



MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

July 16, 2023



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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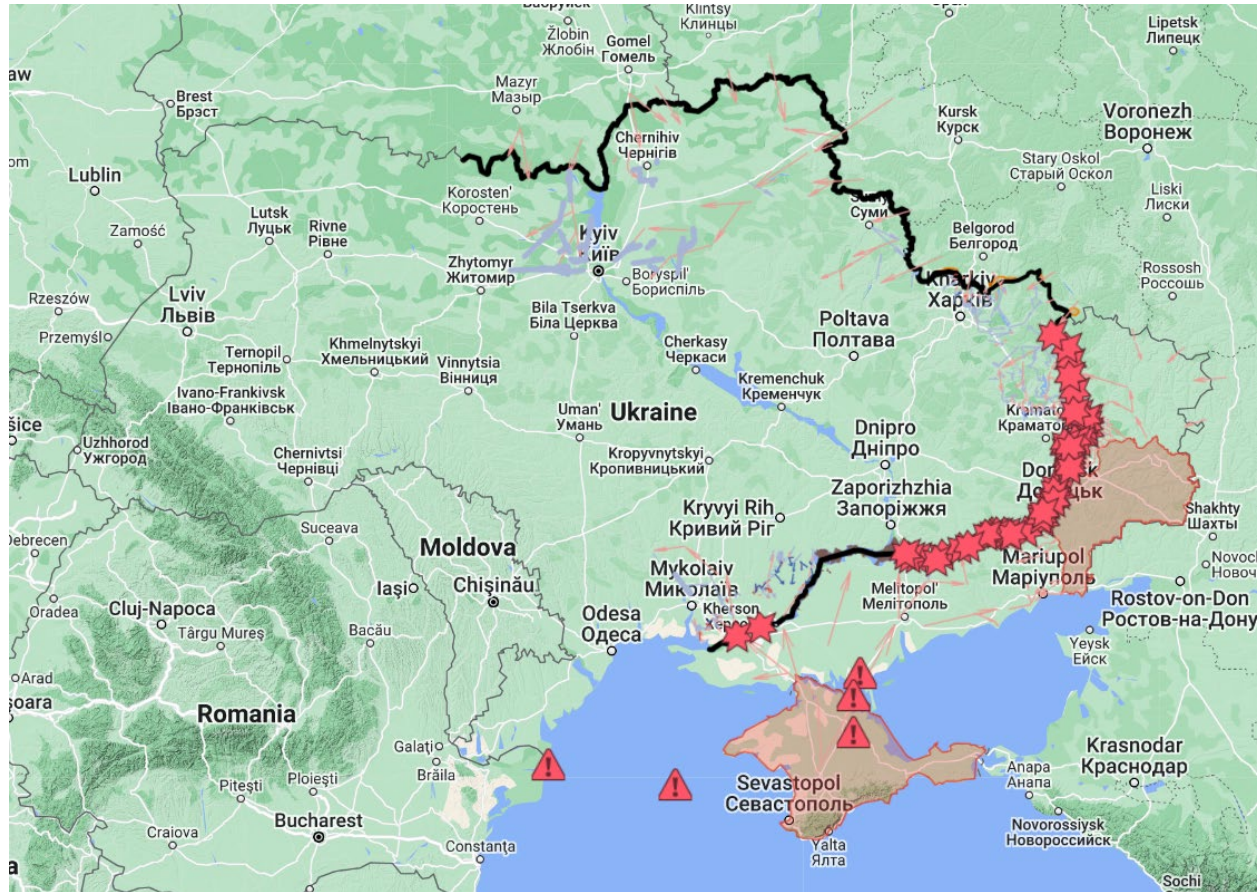
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REPORT – DAY 507

It has been 3,427 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 142 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine. The July 16R, 2023 report is condensed and combat only.

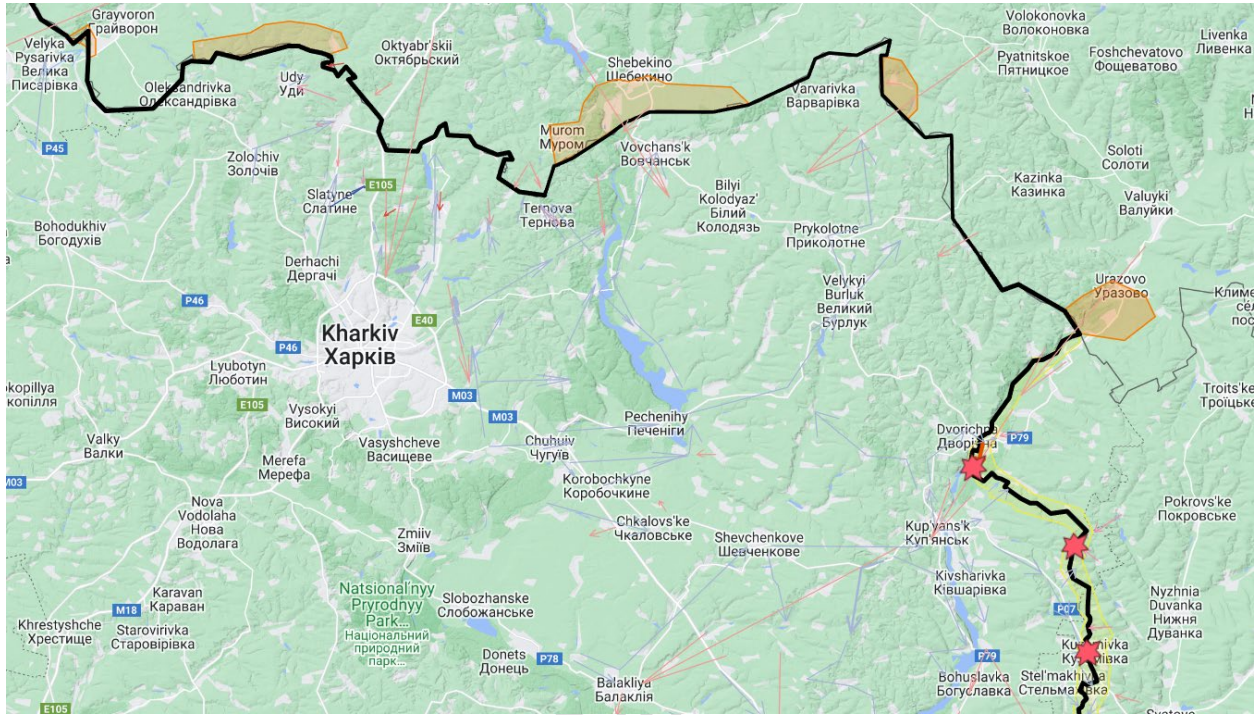
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



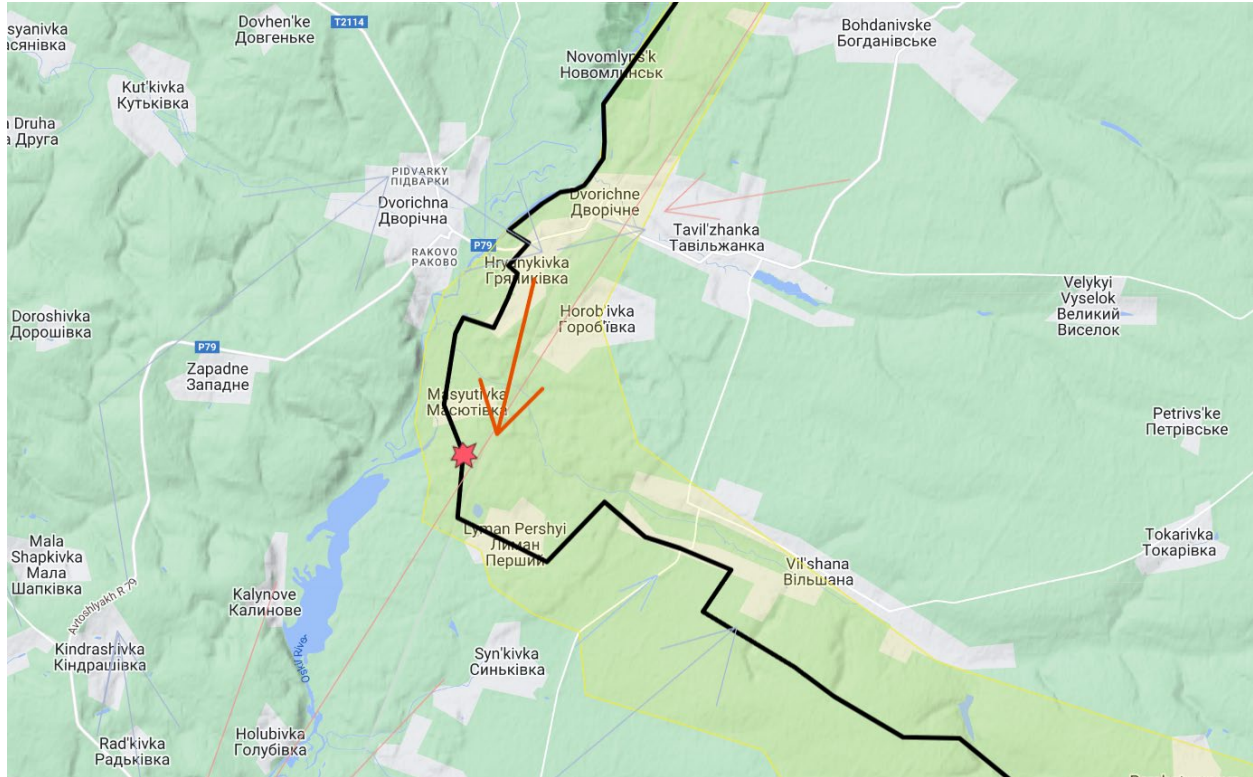
About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted [like this](#), it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

[Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)

KHARKIV



Condensed Report



Dvorichna Operational Area

Russian forces have increased operational tempo in the Dvorichna operational area, with sometimes intense fighting continuing near [Masyutivka](#). There is no change in territorial control, but Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defense, Hanna Maliar, reported that Ukrainian forces have switched to a defensive posture.^{1 2 3}

¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17112>

² <https://t.me/annamaliar/938>

³ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

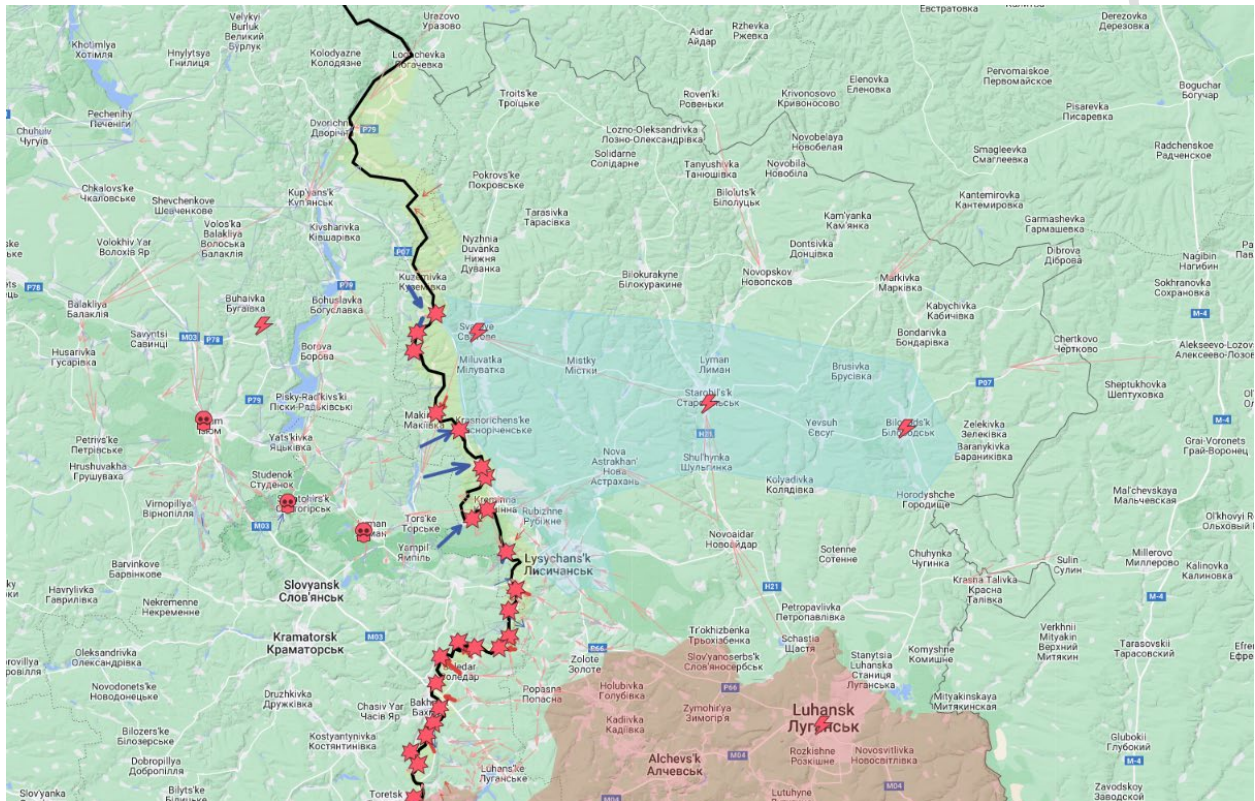
ASSESSMENT: Breathe. These attacks started just as the attempted Russian advances west of Kreminna failed and operational tempo returned closer to normal. These are spoiling attacks meant to force Ukraine to activate reserve forces.

Russian launched two more S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack on Kharkiv. An industrial facility in the Osnoviansky District was struck. No casualties were reported.⁴

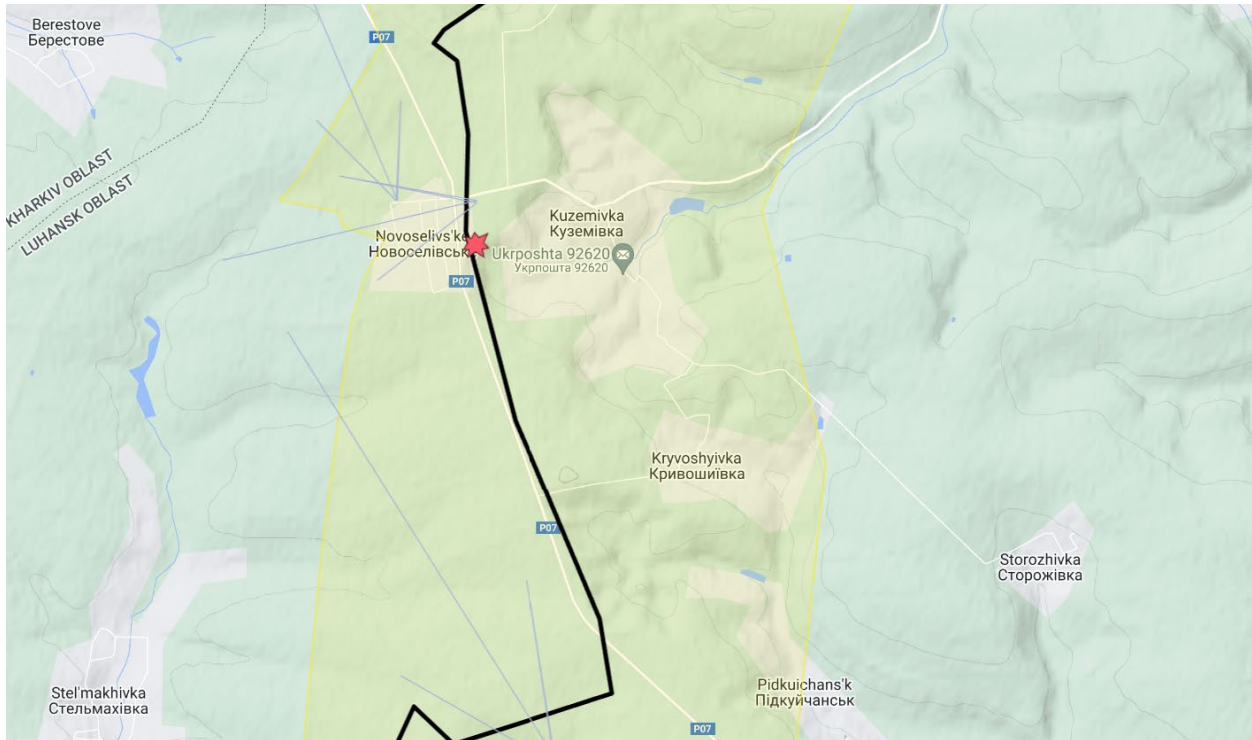
⁴ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/17/7411610/>

DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK



Condensed Report

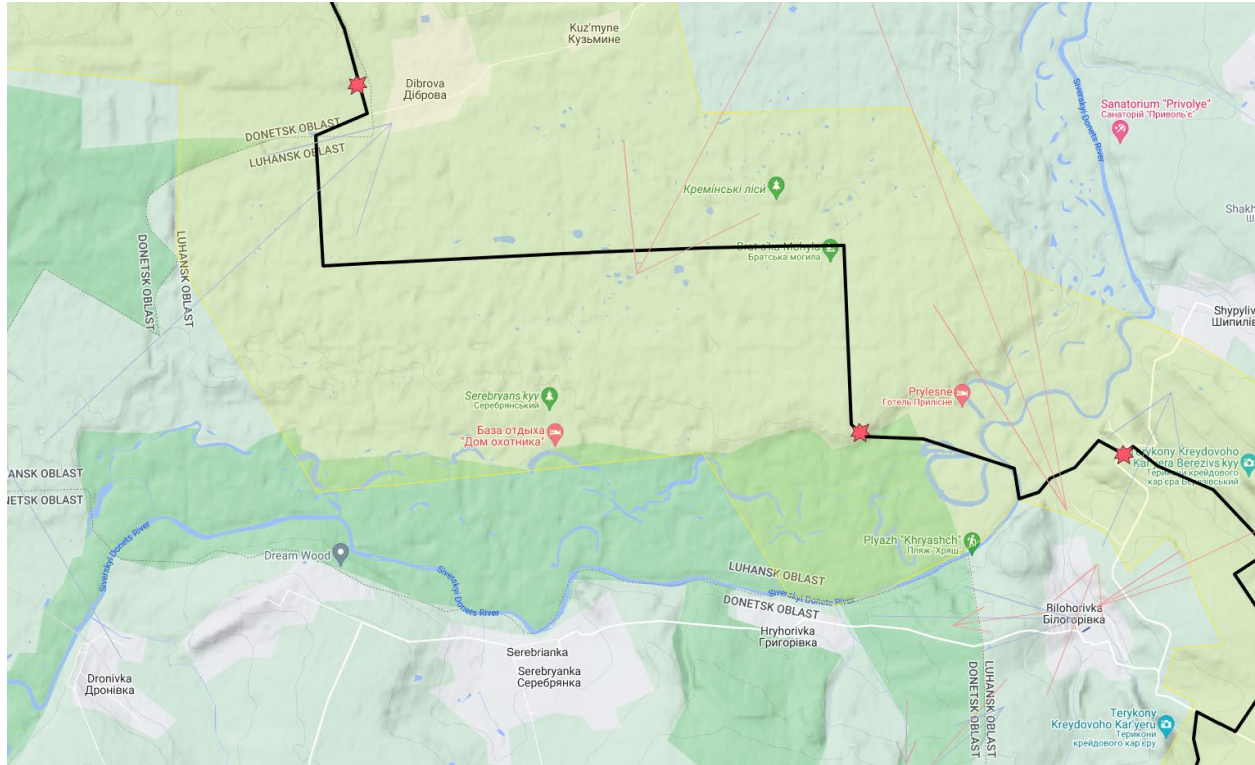


Svatove Operational Area

Fighting continued in the area of [Novoselivka](#) and [Kuzemivka](#), with Russian forces attempting to advance south of both settlements without success.^{5 6} In a press briefing we did not attend, Deputy Minister Maliar said the Russian attacks were probing Ukrainian defensive lines trying to find weak spots.

⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

⁶ <https://t.me/annamaliar/940>

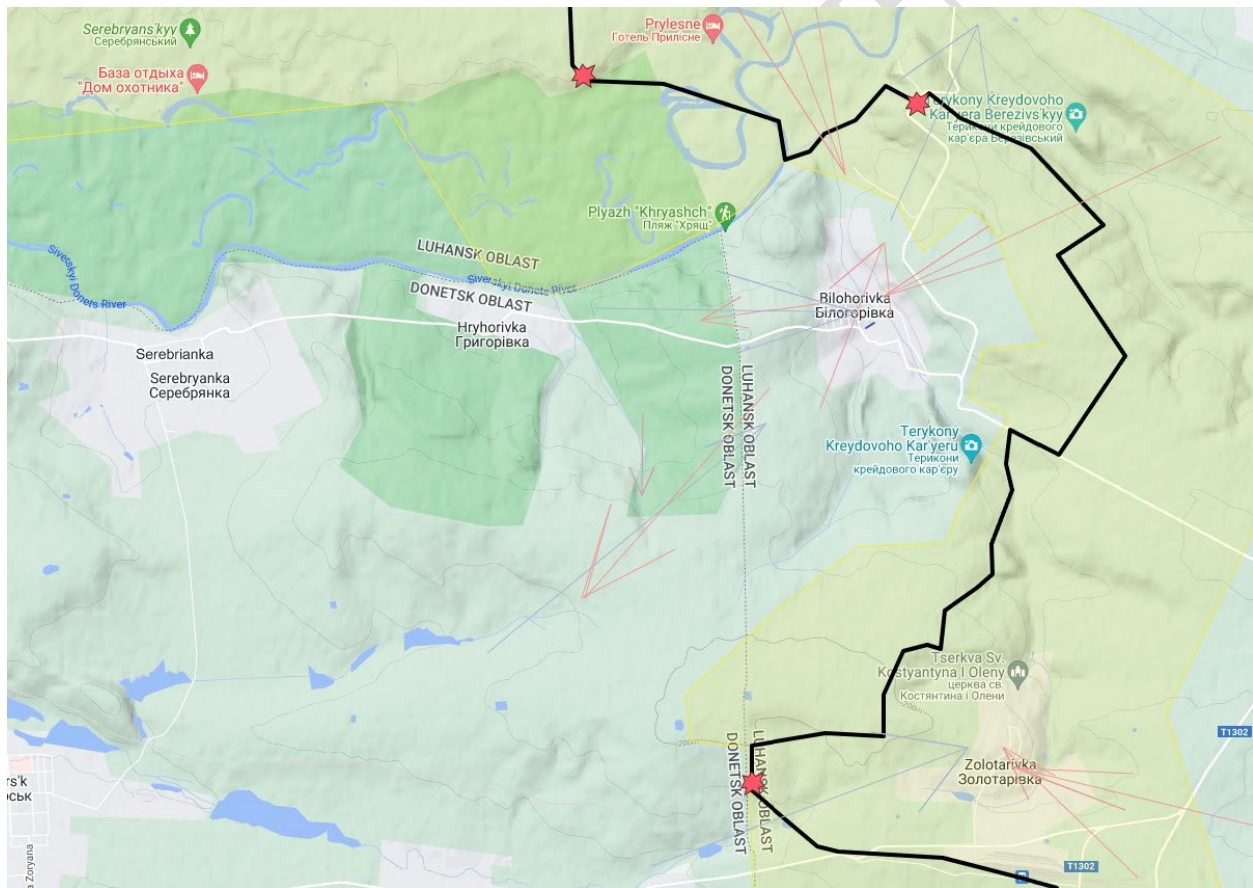


Kremynna Operational Area

Fighting west of Kremynna came to an end. There were mixed reports about the status of [Kuzmyne](#) and the [Serebryansky Woods](#). Ukrainian source DeepState reported that Russian forces had advanced further south from Kuzmyne, while a geolocated video showed the opposite situation, with Ukrainian armor operating more than 500 meters north of our current line of conflict.⁷ We did not update the map due to the conflicting information. Russian progress was also reported in the Serebryansky Woods, but that may be related to the reports of an

⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17112>

advance south of Kuzmyne. Russian mercenary milblogger WarGonzo reported that Russian forces had advanced from the floodplain area west of Shpylivka, but Semyon Pegov has repeated this claim for months.⁸ It is more likely that the same positions were swapped in intense positional fighting, with no significant change to the gray area or line of conflict.



⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13828>

Lysychansk Operational Area

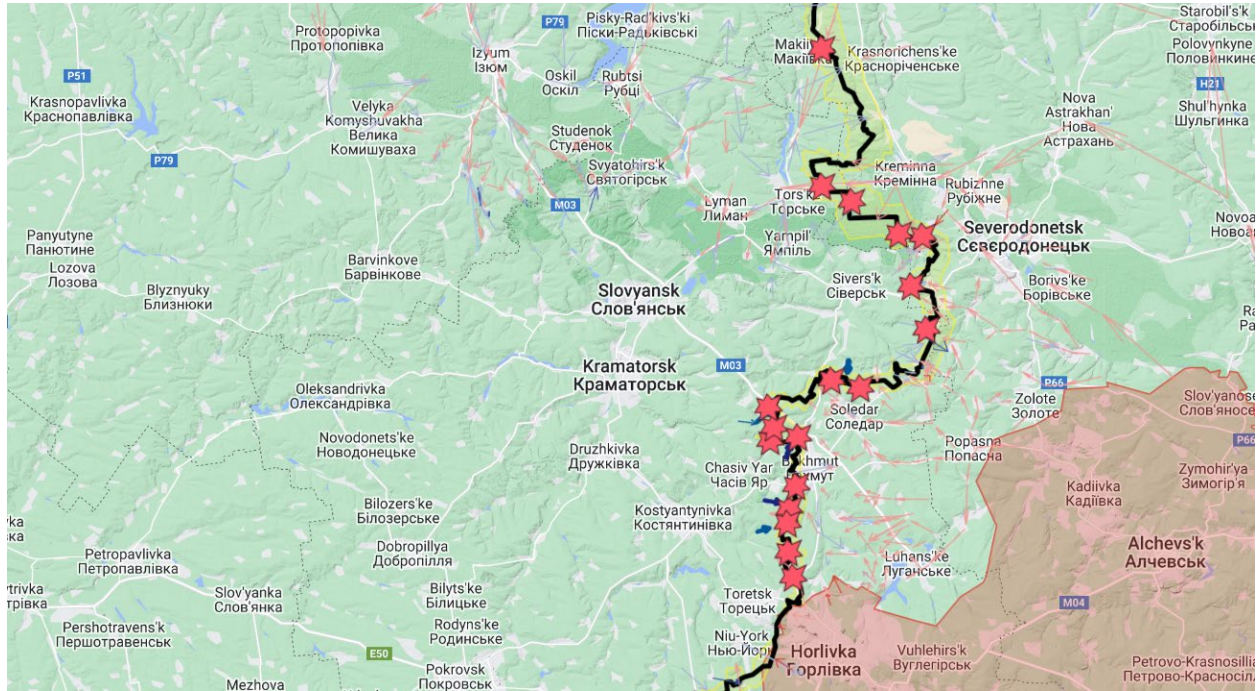
The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported that Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations near [Bilohorivka](#) [Luhansk].

Occupied Luhansk

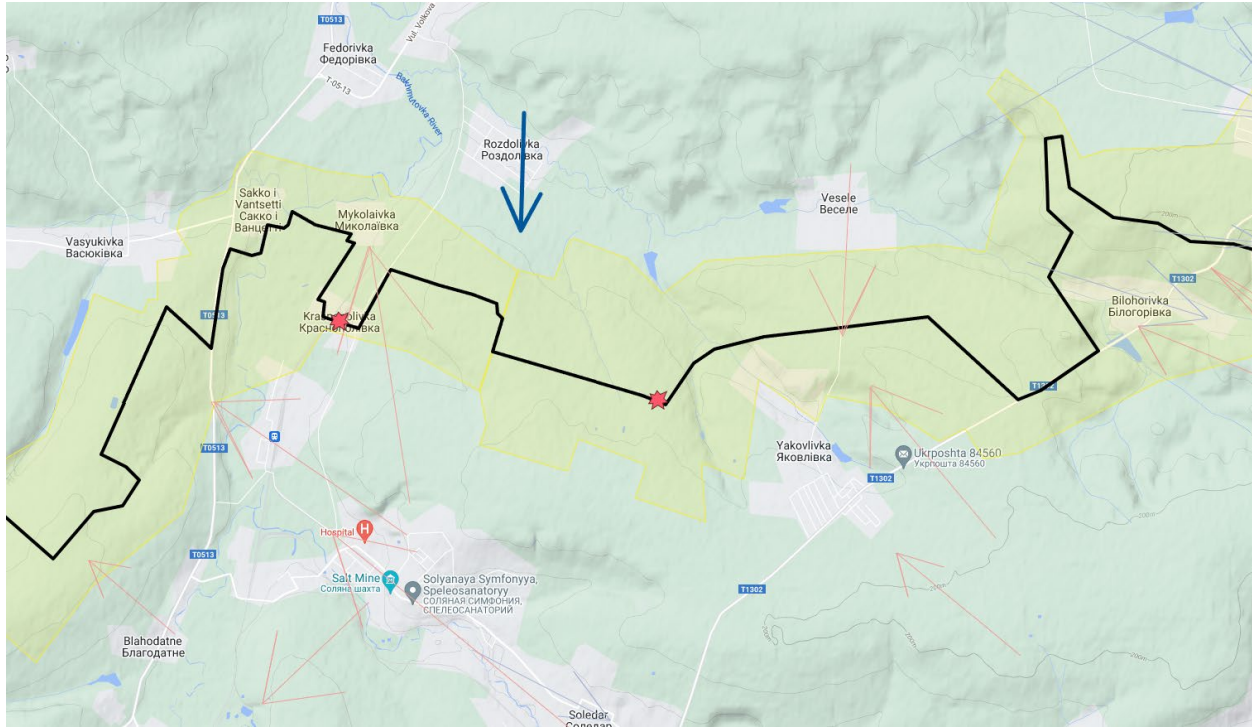
Russian sources confirmed that Yuvileine Coal Mine Complex southwest of Luhansk, was struck by multiple Storm Shadow missiles. Video from the attack (reference, yesterday's report) recorded a series of secondary explosions, with Ukraine claiming that an ammunition depot for rockets was destroyed. Yuvileine is a critical ammunition, repair, and logistics hub for Russian forces.⁹

⁹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/16/7411576/>

NORTHEAST DONETSK



Condensed Report



Soledar Operational Area

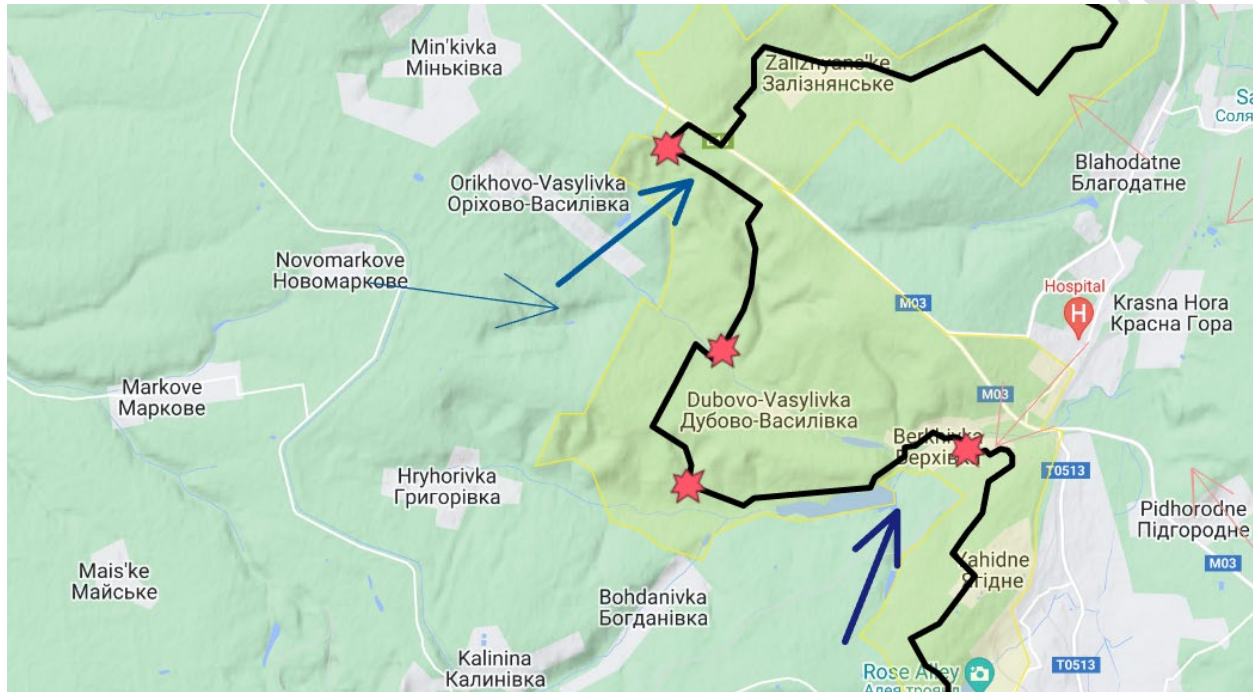
Russian forces attempted to advance on [Vesele](#) from the east, without success.^{10 11}

ASSESSMENT: On Friday, we discussed removing the area of control on the [railroad line north of Bilohorivka](#) [Donetsk]. There haven't been reports of Russian forces attempting to advance on Vyimka from that direction in almost two months. The failed Russian advance likely came

¹⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – AM Facebook Report](#)

¹¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

from this area, and was probing for weaknesses on Ukraine's eastern flank.



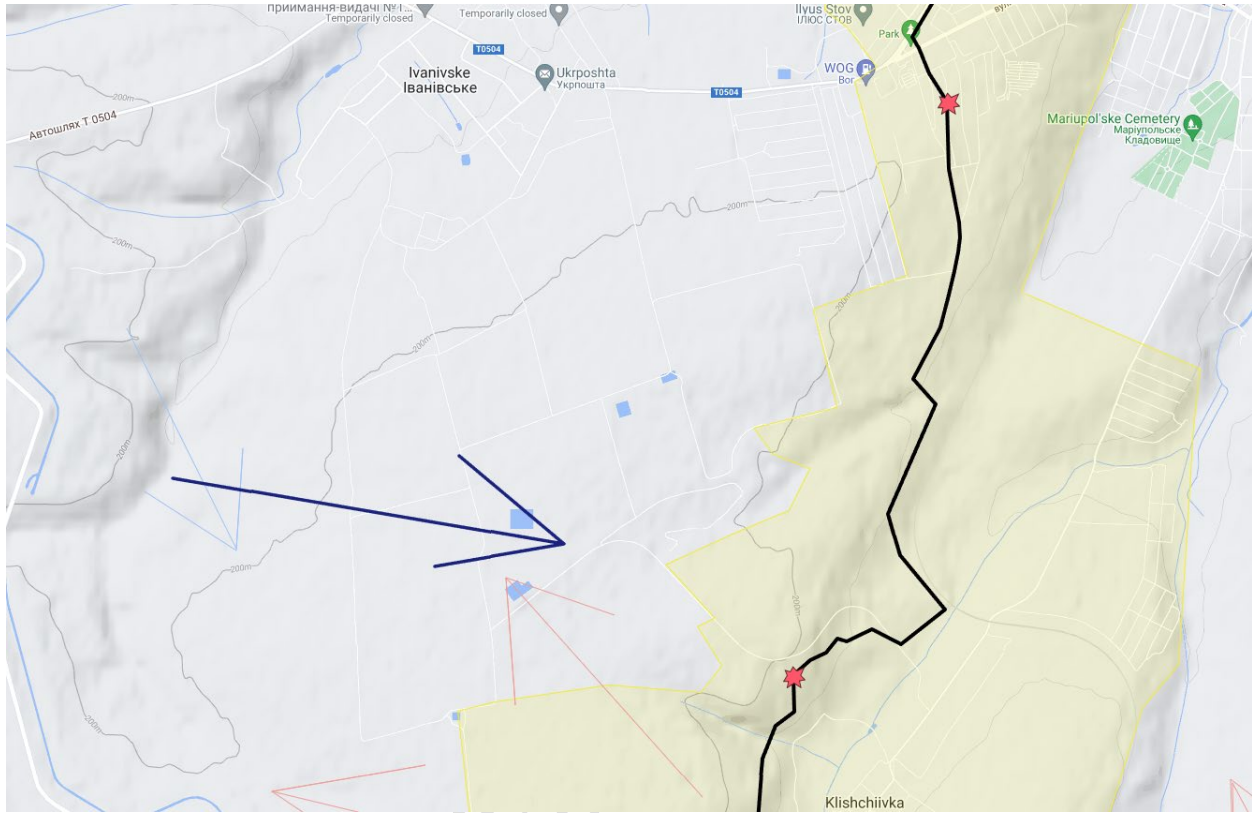
Bakhmut Operational Area

Mutual fighting was reported near [Orikhovo-Vasylivka](#) near the M-03/E-40 Highway.¹² ¹³ Russian forces attempted to advance on [Hryhorivka](#) from Dubovo-Vasylivka without success.¹⁴ Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations at the southwestern edge of [Berkivka](#), with no change in the situation.

¹² [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

¹³ https://t.me/mod_russia/28384 [Russian Federation controlled social media channel]

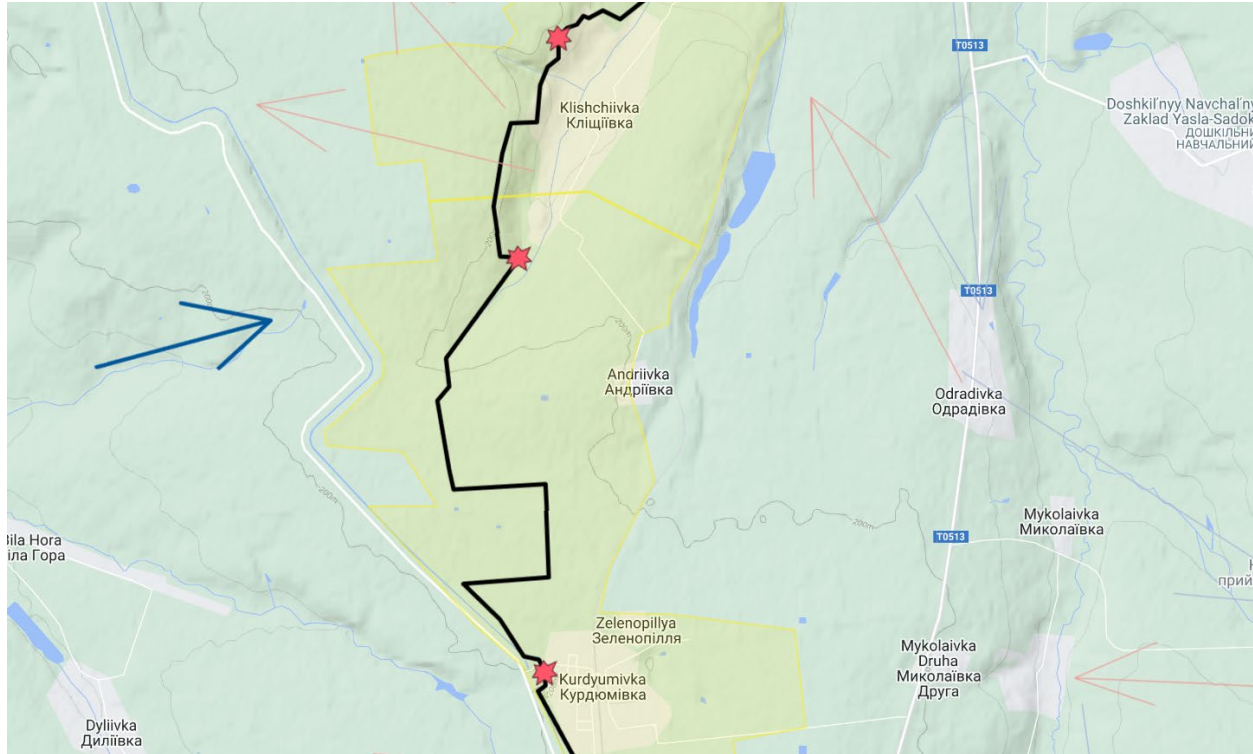
¹⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)



Russian forces attempted to advance in the direction of [Ivanivske](#) from the southern tip of Bakhmut, without success.¹⁵ We maintain Ukraine controls 2.5% of the city in three pockets.¹⁶

¹⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

¹⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/16578>



Klishchiivka Operational Area

Ukrainian and Russian sources reported fighting continued along the outskirts of [Klishchiivka](#), with Russian commanders pulling up reserve forces and blocking troops meant to man the Surovikin and Prigozhin Lines in eastern and southern occupied Ukraine.^{17 18 19} Russian forces attempted to counterattack recently liberated areas southwest of [Andriivka](#) and northwest of [Kurdyumivka](#) without success.^{20 21}

¹⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17112>

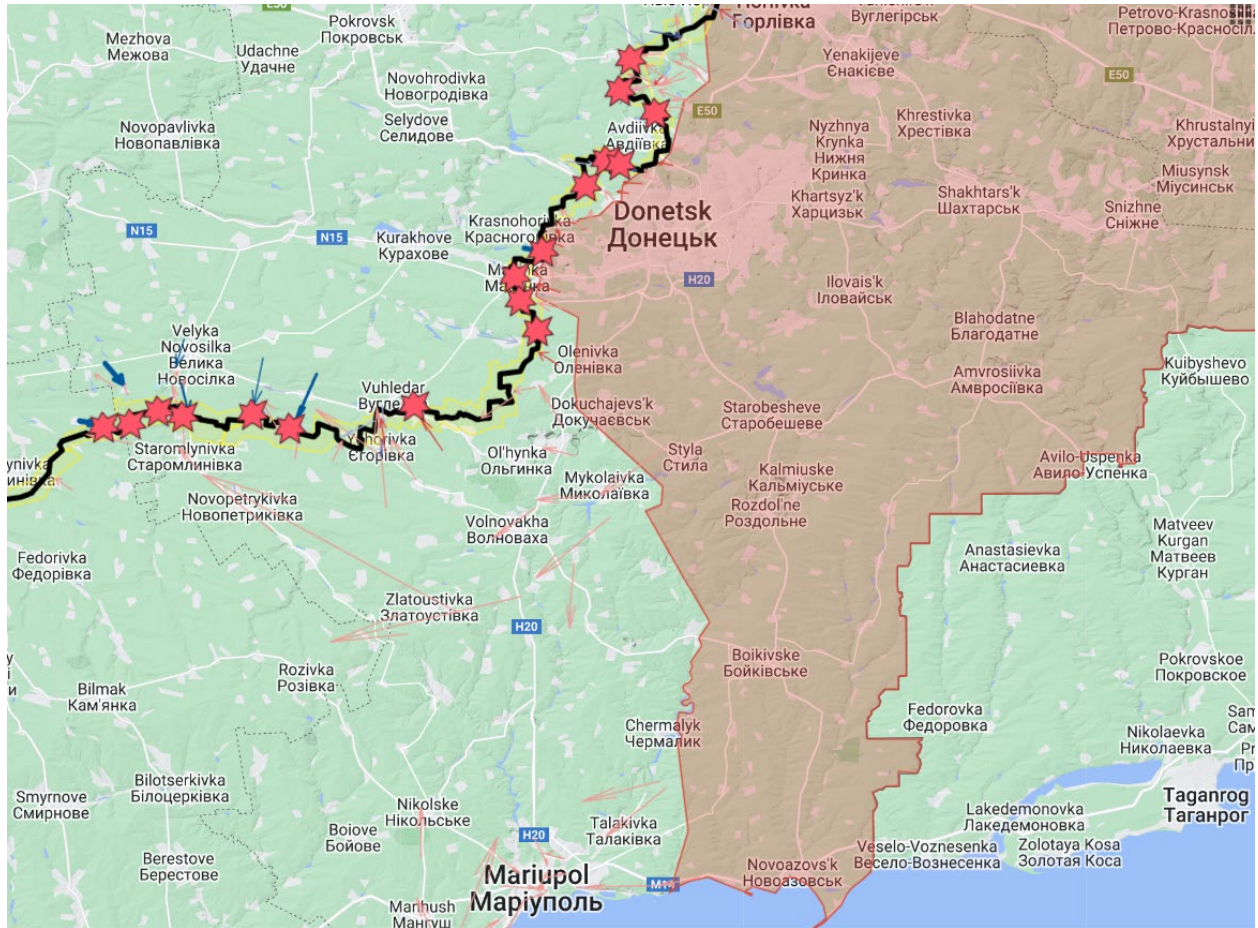
¹⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/49759>

¹⁹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13828>

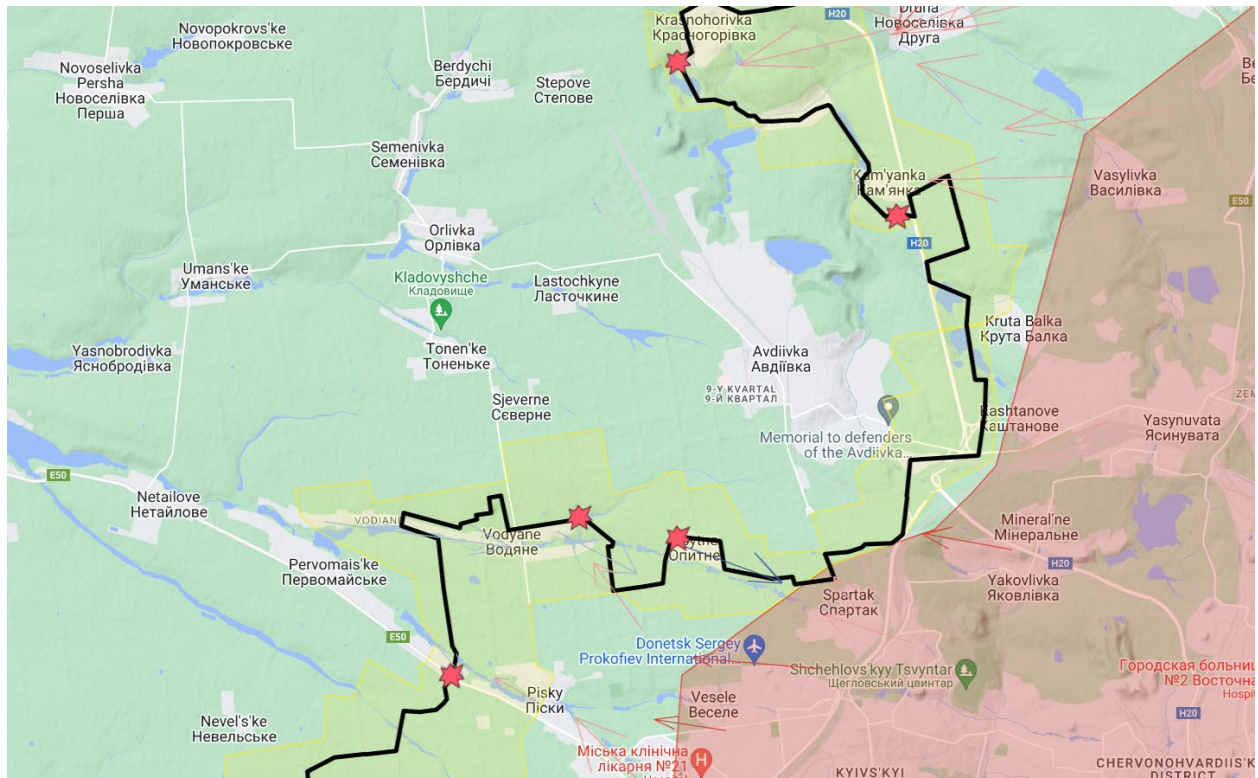
²⁰ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – AM Facebook Report](#)

²¹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Condensed Report



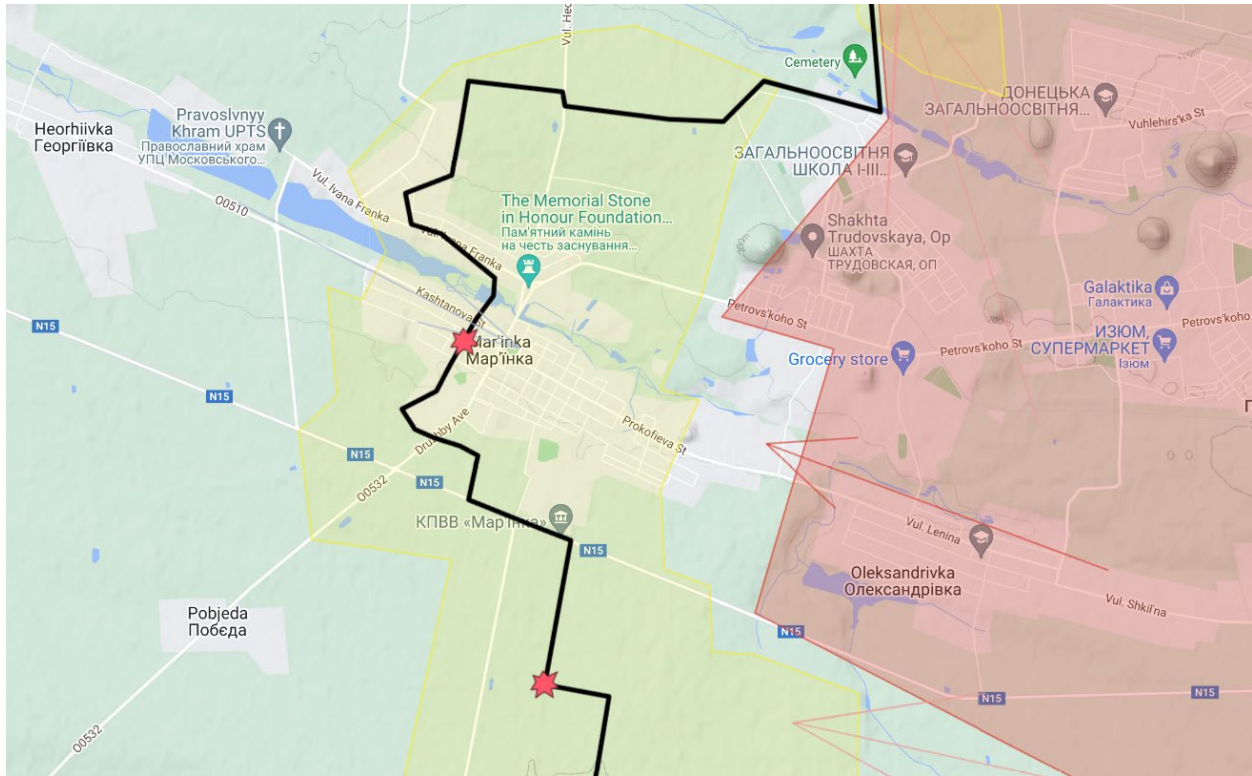
Avdiivka Operational Area

Operational tempo continued to be reduced in the Avdiivka area of operation compared to previous weeks. RMOD reported that Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in the area of [Krasnohorivka](#).²² Mutual fighting was reported in the area of [Sjeverne and Vodyane](#) and south of [Pervomaiske](#).^{23 24}

²² https://t.me/mod_russia/28384 [Russian Federation controlled social media channel]

²³ https://t.me/mod_russia/28384 [Russian Federation controlled social media channel]

²⁴ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – AM Facebook Report](#)



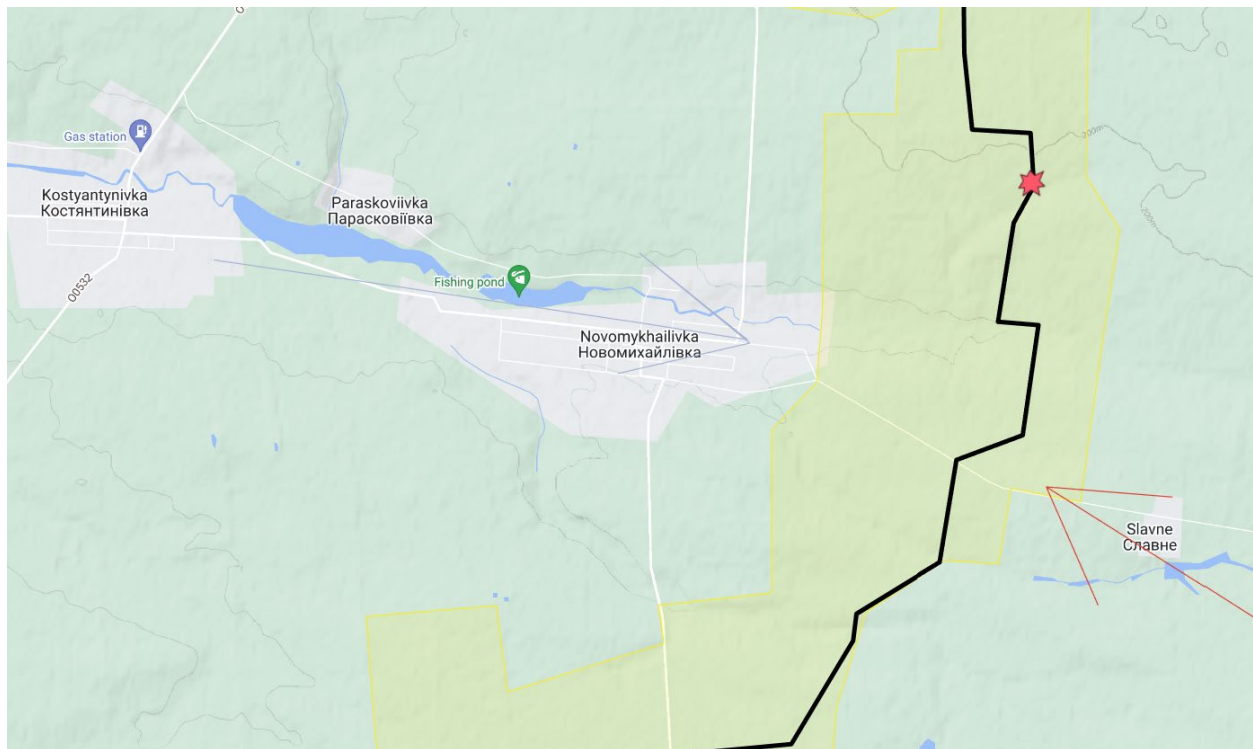
Marinka Operational Area

Intense positional fighting continued in [Marinka](#), with Russian forces supported by the Russian Airforce and army aviation (VKS). There was no change in the situation.^{25 26 27}

²⁵ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – AM Facebook Report](#)

²⁶ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

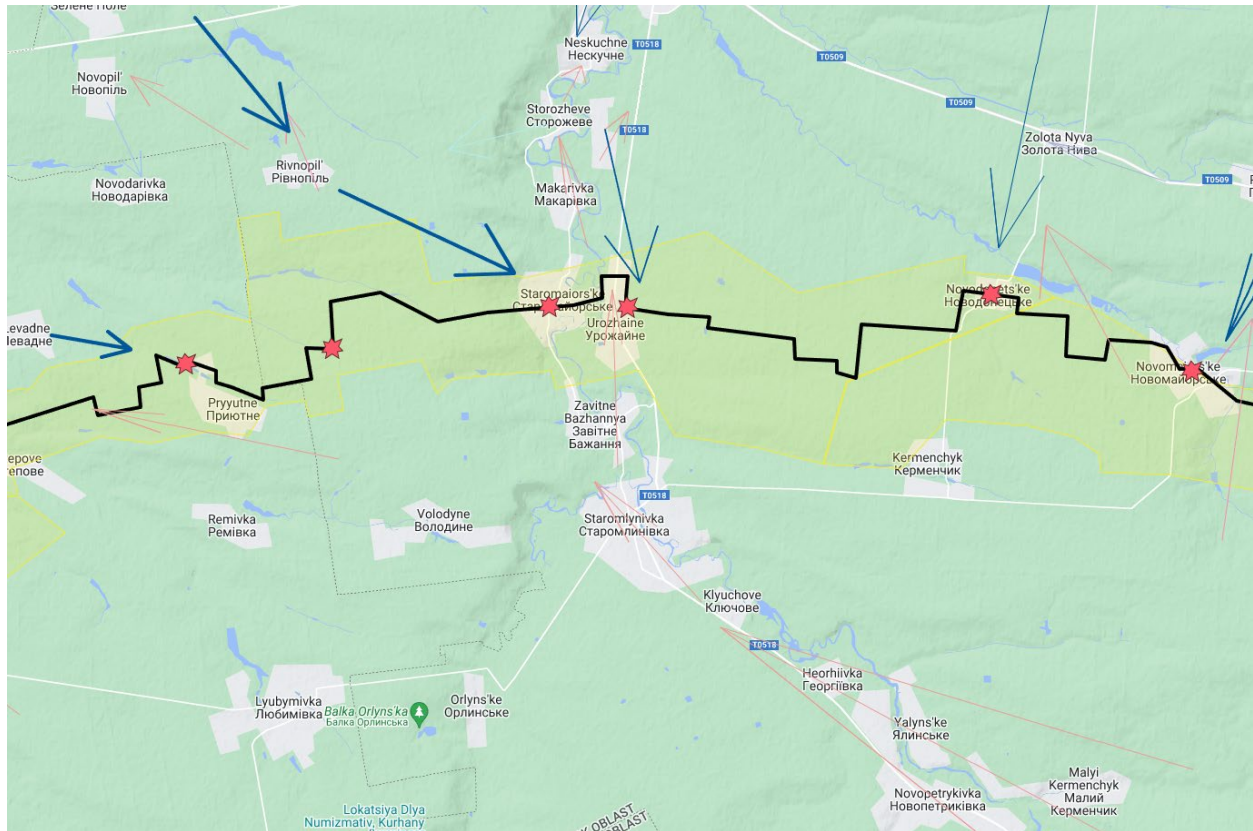
²⁷ https://t.me/mod_russia/28384 [Russian Federation controlled social media channel]



Vuhledar Operational Area

Russian forces continued their attempts to advance on [Novomykhailivka](#) from the east without success.²⁸

²⁸ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – AM Facebook Report](#)



Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction

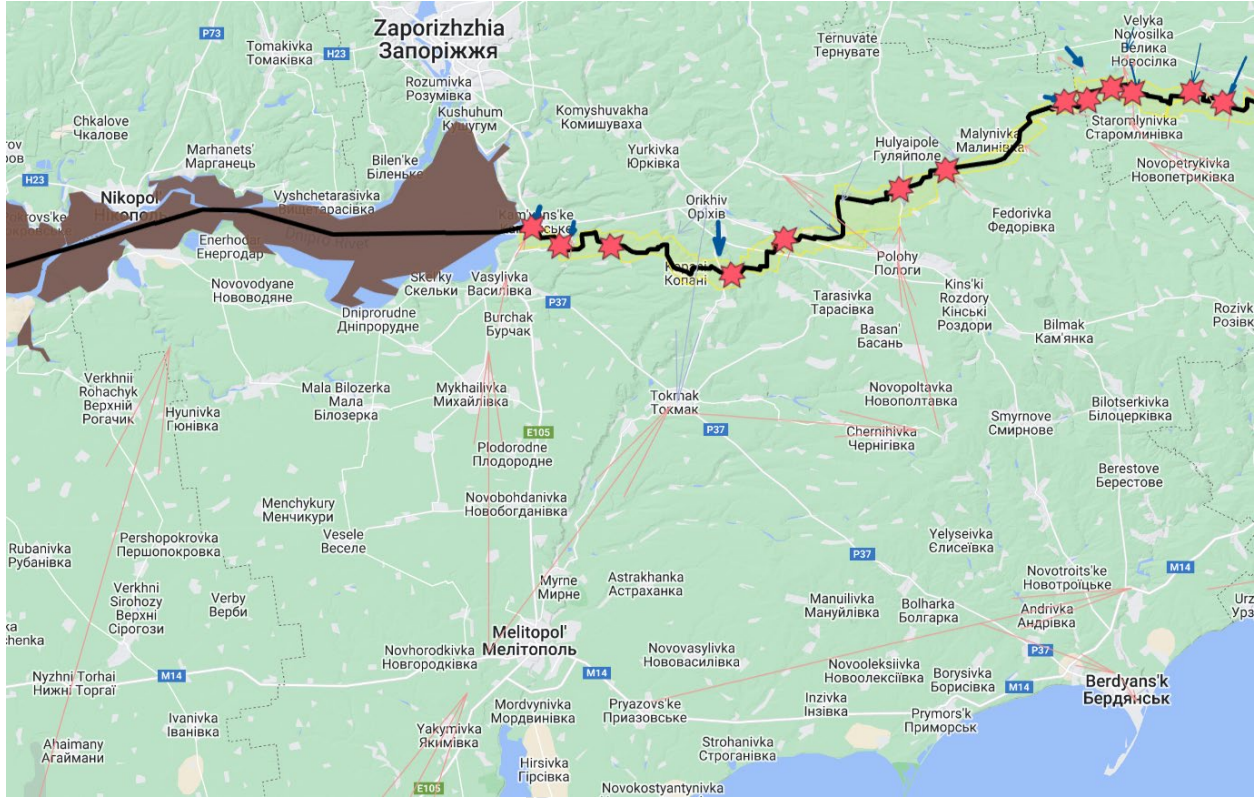
Ukrainian forces secured the northern part of [Staromaiorske](#) and have gained fire control over [Urozhaine](#) and Zavitne Bazhannya, as well as the southern part of Staromaiorske.^{29 30 31}

²⁹ [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – PM Facebook Report](#)

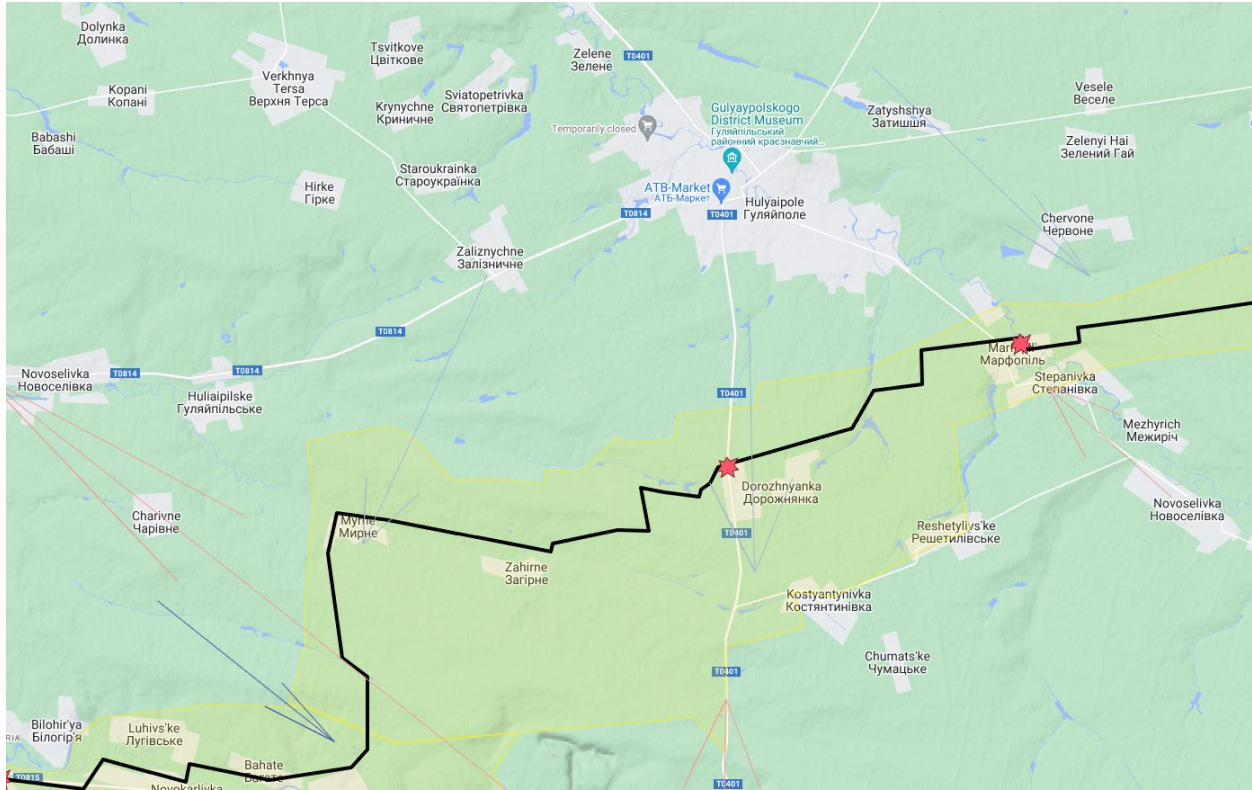
³⁰ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17112>

³¹ <https://t.me/rybar/49759>

ZAPORIZHIA



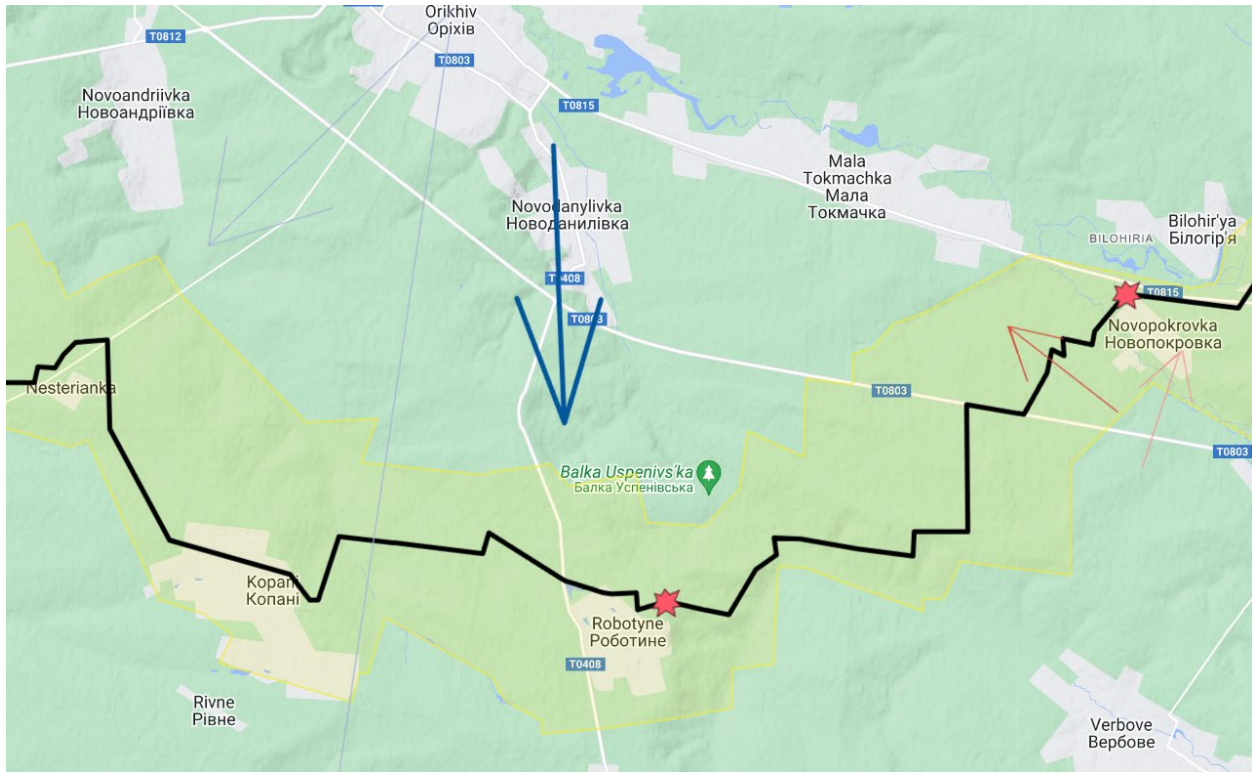
Condensed Report



Hulyaipole Operational Area

WarGonzo claimed that Ukrainian forces launched an offensive on [Dorozhnyanka](#) and were able to capture several Russian positions.³² There was no second source to confirm the report.

³² <https://t.me/wargonzo/13828>



Orikhiv Operational Area

Positional fighting continued around [Robotyne](#), supported by intense artillery fire. There was no change in the situation today.³³

³³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13828>

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

No update.

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Black Sea

Ukrainian Operational Command South (OKS) reported that ten vessels of the Black Sea Fleet were on patrol, including one frigate and one Kilo-class submarine capable of launching up to 12 Kalibr cruise missiles.³⁴


Occupied Crimea

At least two Ukrainian uncrewed surface vessels (USV) attacked the Crimean Bridge, with the first USV exploding on July 17 at 03:04 hours local time and the second at 03:20 hours. The blast caused a partial collapse of the westbound highway lanes from Krasnodar Krai to occupied Crimea. Reportedly two people were killed and one injured.

The illegitimate leader of occupied Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, reported an "emergency situation," and traffic on

³⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/105811>

the highway portion of the bridge was suspended. The Kerch Strait Ferry and rail service on the Crimean (Kerch) Bridge was suspended until 09:00 hours local time. Russian officials claim that both have been restored, but it is worth noting that after the October 8, 2022 attack, they also claimed rail service had been restored less than 24 hours later, even though it took until May 2023 to repair the railroad span.

Russian state media was more than happy to provide the public with a bomb damage assessment (BDA) from every imaginable angle and ignore operational security (OPSEC). At least  [one section of the highway is partially collapsed](#) at support 145.³⁵ Russian officials quickly denied damage to the bridge supports despite the lack of an engineering survey. The linked video appears to show a different story, suggesting support 145 has been damaged, which will complicate repairs.^{36 37}


People wanting to leave Crimea have been advised to travel through Armiansk to occupied Crimea. They would then travel on side roads to Melitopol and continue on the M-14 Highway to Berdyansk and Mariupol before returning to

³⁵ <https://twitter.com/AndrewPerpetua/status/1680821838857814018>

³⁶ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/17/7411634/>

³⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/17/7411623/>

Russia at Novoazovsk. Russian military logistics share the route, covered without countless military checkpoints, comes under Ukrainian HIMARS and Storm Shadow fire, and leaves little for accommodations where civilians could be potentially mixed with Russian or Chechen combat units in nearby resorts and hotels. Further, traffic will snarl Russian logistics, and civilians risk getting their cars impounded, phones searched, detained for questioning, arrested, or conscripted while traveling through the Russian-occupied combat zone.

Ukraine forces launched a raid on Sevastopol using uncrewed surface vessels (USV) and kamikaze drones.³⁸ The illegitimate governor of occupied Crimea, Mykhailo Razvozhayev, reported that one UAV was shot down, and the other four were brought down using electronic warfare. He also reported  [at least one USV was destroyed](#).³⁹

WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

Condensed Report

³⁸ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/105627>

³⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/105640>

There wasn't any significant activity.

NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE

Condensed Report

There wasn't any significant activity.

RUSSIAN FRONT

Condensed Report

There wasn't any significant activity.

THEATERWIDE

While on a brief semi-break, we didn't plan to provide analysis, but with frustration growing on the perceived slow pace of the Ukrainian offensive, some intelligence needs to be brought up. There are growing reports from

Russian sources and intelligence organizations that Russian units are reaching 70% staffing. Much like in late June of 2022, Russian military units are moving to a state of combat ineffective – theaterwide. Combat ineffective does not mean that units cannot engage in offensive operations, but it does mean that offensives can only be accomplished on a local and tactical level by concentrating combat potential. In July and August of 2022, we saw a similar situation, leading to the start of the Kherson counteroffensive and the successful Kharkiv counteroffensive, which began on September 5, 2022. Russian troop strength in Donetsk and Kharkiv reached a level of combat destroyed, and Russian reserves were rushed to Kherson.

The Oryx Database (condensed reports end on July 19, 2023, and the table will be back) reported that Ukraine lost 16 pieces of military hardware, compared to Russia losing 66. A 1:5 ratio in favor of Ukraine is stunning when considering Ukraine is on the offensive. Russian losses since we last updated the table on July 14 include the equivalent of an entire company of main battle tanks, another company of mechanized infantry, and a third company of artillery. That's a Russian battalion combat destroyed in 48 hours.

Ukrainian artillery is devastating Russian troop concentrations and firepower. And in the background, Ukraine has ten brigades in reserve that have not been committed to the fight.

Another sign that Russian commanders are running out of reserve forces is the arrival of Russian airborne (VDV), naval infantry, political officer-led blocking troops, and Chechen OMON blocking troops to the front lines. Additionally, the Russian forces on what Russia calls the "zero line" (Forwardmost Line of Friendly Troops – FLOT) are not being rotated, some since their arrival as mobiks in October 2022.

In contrast, Ukrainian units are being regularly rotated, and Western aid is replacing equipment losses faster than Russia can destroy it – at least for now. It is critical to point out that the New York Times story, which reported Ukraine lost 20% of the military equipment deployed to support the start of the offensive, represents just 3% of their military hardware – only 15% of Ukraine's assets have been used so far – 20% of 15% is what was lost, not 20% of all military hardware. That would be a catastrophe. It's also important to point out that Ukrainian military commanders didn't let the units involved in the offensive descend into a combat ineffective state. They paused the operation, changed

tactics, cut losses by more than half over the next month, and started to rotate the exhausted units reaching 30% losses. Russian milbloggers and Russian commanders who don't adhere to the "all is going to plan" party line quickly point out this difference.

Another problem we had predicted for Russian forces has been getting steadily worse. The losses of the better Russian artillery pieces forced the second echelon of the Russian defense to move closer to the FLOT. Their range and accuracy are degrading due to worn barrels and poorly trained crews. Ukrainian forces have ruthlessly targeted Russian artillery units because the NATO systems they are using have a superior range, are immune from direct counterbattery, and Ukrainian artillery crews are highly skilled. The problem for Russia isn't just shorter range and proximity to the line of conflict, but the inaccuracy of their fire requires three, five, seven, or even ten artillery rounds to be fired to complete a fire mission. By the time that's been executed, counterbattery radar or drones have fixed the position of the Russian battery, and even a self-propelled artillery piece can't "shoot and scoot" fast enough.

Russia's biggest battlefield advantage since February 2022 is its artillery firepower. In Zaporizhia, Ukraine is exceeding

Russian capacity now. A growing number of Russian units claim that requests for fire missions and suppressive fire go unanswered. While Russia is firing 25,000 to 40,000 munitions a day, the worn barrels, fear of counterbattery and drone strikes, shorter-range older systems, and poorly trained crews are increasing exposure. Further, the fire mission is wasted if an artillery battery is given a budget of five rounds and can't fire for effect within that budget.

We are seeing a lot of parallels to July 2022 in Ukrainian and Russian strategy. There are now 14 settlements that Ukrainian forces have brought to contested status or have advanced to the administrative boundaries. The deep strikes on command and control, logistics, ammunition depots, and the paranoia gripping the Kremlin after Prigozhin's failed offensive is working against Russia.

Ukraine just needs to break through in one place.