested and charged. In addition, he is verified for involvement in other crimes.

---

And somewhere, when solving a crime, the use of competent tactics of investigative actions can help. For example, in the case when a serial offender is serving a life sentence, but not all the crimes committed by him have been solved yet. And here, a competent interrogation tactic, combined with an analysis of the files of suspended cases, can give positive results. In Samara oblast, during such work, additional episodes of the crimes committed by Mr. Oleg Rylkov, who was convicted of especially serious crimes, were detected. It was revealed that between 1993 and 1994, Mr. Rylkov committed the murder of five women and one juvenile on the territory of the Central Rayon of the Tolyatti city. When verifying the testimony on the scene, this information was confirmed, and taking into account the available evidence, the court found him guilty of these crimes. It must be said, that it is important for the relatives of the victims to know about the fate of their loved ones and about the punishment those involved received. This is the principle of the inevitability of punishment.

**– You mentioned serial criminals. And how many serial crimes were resolved, including with the help of forensic capabilities?**

– This year, 51 grave and especially grave crimes have already been finalized, with signs of seriality, 45 of which belong to the category of crimes of past. For example, it was possible to resolve a murder and attempted murder, forced by robbery and committed with a very long time interval in two subjects - in 1998 in Samara oblast and in 2008 in the Republic of Bashkortostan. Drivers of heavy trucks were attacked in both cases. At the same time, in the second case, after the misfire of the attacker's pistol, the victim offered active resistance, he managed to survive. Biological traces of the attacker were found at the crime scene, and a DNA profile was isolated. After the first attack, a fingerprint was preserved. However, no individuals with a similar genotype or fingerprints were found in the databases. After more than two decades, within the work related to solve crimes of past, Forensic Experts carefully examined and studied the files of case, and appointed repeated expert studies. The existing fingerprint was verified against databases, and a match was found with the data of a native of Chelyabinsk oblast. Further investigative actions and a comparison of facts proved that he could be involved in the 1998 crime. And when testing his genetic profile, a match was obtained with the genotype on physical evidence in a criminal case of robbery in 2008. After that, the issue of combining criminal cases in one proceeding was resolved. The accused is in custody and is being checked for involvement in other similar crimes.

The trial of Mr. Radik Tagirov began yesterday, he is charged with more than 30 murders and other crimes. Between 2011-2012, on the territory of Volga Federal Okrug, he fraudulently entered the apartments of lonely elderly women, posing as a public utility worker, then killed and stole their property. To solve the crimes, the investigation worked out different lines. More than 10 thousand people were tested for involvement with more than five thousand expert studies. The media were also involved in this process. As a result of well-coordinated interaction between Law Enforcement Agencies, Mr. Tagirov was detained and prosecuted.

**– How is the search for missing people organized?**

---

– In recent years, the Investigative Committee, together with other Directorates, has taken serious measures to make this process as efficient as possible. Especially if a child goes missing. Orders and instructions have been issued, based on them the Investigating Authorities take measures to search for missing juveniles, organize the necessary interagency cooperation. From all regions, Forensic Experts of the Main Directorate receive information about grave and especially grave crimes committed against juveniles, including those associated with their disappearance. Information about the missing children is transmitted within a day. Facts where the missing has not yet been discovered are the subject to control, practical and methodological assistance is provided to ensure the completeness and comprehensiveness of the investigation.

The overall effectiveness of the search for missing juveniles for the six months of 2022 is estimated at 99.2%. According to the Russian Investigative Committee, in the first half of this year, 4,057 juveniles were reported missing, but the vast majority of them were promptly found alive and unharmed. For example, competent actions of Law Enforcement Agencies made it possible to find a minor missing in the Toropets town, Tver Oblast. Forensic Investigators, Officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, Rosgvadiya (the Russian Guard), as well as volunteers of the Sova VSOD organized large-scale events during which the child was found alive in a sewer hole, where he accidentally fell down.

**– Are the available DNA databases somehow used in the search for people?**

– A significant part in the investigation of the facts of the disappearance of citizens is played by DNA research and DNA recording of biological materials from unidentified corpses. As a result of cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, for several years now, our Divisions have been given access to the service of the Unified Search Federal System for Genetic Identification. This allows the Department of Medical and Biological Research of the Main Investigative Directorate of the Russian Investigative Committee to independently register and verify genetic profiles obtained during the production of molecular genetic examinations according to the decisions of Investigators of the Investigative Divisions of the Russian Investigative Committee, as well as to carry out information interaction between the Forensic Subdivisions of the Bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia and the Russian Investigative Committee in the field of accounting for genomic information. The Main Directorate of the Russian Investigative Committee has organized work to use the Federal Database of Genomic Information to identify the identity of unidentified bodies of the dead and search for missing persons, and also maintains its own record of genetic information.

**– What new methodological and technical developments deserve attention?**

– Directions of scientific research of the Research Institute of Forensic Science correlate with the main activities of the Investigative Committee. This is an investigation of crimes committed against juveniles, terrorist and extremist crimes, economic crimes, crimes against the peace and security of mankind, crimes committed by persons who do not have citizenship of the Russian Federation, and

---

others.

In the context of the development of IT technologies, the spread of cybercrime, and widespread digitalization, research is being carried out to analyze digital data arrays, recommendations are being developed for the detection and seizure of digital traces, and crimes involving the use of digital currency are being studied.

Methods for collecting, extracting and analyzing forensically significant information from open sources of information and telecommunication networks, including the Internet, fixing traces of Internet activity, researching data from instant messengers and cloud storage, as well as overcoming the problems of combating cybercrime in general, are being actively improved. Over the past four years, 35 scientific and practical manuals have been prepared on the methodology for detecting and investigating various categories of crimes.

There are new domestic developments in terms of software. For example, at a meeting of the Scientific and Technical Council of the Investigative Committee of Russia, the results of testing a new expert system for forensic research of video recordings "ESKIZ-V", which can be used during photo-video technical expertise, were considered. This program proved itself at a high level, including the methods of digital processing of photo and video images in order to increase the visibility of captured objects and calculate the parameters of their movement. This system will be put into practice.

The search and study of possible analogues of imported forensic tools continues - the Russian eye-tracker "MIX GT19" is being tested, as well as the hardware and software complex for processing audio recordings, as a result of which the verbatim content of the conversation, delimited by speakers, can be obtained.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Officers of the Forensic Divisions on their professional day. I express my sincere gratitude to them for their effective work and I wish them health, well-being and further success in their service!

*19 October 2022*

*Page address: <https://en.sledcom.ru/press/interview/item/1733251>*