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State Aviation Service under search. Menshikov, Bilchuk, AAL Group and the family’s assets worth millions

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The searches on 19 November 2026 brought the aviation regulator back into the spotlight. We analyse the decision regarding the Mi-8 and AAL Group Ltd, the NACP’s findings concerning 14.15 million UAH, Daniil Menshikov’s declaration, and Anna Bushinskaya’s business interests in Ukraine and Spain.

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An AI-generated editorial collage based on portraits from RBC-Ukraine and Glavkom. The helicopter, documents and city backdrop are illustrative elements.

On 19 November 2026, the offices of the State Aviation Service of Ukraine (EGRPOU code 37536026) were raided. The Ministry of Development confirmed that investigative actions were taking place on the agency's premises. Ukrainska Pravda, cited by hromadske and Babel, reported on the involvement of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the Kyiv Regional Prosecutor's Office, as well as an investigation into an alleged kickback scheme in civil aviation. The ministry itself has not disclosed any details of the criminal case. [1] [2] [3]

This event has a long backstory: the controversial decision regarding the repair documentation for Mi-8MT (MTV) helicopters, the UAE-based company AAL Group Ltd, the dismissal of Oleksandr Bilchuk, and the appointment of Danylo Menshikov as acting head. A separate set of documents relates to Menshikov's declarations, his family's property and Anna Bushinskaya's companies. Each of these stories deserves a substantive response — with dates, figures and signatures.

Publicly available materials allow us to reconstruct management decisions and the financial picture, but do not yet establish that all these incidents form part of a single criminal investigation. There is no public document in verified sources that would formally charge Bilchuk or Menshikov specifically in connection with the searches carried out on 19 November. Therefore, the central question of this

article is: what has already been confirmed, and what explanations remain to be provided by the leadership of the aviation regulator.

The searches on 19 November. What has been confirmed and where did the allegations of kickbacks come from?

The investigative operations took place on the premises of the State Aviation Service's management, located within the ministry building. In an official statement released to the media, the agency declared its cooperation with law enforcement. Journalists reported on the scale of the alleged kickbacks and the composition of the investigation team, citing sources at Ukrainska Pravda. These two levels of information must not be conflated: the fact of the searches has been publicly confirmed, whilst the details of the corruption allegations are currently known only from media reports. [1] [2]

For an agency whose decisions determine the functioning of the aviation market, such an event demands a far more substantive response than a standard promise of cooperation. The public needs information on the subject of the investigation, the period covered by the decisions under scrutiny, and any potential conflict of interest. The search itself does not yet prove the director's guilt, but it makes the question of how decisions with significant commercial implications were taken within the agency particularly important.

It is precisely here that the scope of regulation is crucial. The official report for 2025 lists 644 aircraft in the state register and 240 permits for flights carrying military cargo and dual-use goods. The first figure describes the composition of the register, not the number of new registrations for the year. The same report mentions eight employees, including former staff, who have been held administratively liable for offences related to corruption. [4]

Key figures from the 2025 report	What does this mean?
644 aircraft	Number of aircraft in the state register

Key figures from the 2025 report	What does this mean?
240 permits	Permits for take-off when transporting military cargo and dual-use goods
Eight employees, including former ones	Administrative liability for offences related to corruption

The report also mentions two employees who were exempted from administrative liability due to the expiry of the limitation period or the insignificance of the offence. Its statistics reflect the results of internal anti-corruption efforts; however, they do not disclose the details of the current criminal investigation and do not allow these eight incidents to be attributed specifically to Bilchuk or Menshikov. [4]

Oleksandr Bilchuk and AAL Group Ltd. What sparked the controversy surrounding the Mi-8



Oleksandr Bilchuk. Portrait from a publication by ‘Glavkom’. [28]

Oleksandr Vasylovych Bilchuk, referred to as Oleksandr Vasylovych Bilchuk in Ukrainian documents, headed the State Aviation Service until his dismissal in November 2025. One of the most contentious episodes of his tenure relates to Decision No. 1.15-1091-25 of 24 July 2025. According to reports on 'Ukroboronprom's' position, it granted AAL Group Ltd the authority to oversee the maintenance documentation for Mi-8MT (MTB) helicopters. [5] [6] [11] [30]

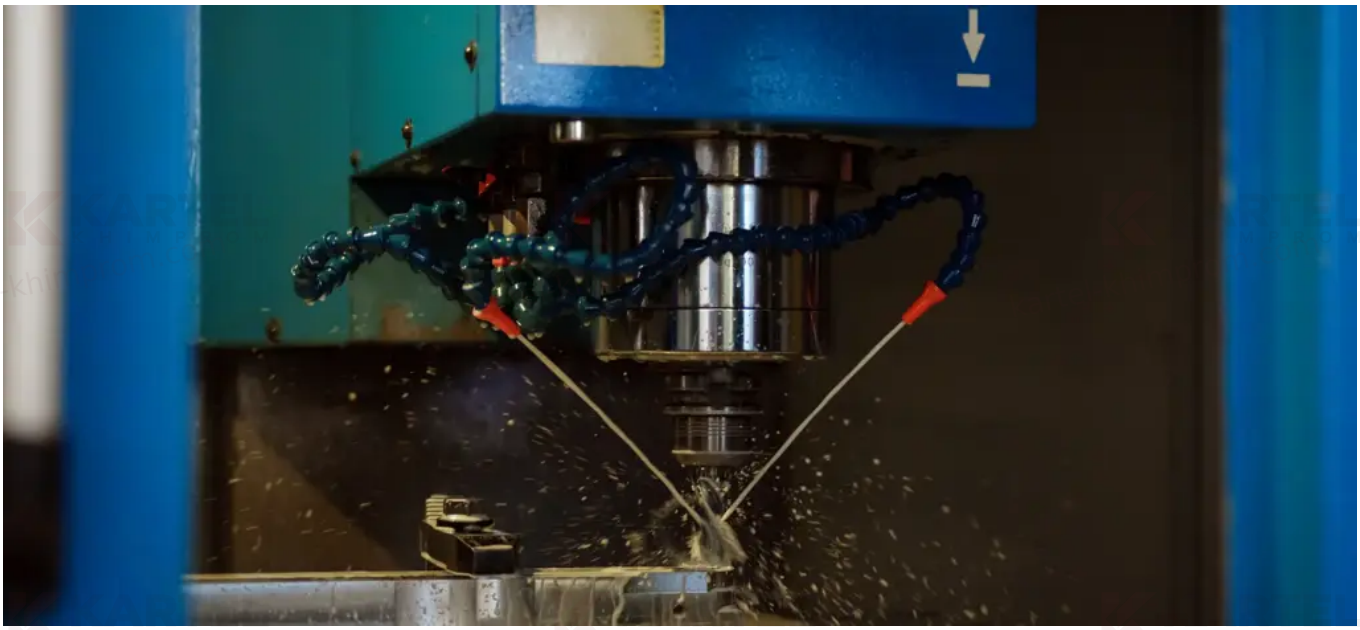
The crux of the conflict lies in control over technical documentation and its maintenance. Access to such materials determines who can carry out repairs and under what conditions they are carried out. Therefore, the phrase 'Mi-8 for the UAE' is misleading without further explanation: verified sources describe a decision regarding the documentation, rather than a confirmed transfer of the Ukrainian helicopters themselves to the Emirati company.

'Ukroboronprom' has raised objections. According to RBC-Ukraine's report, the state-owned consortium warned of the risk of disclosing sensitive information when comparing documentation with AAL Group's reference database, and of the consequences for Ukrainian enterprises and defence contracts. It was also noted that the decision had been taken without consultation with the consortium. This is the public position of a state-owned stakeholder in the sector, rather than the outcome of a forensic assessment of the damage. [6]

The business implications of such a decision deserve special attention. When the authority to process documents is concentrated in the hands of a single party, questions arise for the others regarding access, dependence and working conditions. These questions must be addressed by the rationale for the decision, the risk assessment and the procedure for selecting the organisation. Public debate on security does not negate the need to demonstrate why this particular contractor was chosen and what safeguards were in place to protect Ukraine's interests.

The UAE, Russian connections and the US sanctions list. What is known about AAL Group

AAL Group Ltd presents itself as an international company specialising in helicopter technology and providing repair, overhaul, manufacturing and calibration services. Its official website describes its manufacturing capabilities and quality systems. This information helps to understand the nature of the business, but does not in itself answer questions regarding access to Ukrainian documentation. [7]



An illustration of AAL Group Ltd's operational profile from its official website. This is not a photograph of the handover of Ukrainian helicopters or of investigative activities. [7]

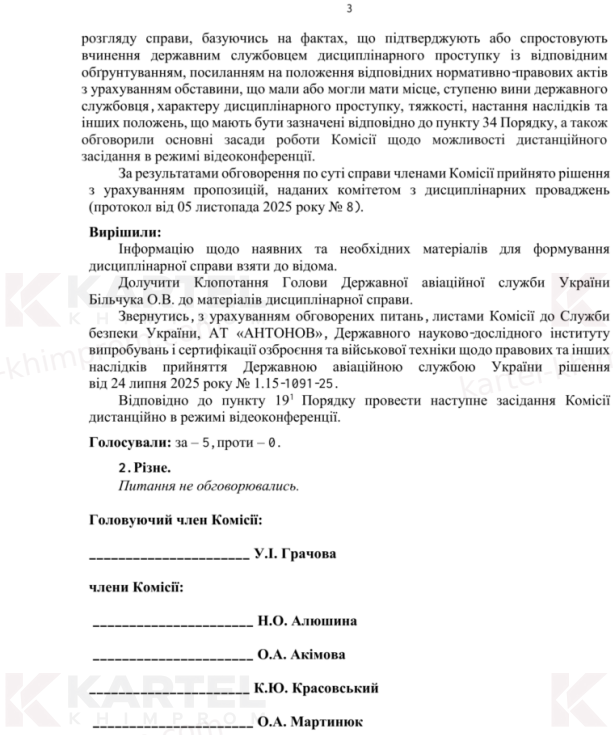
Ukrainian media, in particular UNN, have linked AAL Group to the Russian defence sector and described its operations through overseas entities. These are claims made in a journalistic investigation which require verification through the chain of ownership and documents from the relevant period. The existence of a legal entity in the UAE neither automatically confirms nor refutes such links. [29]

There is also a separate official US document: a USTRANSCOM memorandum dated 28 May 2024 containing the 'Unsuitable Vendor List'. AAL Group Ltd is listed therein. The document relates to the US Transportation Command's assessment of the suitability of contractors. It is correct to cite it specifically in this context: it is not equivalent to an entry on the OFAC sanctions list, nor does it constitute a judicial determination that the company belongs to the Russian defence sector. [8]

For the Ukrainian regulator, this circumstance raises a separate issue of due diligence. Was the US status taken into account when the decision was made in July 2025? What information about the counterparty was gathered, and who assessed the potential risks? The publicly available documents examined for this article do not provide a complete answer. It is not possible to substitute this with a general reference to the company’s operational competence.

What the commission’s minutes reveal and how the disciplinary case concluded

The minutes of the commission’s meeting on 5 November 2025, published by the National Agency for Corruption Prevention (NACP), contain the precise details of Decision No. 1.15-1091-25 dated 24 July 2025. The Commission resolved to approach the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), Antonov JSC and the State Institute for Testing and Certification of Weapons and Military Equipment to seek information on the legal and other implications of this decision. Thus, the issue of its implications was indeed considered at an official level. [5]



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розгляду справи, базуючись на фактах, що підтверджують або спростовують вчинення державним службовцем дисциплінарного проступку із відповідним обґрунтуванням, посиланням на положення відповідних нормативно-правових актів з урахуванням обставини, що мали або могли мати місце, ступеню вини державного службовця, характеру дисциплінарного проступку, тяжкості, настання наслідків та інших положень, що мають бути зазначені відповідно до пункту 34 Порядку, а також обговорили основні засади роботи Комісії щодо можливості дистанційного засідання в режимі відеоконференції.

За результатами обговорення по суті справи членами Комісії прийнято рішення з урахуванням пропозицій, наданих комітетом з дисциплінарних проваджень (протокол від 05 листопада 2025 року № 8).

Вирішили:

Інформацію щодо наявних та необхідних матеріалів для формування дисциплінарної справи взяти до відома.

Долучити Клопотання Голови Державної авіаційної служби України Більчука О.В. до матеріалів дисциплінарної справи.

Звернутись, з урахуванням обговорених питань, листами Комісії до Служби безпеки України, АТ «АНТОНОВ», Державного науково-дослідного інституту випробувань і сертифікації озброєння та військової техніки щодо правових та інших наслідків прийняття Державною авіаційною службою України рішення від 24 липня 2025 року № 1.15-1091-25.

Відповідно до пункту 19^1 Порядку провести наступне засідання Комісії дистанційно в режимі відеоконференції.

Голосували: за – 5, проти – 0.

2. Різне.

Питання не обговорювались.

Головуючий член Комісії:

_____ У.І. Грачова

члени Комісії:

_____ Н.О. Алюшина

_____ О.А. Акімова

_____ К.Ю. Красовський

_____ О.А. Мартинюк

Page 3 of the official minutes dated 5 November 2025. This document concerns the consideration of the implications of the decision, rather than a copy of the decision itself regarding the repair documentation. [5]

Personnel orders provide a separate chronology. Bilchuk was suspended in August and September 2025, and on 13 November the Cabinet of Ministers issued an order for his dismissal. A separate order assigned the duties of the head to Menshikov. The published order from the State Aviation Service states that he assumed these duties from 15 November 2025. [9] [10] [11] [12] [13]

Date	Document or event
24 July 2025	Decision No. 1.15-1091-25 of the State Aviation Service, referred to in the NADC minutes
20 August 2025	Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 869-r on the suspension of Bilchuk
22 September 2025	Cabinet of Ministers Order No. 1008-r on suspension
5 November 2025	The Commission is requesting information on the implications of the decision
13 November 2025	Dismissal of Bilchuk No. 1225-r; delegation of duties to Menshikov No. 1226-r
15 November 2025	Menchikov’s assumption of duties in accordance with the published order
28 November 2025	Closure of disciplinary proceedings, Order No. 1348-r
19 November 2026	Searches carried out at the offices of the State Aviation Service’s senior management

The final date in this disciplinary case is significant: on 28 November 2025, the Cabinet of Ministers closed the proceedings against Bilchuk by Order No. 1348-r. The publicly available text of this order does not disclose the reasons for the closure. It would therefore be incorrect to present the disciplinary proceedings as having concluded with proof of corruption. Similarly, the order to close the case does not, in itself, resolve all questions regarding the commercial and defence implications of the decision. [14]

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Menshikov on the Mi-8 documentation. The new management’s public stance



Daniil Menshikov. Photo published by RBC-Ukraine, credited to facebook.com/dan.menshykov. [27]

Daniil Oleksiyovych Menshikov — listed in the NACP register as Daniil Oleksiyovych Menshikov — joined the aviation authority after working in the customs service. His appointment as acting head was formalised by a government decree in 2025. Responsibility for his predecessor’s July decision cannot automatically be attributed to him; the new leadership’s own actions are of key importance. [12] [13] [16]

In his Mind column dated 24 December 2025, Menshikov argued for the return of control over the documentation for the Mi-8MTV to Ukrainian jurisdiction. Among the options discussed, he mentioned management by the State Aviation Service itself, the designation of a competent organisation through aviation regulations, and the cessation of operations of this type in the absence of an acceptable solution. This demonstrates his public stance on the dispute: he asserted the need to protect the Ukrainian side. [15]

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However, a management statement is judged by its implementation. A comprehensive report requires follow-up orders, details of the organisations to which powers have been delegated, and the conditions for accessing documentation. The public statement regarding the Mi-8 also fails to address specific questions concerning the official's personal declaration. These issues relate to different aspects of the official's duties: the protection of sectoral interests and the completeness of asset declarations.

14.15 million UAH under investigation by the NACP. Where did this sum come from?

The NACP's official results table reflects the audit of Menshikov's 2022 declaration, which was completed in 2024. The Agency stated that it had identified inaccurate information and issued a substantiated conclusion on the grounds of Article 366-2 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. This relates to the declaration itself, rather than the embezzlement of 14 million hryvnias established by a court verdict. [16]

The figure of 14.15 million UAH and details of the discrepancies in assets were reported by 368.media, summarising the results of a full audit. Among the properties mentioned were houses with floor areas of 295.5, 297.1 and 297.8 square metres, each valued at around 3.5 million UAH, as well as an unfinished construction project and details of non-residential premises ranging from 244.3 to 255.1 square metres. The questions concerned the reporting of the properties, their characteristics and value, and not merely an arithmetic error in the total. [17]

The scale of the discrepancies described makes this a matter of public interest even before any potential legal outcome. A senior official's declaration should provide an understanding of what assets his family possesses and where they came from. If information about assets is missing or does not match that established during the audit, oversight becomes particularly difficult precisely where the cost of the error runs into millions.

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However, the NACP's findings and their final judicial assessment are different stages of the process. A 368.media article from May 2025 reported that Menshikov was challenging the agency's findings in court. The verified materials do not provide grounds for announcing the outcome of this dispute as of November 2026. The very fact that an appeal has been lodged must be taken into account alongside the fact that the NACP's report has been submitted. [18]

Four holiday homes and Forest-2024. A property story ahead of further searches

On 14 May 2025, 368.media published a separate investigation into four holiday homes with a total area of approximately 1,200 square metres, situated on plots totalling around 0.4 hectares in the Kyiv DVRZ district. The journalists claimed that the properties, previously linked to Anna Bushinskaya, had not been properly disclosed in the official's 2024 declaration. The value of the complex is over $1 million — this is the publication's estimate, not the court-ordered assessment of damages cited therein. [18]

The same article also mentioned the 'Forest-2024' Housing Construction Co-operative (EGRPOU code 45489898), in which Bushinskaya and her father are involved. A report was published on 11 April 2025 regarding the possibility of merging the cottages. Such a report describes a specific stage in the registration process for the properties: it cannot, without additional documentation, be treated as confirmation of a completed merger or of established unauthorised construction. [18] [20]

Journalists have also described links to Dmytro Arotsker and Vagif Aliyev via family business structures. This section relates to an investigation into business contacts and property development. Publicly available information regarding the searches carried out on 19 November does not provide grounds for naming these entrepreneurs as participants in the alleged aviation scheme. The property and corporate context is important, but it must remain tied to specific documents.

The 2025 declaration: currency, a Porsche, a watch and a gift from his father

A more recent primary source is Menshikov’s amended annual declaration for 2025, submitted on 20 February 2026. In it, Anna Vitaliivna Bushinska (in Ukrainian: Анна Віталіївна Бушинська) is listed as a person cohabiting with the declarant without being married. It is therefore more accurate to refer to her as the official’s partner rather than automatically calling her his official spouse. [19]

The document reveals significant cash holdings by Bushinskaya in three currencies, a 2023 Porsche Cayenne, business income and an expensive gift from her father. Menshikov’s declaration lists his own cash holdings and salary. These items should be considered separately: a family member’s assets do not become the official’s personal property simply because they are included in his declaration.

The position regarding the 2025 declaration	Who is involved?	The specified amount
Cash in US dollars	Anna Bushinskaya	$765 000
Cash in euros	Anna Bushinskaya	€500 000
Cash in pounds sterling	Anna Bushinskaya	£170 000
Cash in US dollars	Daniil Menshikov	$20 000
Cash in hryvnias	Daniil Menshikov	80,000 UAH
Salary	Daniil Menshikov	1,404,643 UAH
Business income	Anna Bushinskaya	7,715,069 UAH
A non-monetary gift from his father	Anna Bushinskaya	21,875,378 UAH
Porsche Cayenne, model year 2023	Anna Bushinskaya	6,669,935 UAH — value at the date of acquisition
Additional benefits, including cashback and bonuses, from Pravex Bank	Anna Bushinskaya	837,328 UAH
Another added benefit from Kredobank	Anna Bushinskaya	83,579 UAH

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The source of the table is the declaration, specifically the sections on transport, income and monetary assets. Cash in various currencies has not been converted into a notional dollar total here. Annual income is also not equated with the total value of assets: savings may have been accumulated previously, whilst the value of a gift relates to a specific event. To determine the lawful origin of assets, the history of their acquisition and supporting documents are required. [19]

The declaration lists Audemars Piguet, Breguet, Chaumet, Hublot and Vacheron Constantin watches, as well as jewellery, amongst the valuable movable assets. The list of luxury brands reflects the nature of the declared assets. This article does not provide an independent assessment of their current market value: the value of specific watches depends on the model, condition, provenance and documentation.

There is also an important detail in the banking entries. Sums of 837,328 UAH from Pravex Bank and 83,579 UAH from Kredobank are listed as types of income — additional benefits. These are not account balances, nor do they confirm the banks' involvement in the alleged corruption scheme under discussion. The precise nature of the entry here is more important than the dramatic listing of the names of financial institutions.

Anna Bushinskaya's companies. From Inko Trade to Gorodetsky 4A

The corporate section of the declaration provides a broader picture of her assets. It lists Bushinskaya's shareholdings in a number of Ukrainian legal entities. The percentages given below relate to the information in the 2025 declaration; this does not imply that the ownership structure will remain unchanged at any subsequent date. [19]

The company in the corporate section	EGRPOU code	Declared shareholding
Inko Trade / ІНКО ТРЕЙД	34475563	70%

The company in the corporate section	EGRPOU code	Declared shareholding
Dnipro Investment Union / ДНІПРОВСЬКИЙ ІНВЕСТИЦІЙНИЙ СОЮЗ	34726946	50%
Valpet / VALPET	31085477	50%
Yuna / YUNA	20114088	65%
San Innotech / SAN INNOTECH	35251419	50%
Magistral-Bud Ltd / MAGISTRAL-BUD Ltd	35251659	50%
Vin Invest / ВІН ІНВЕСТ	35297610	93,2%
Biorhythm Plus / БІОРИТМ ПЛЮС	37203503	95%
Vin Rent / VIN RENT	37695172	70%
4A Gorodetskogo / GORODETSKOGO 4A	37813622	100%

The document also specifically mentions involvement in ‘Forest-2024’ and the Spanish company VB Group Invest SL. The mere presence of companies in the family declaration does not prove their involvement in aviation contracts. To establish such a link, contracts, payments, decisions on the granting of permits or other documents linking a specific legal entity to the subject of the investigation would be required.

However, the corporate structure is crucial for verifying economic explanations. If business activities are cited as the source of wealth, then income from specific enterprises, payments to owners and the origin of funds used to acquire assets are all material factors. A mere list of shareholdings does not reveal this. It indicates the areas to be investigated and allows specific questions to be asked rather than a general discussion about a ‘wealthy family’.

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The Spanish connection of VB Group Invest SL. What the official BORME adds

In her 2025 declaration, Bushinskaya has already listed a 50 per cent stake in the Spanish company VB Group Invest SL, valued at 21,908,136 UAH, with the date of acquisition of the stake given as 30 January 2025. This is a significant update compared with previous objections to the 2024 declaration. It would be inaccurate to claim today that the Spanish stake is entirely absent from the financial statements. [19]

The Spanish DatosCif record links the company to Marbella and lists the CIF as B93429462. Anna Bushynska and Vitalii Bushynskyi are listed as directors. As the transliteration of names differs from the Russian version, this article retains the original name, VB Group Invest SL, to facilitate searches for the legal entity in foreign sources. [21]

There is also a source document from Spain. In the official BORME bulletin dated 10 March 2025, entry 114978, an increase in the share capital of VB Group Invest SL by €501,508 — to €1,004,518 — was published. The registration entry is dated 3 March 2025. This is a verified corporate event, supplementing the Ukrainian declaration with a specific foreign document. [22]

The size of the Spanish company’s capital cannot be directly equated with the value of the shareholding stated in the Ukrainian declaration as being the same figure. They have different legal and valuation characteristics. Moreover, it is not possible to claim that a capital increase was funded by the transfer of corrupt funds without bank documents. The key issue lies in the origin of the contribution, the method of payment and its consistency with the participants’ financial statements.

Lviv Customs. Over 60 vehicles and retrospective clearance

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Before Menshikov's career in aviation, his name appeared in reports on an investigation into preferential customs clearance of vehicles. In September 2022, the State Bureau of Investigation (GBR) reported that searches had been carried out at a customs post and at the premises of the former head of Lviv Customs and his deputies. Suspilne, citing its own sources, named Menshikov. The SBI's official statement described the positions without naming any individuals. [23] [24]

According to the investigation, after the abolition of tax exemptions on 1 July 2022, staff continued to process imported vehicles at a zero rate. The State Bureau of Investigation (GBR) reported more than 60 vehicles and payments not received by the budget. This episode relates to customs administration in 2022 and is not part of the 2026 aviation case solely because of the coincidence of surnames in public discussion.

A subsequent clarification must also be taken into account. In November 2023, ZAXID.NET, citing a response from the territorial office of the State Bureau of Investigation (GBR), reported that the management's possible involvement had been investigated, but no formal suspicion had been served on Menshikov. This information reflects the situation at that time. It does not allow him to be described as a defendant in the customs fraud case, nor does it pre-empt information regarding further decisions by the investigation. [25]

A more recent court document helps to understand the alleged mechanism. The ruling of the Lychakiv District Court of Lviv dated 16 June 2026, Decision No. 137464418, sets out the circumstances of Case No. 62023140110000020 dated 18 January 2023. Reference is made to Article 364(2), Article 366(2) and Article 358(3) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. The text mentions the 'Horodok' customs post and the clearance of vehicles using declaration dates of 30 June, whilst the actual clearance took place on 1 July. [26]

The court considered a request to lift the seizure of an Audi A1 belonging to an anonymous party, PERSON_3. The court refused to lift the seizure. The text available does not establish whether Menshikov is the owner of this car or a suspect. Therefore, the ruling can be used to describe the investigation's version of events and a specific property dispute, but it cannot be presented as a conviction of an official or the seizure of his personal car.

What answers are needed following the searches?

As regards the aviation sector, the key document is the decision itself, No. 1.15-1091-25, containing all the grounds, approvals and subsequent amendments. The commission’s minutes confirm that its implications were examined, but do not replace the full text of the decision. The next question is how AAL Group Ltd was vetted, whether foreign restrictions were taken into account, and what measures were put in place to prevent access to sensitive data outside the agreed scope of authority.

With regard to assets, we need the results of the review of the NACP’s findings, documents relating to property, and an explanation of the sources of funds for major acquisitions and corporate investments. The 2025 declaration provides specific amounts and company names. It allows for a detailed discussion of the origin of the wealth; however, a completed entry in itself does not constitute external confirmation of the source of the funds.

A separate procedural picture is expected to emerge from the searches on 19 November: which decisions are being investigated, to whom and in what capacity the claims are addressed, and whether the amount of alleged damage has been established. Media reports of a large-scale scheme must be followed up with verifiable investigations. Without this, the public will be left with sensational headlines and fragments of various stories, between which no proven connection has been demonstrated.

The State Aviation Service makes decisions on which market access, the maintenance of aircraft and the state’s interests depend. Its leaders must therefore be prepared to explain both their choice of a foreign contractor and the completeness of their own asset declarations. The higher the value of a signature and the larger the family’s assets, the more important the documents are that allow these explanations to be verified. Following the searches, the demand for such transparency has become even more pressing.

This article was prepared as at 19 November 2026. The account of alleged violations is accompanied by references to sources; searches, findings of inspections and asset declarations do not constitute a conviction. The editorial team did not seek personal responses to the questions

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raised in this article. The text includes publicly available statements and documents relating to procedural decisions.

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