

MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

July 21, 2023



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 512

It has been 3,432 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 147 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

- Storm Shadow missile strike has obliterated the Russian fuel storage and ammunition depot in Oktyabrskoye, Crimea
- The Russian training base in Stary Krym was destroyed by a July 18 explosion of unknown origin
- A Shahed-136 kamikaze drone destroyed a Ukrainian ammunition depot in Zhytomyr
- Russian forces are probing for Ukrainian weak points in the Svatove Operational Area
- Ukrainian forces have entered the tactically important settlement of Klishchiivka, where fighting continues
- Igor Strelkov Girkin was charged with extremism after a PMC Wagner employee filed a complaint with the prosecutor's office
- Rosatom is still blocking the inspectors with the International Atomic Energy Agency from surveying all areas of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant
- Russian tactical nuclear weapons arrive in Belarus
- Equipment loss table has been updated through July 21, 2023

DAILY ASSESSMENT

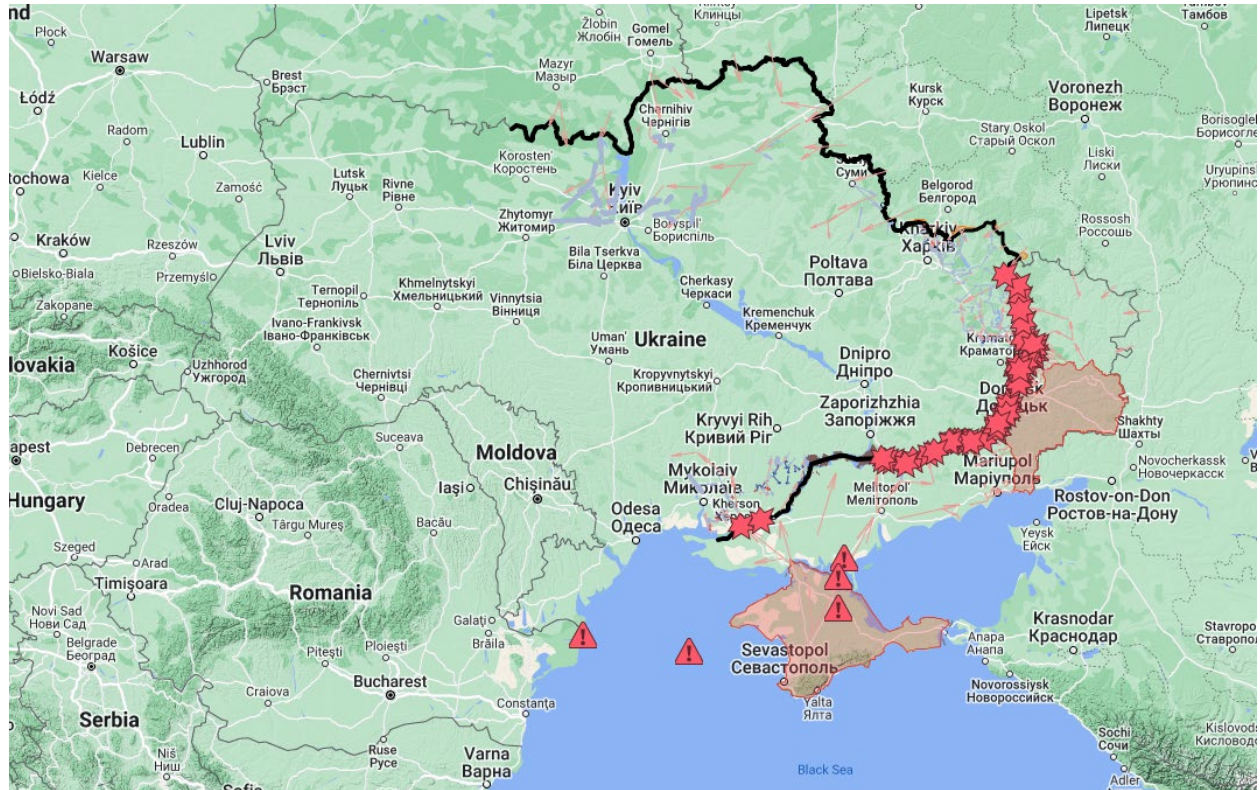
We assess the following:

1. Russia's defacto blockade of the Ukrainian coast and threats to shipping interests in Bulgaria and Romania has created another potential international flashpoint that could expand the ongoing war into a regional conflict.
2. Ukrainian forces have entered an artillery-centric war of attrition against Russian forces, leveraging an advantage in range, accuracy, capacity, and in the Zaporihia region, firepower.
3. The current Ukrainian military activity is subordinate offensives and shaping operations, and the main operation has not started.
4. The arrest of Igor Strelkov Girkin and some of his associates reinforces that Russian President Vladimir Putin was weakened after the failed Prigozhin Insurrection, with a small but very real possibility of a future attempt to change the Moscow regime.
5. The Russian Ministry of Defense remains in a chaotic state, incapable of creating mission cohesion between penal units, mobiks, conscripts, elite forces, PMCs, and proxy forces.

6. Mistrust among the command structures of the Russian Ministry of Defense, intelligence, and security community is negatively impacting Russia's ability to wage war within Ukraine.
7. Russian troops in key areas of operations continue to suffer from critical shortages of heavy weapons, effective radio communications, food and potable water, and suffering from increasing casualties and low-quality battlefield medical care.
8. Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu are some of the best allies available for the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense due to their acceptance of systemic corruption, political infighting, waste of military resources, and refusal to adapt to the realities within the theater of war.
9. While the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the threat should be taken seriously.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

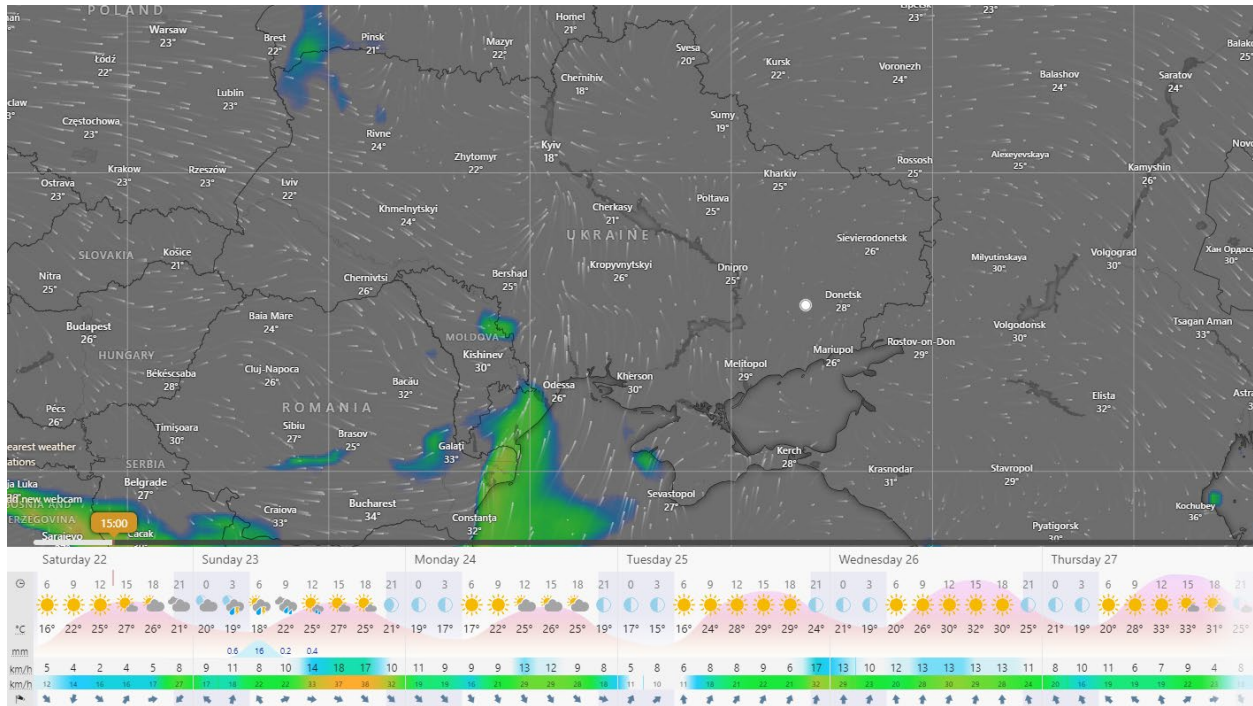


About the maps: Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the *Moskva* and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The 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](#)

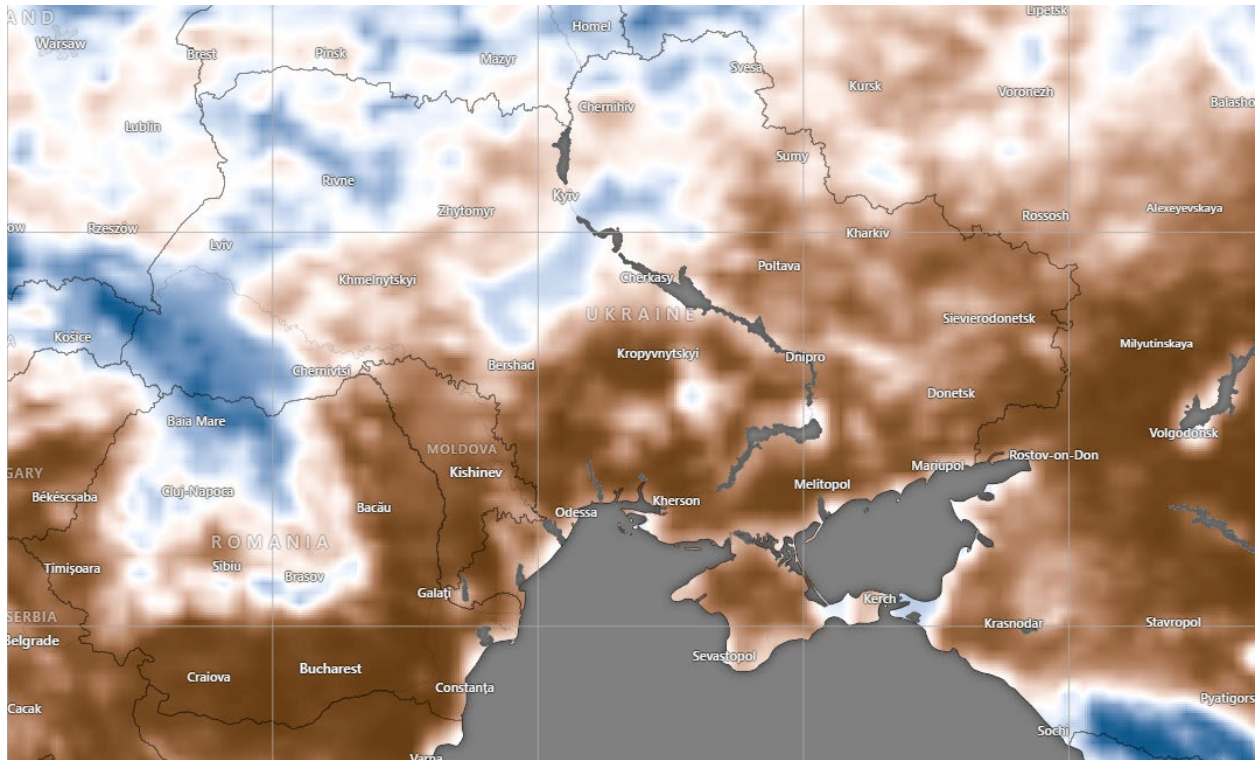


UKRAINE WEATHER



Thunderstorms, possibly severe, are possible through July 23. Localized rainfall of up to 15 millimeters is possible in stronger cells. The week of July 24 will be hot and dry. High temperatures will be from 23° to 36° Celcius, with July 27 forecasted as the hottest day. Low temperatures will be from 12° to 22°.

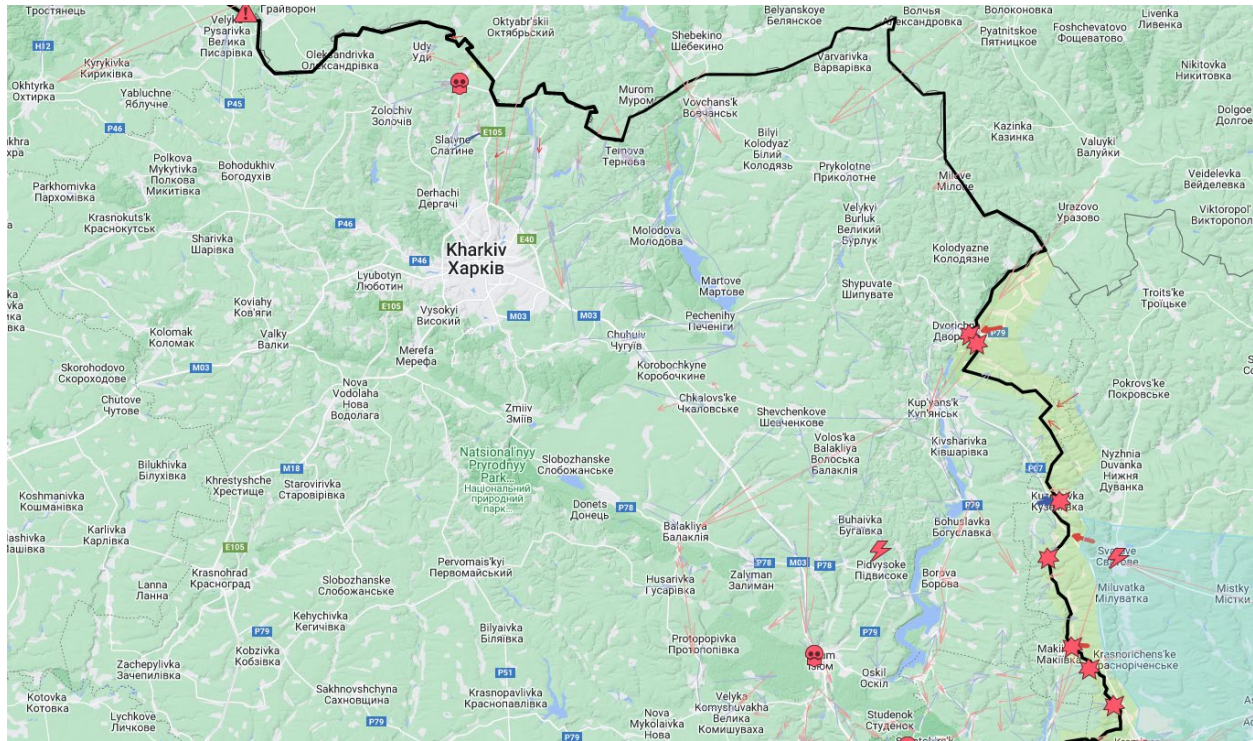
SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY



July 29, 2023, GFS forecast predicts soil saturation will be below 30% throughout the theater of war.

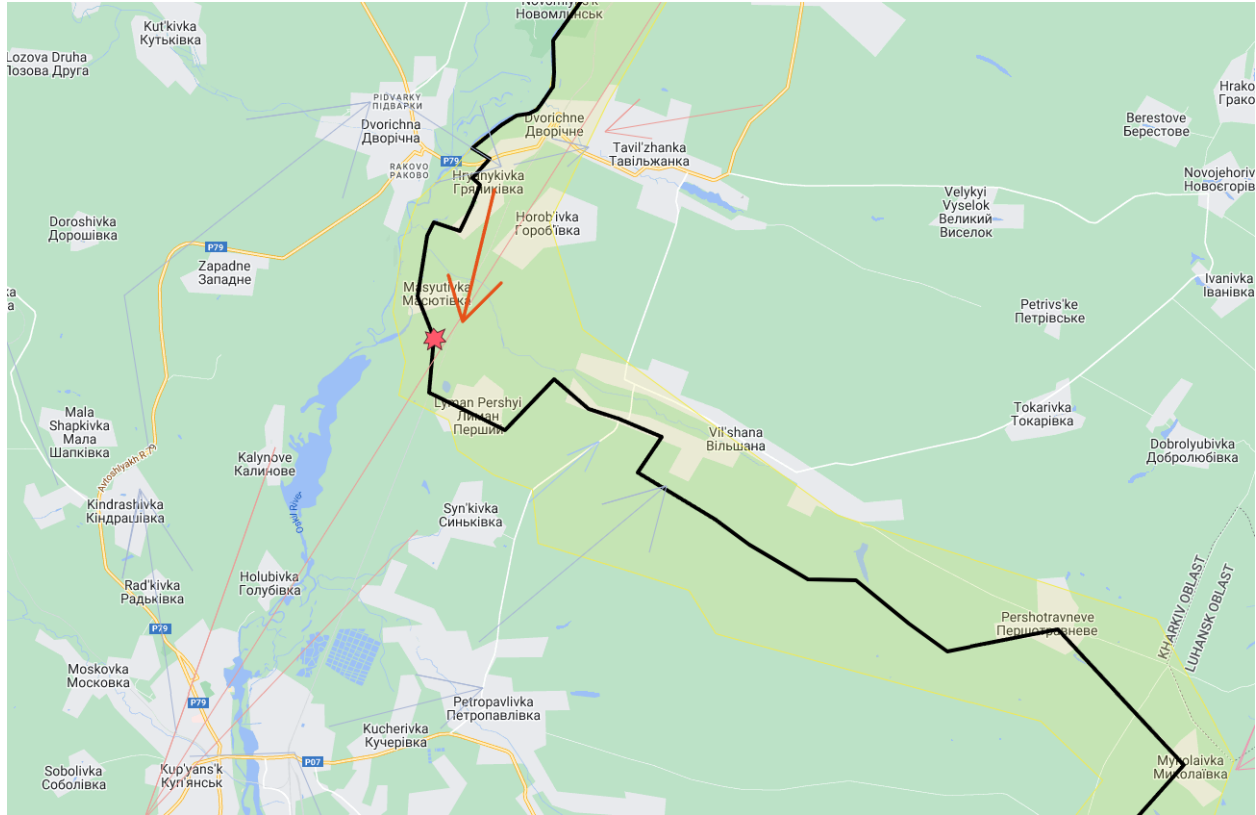
The soil saturation model does not consider the lakebed of the Kakhovka Reservoir. Soil saturation is between 10% to 40% in southern and most of eastern Ukraine, with pockets in the Kremenna area up to 60%. While thunderstorms and rain showers are expected through July 23, the impact on tractability will be minimal.

KHARKIV



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians near the line of conflict

Ukrainian Objective: Liberate the northeastern corner of the oblast, hold defensive lines in the Dvorychne and Kupyansk Operational Areas, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure



Dvorichna Operational Area

Fighting continues south and southwest of [Masyutivka](#) and west of [Lyman Pershyi](#), with no change in the situation.^{1 2 3} Our earlier assessments of claimed Russian advances being false were accurate.

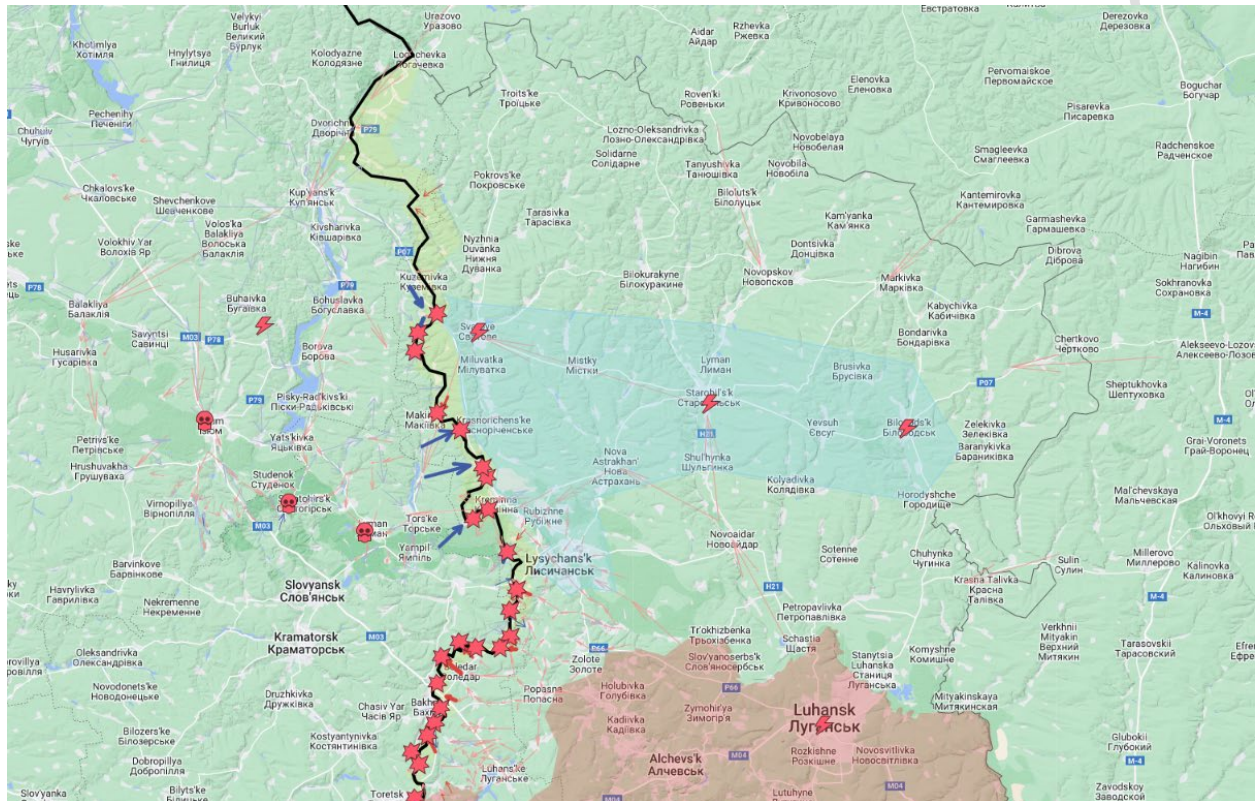
¹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10536>

² <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>

³ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

DONBAS REGION

LUHANSK



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, control insurgent activity, set conditions to capture the rest of the region, and support September 2023 elections

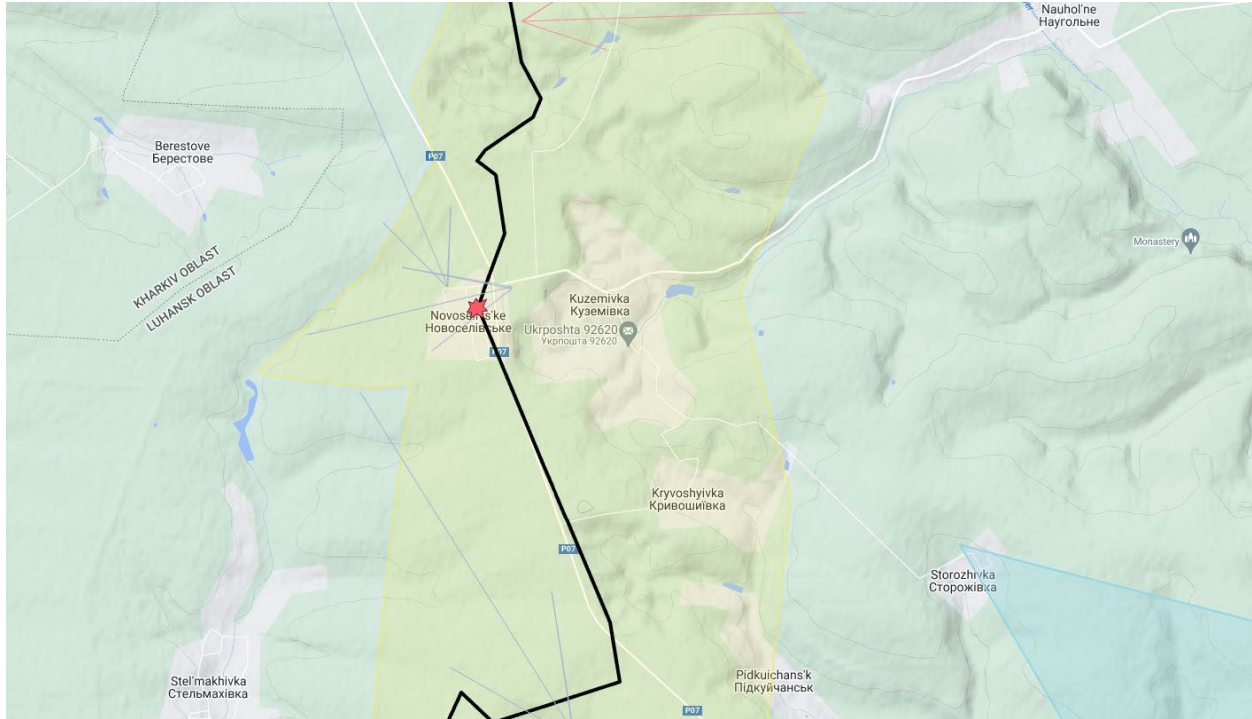
Ukrainian Objective: Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents

Free Luhansk

The spokesperson for Operational Command East (OKE), Colonel Serhiy Cherevaty, reported that Russian forces fired 400 artillery rounds, mortars, Grad and Smerch rockets, indirect tank fire, drone-delivered IEDs, and bombs, and the Russian Airforce and army aviation (VKS) launched 11 airstrikes from Dvorichna in Kharkiv to Bilohorivka in Luhansk.⁴ Twenty combat clashes were reported, with Russian forces probing the entire Svatove front looking for weaknesses in the Ukrainian defenses.⁵

⁴ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/12167>

⁵ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/12202>



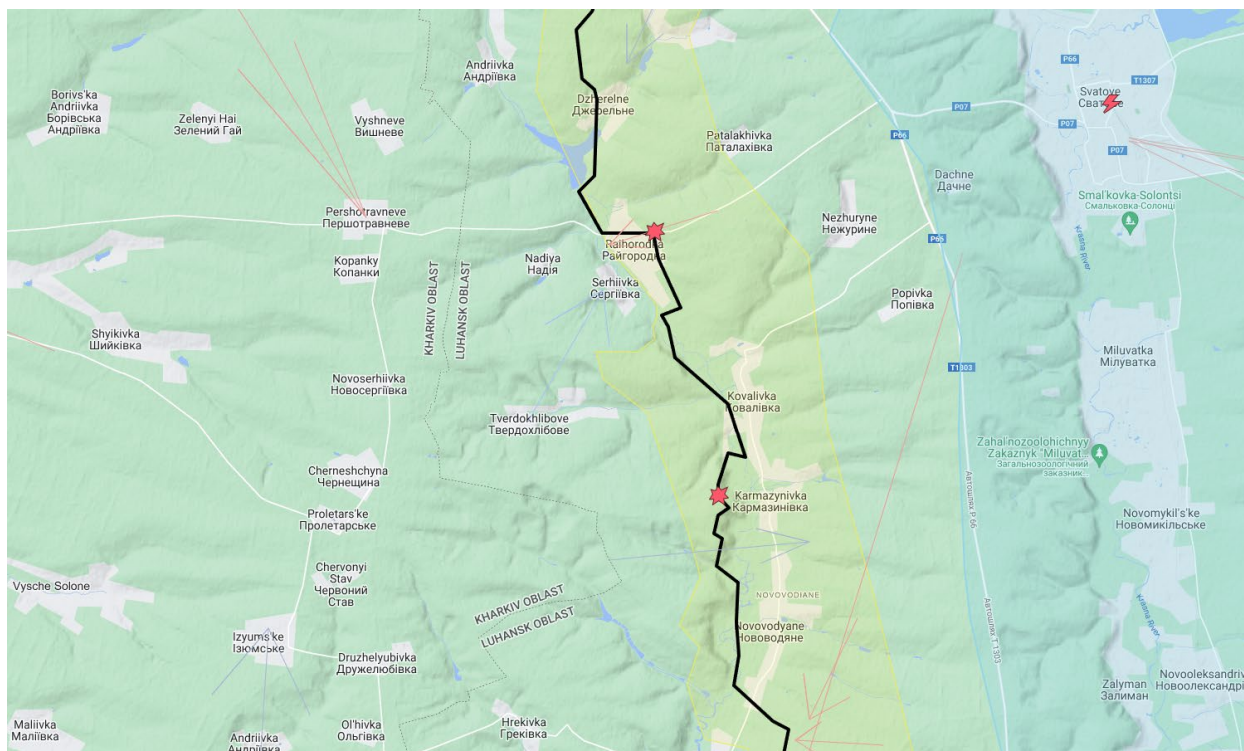
Svatove Operational Area

Russian forces continued their attacks on [Novoselivske](#) with no change to the situation.^{6 7 8} Fighting is between squad and platoon sized units.

⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>

⁸ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]



Russian forces launched probing attacks in the directions of [Nadiya](#), western [Raihorodka](#), [Serhiivka](#), [Novojehorivka](#), and [Karmazynivka](#).^{9 10 11} The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive at [Kovalivka](#) and, on July 21, counterattacked at [Karmazynivka](#).^{12 13} We did not update the map despite claims of marginal Russian advances near Karmazynivka on July 20 as we await intelligence on the outcome of the Ukrainian counterattack.

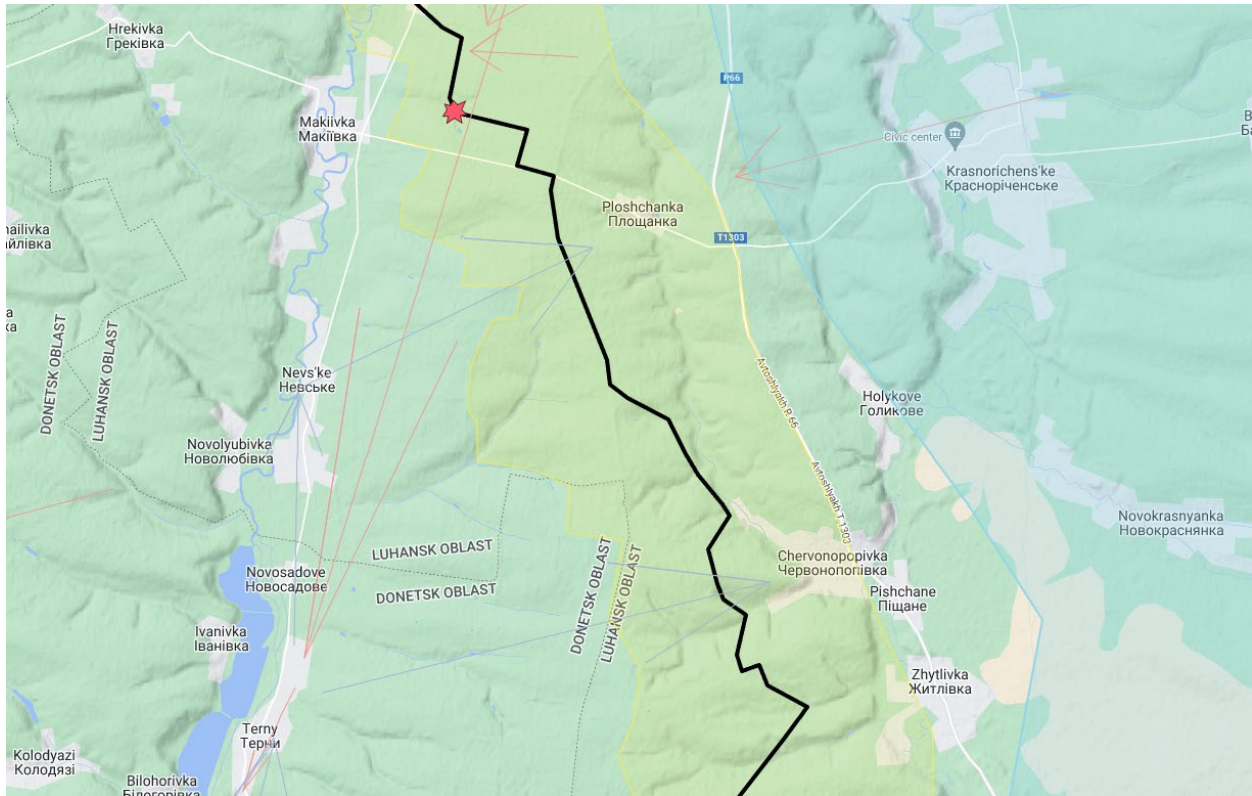
⁹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10563> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

¹⁰ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>

¹¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

¹² https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

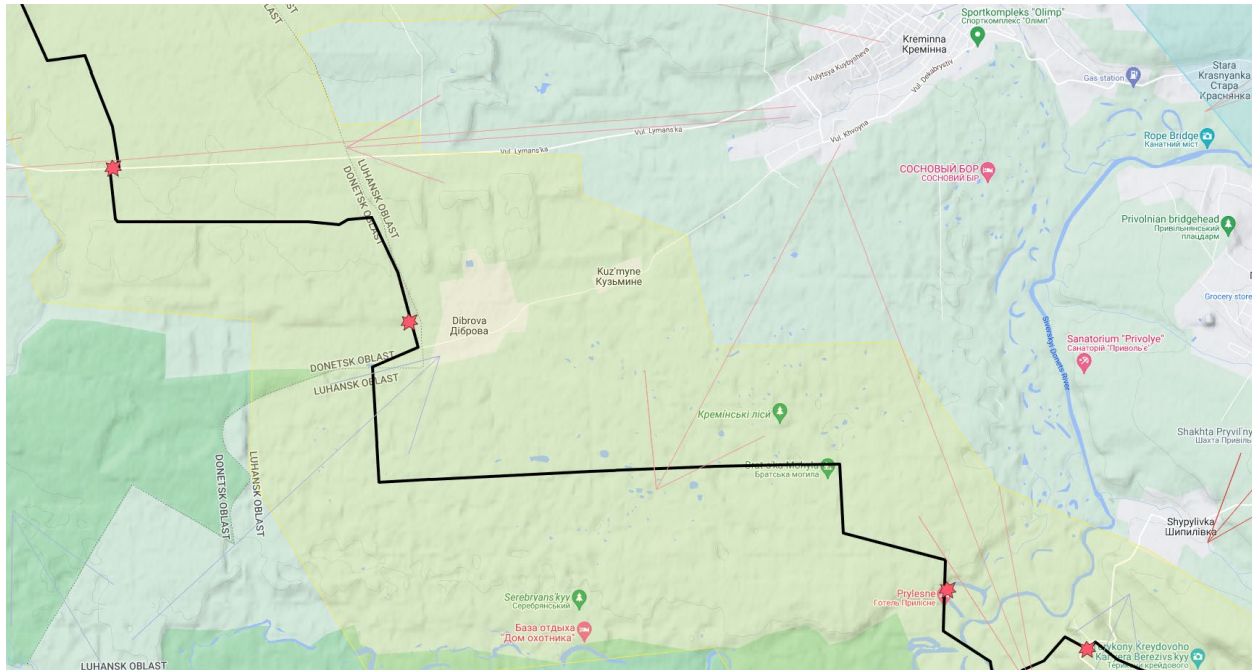
¹³ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>



Kreminna Operational Area

On July 21 north of Kreminna, Russian forces attempted to advance in the direction of [Makiivka](#) and [Nevske](#) without success.¹⁴

¹⁴ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10563> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]



Positional fighting continued west of [Dibrova](#) and in the [Serebryansky Woods](#) south of Kuzmyne, with no change in the situation.^{15 16 17 18 19 20}

¹⁵ https://t.me/mod_russia/28477 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

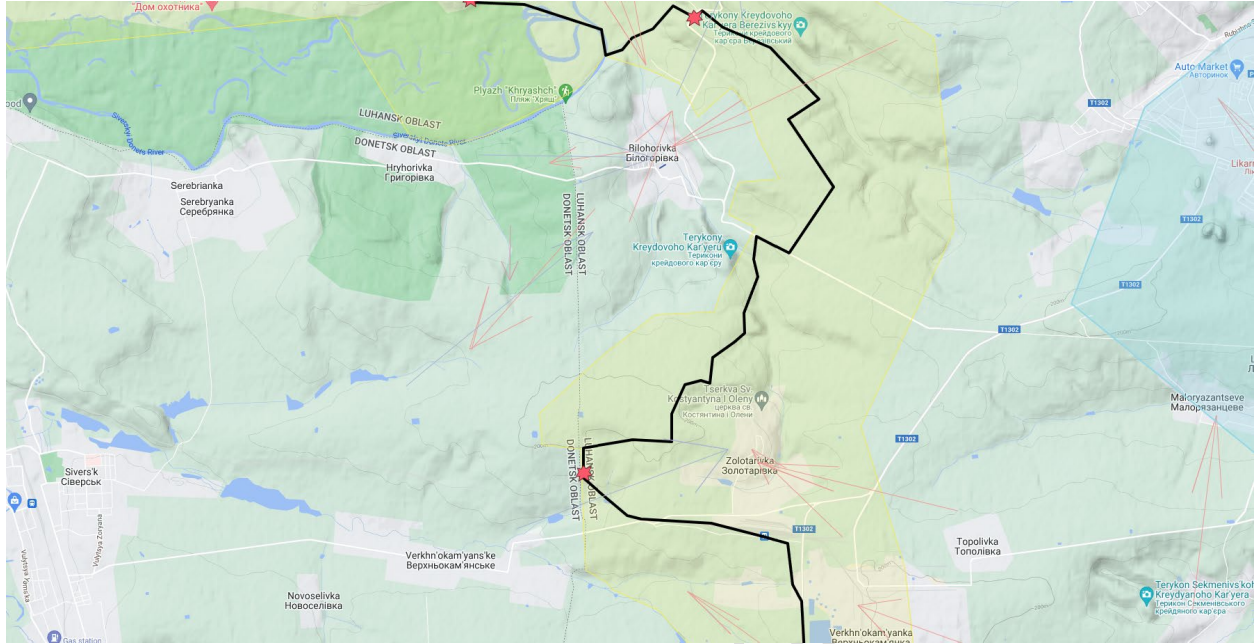
¹⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

¹⁷ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

¹⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891>

¹⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>

²⁰ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

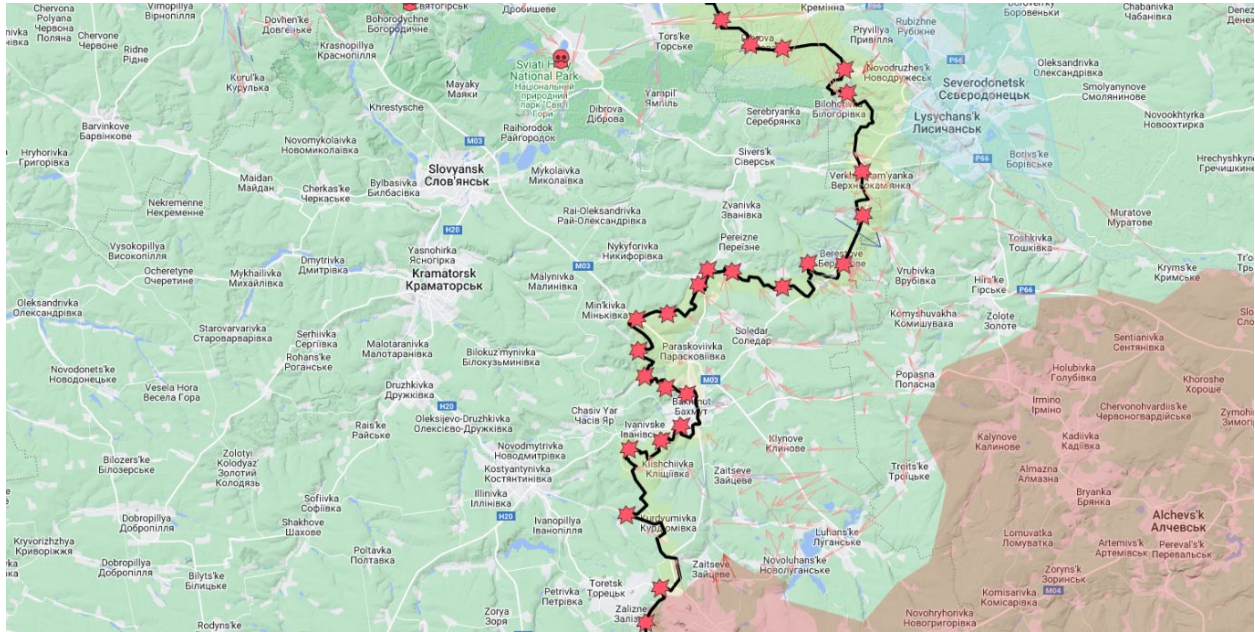


Lysychansk Operational Area

RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Zolotarivka](#) without supporting evidence.²¹

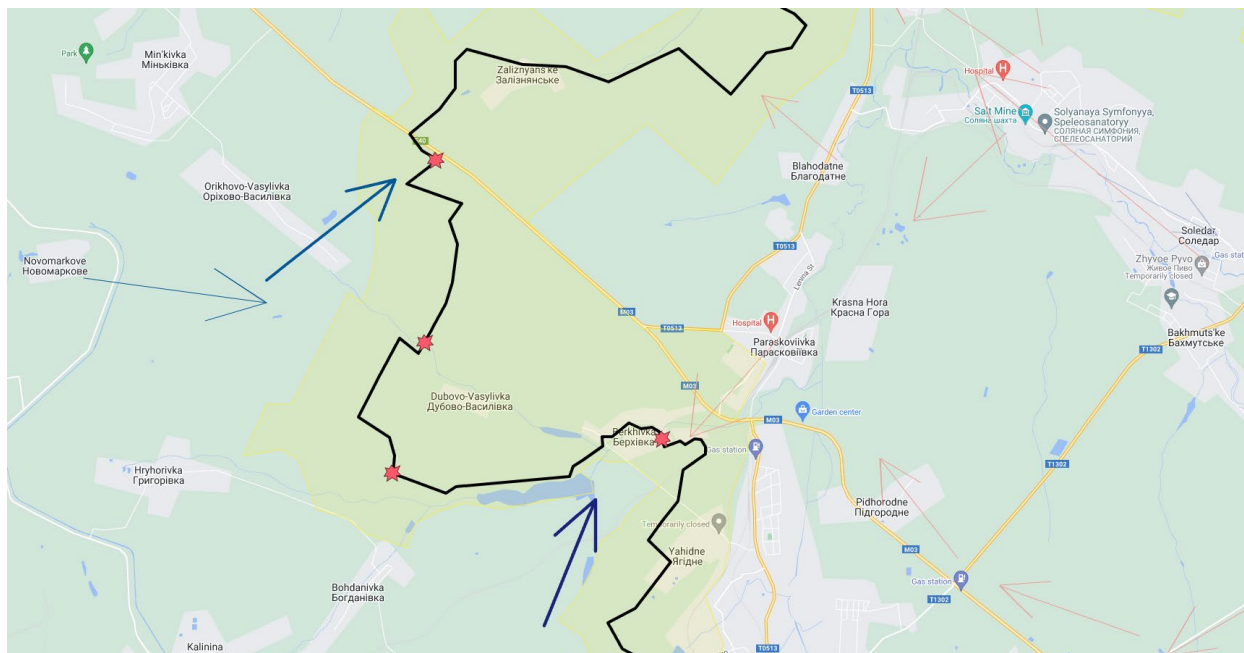
²¹ https://t.me/mod_russia/28508 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

NORTHEAST DONETSK



Russian Objective: Complete the capture of Bakhmut, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and capture the entire region, set conditions for September 2023 elections

Ukrainian Objective: Defend Siversk and Bakhmut, collapse the Russian flanks while maximizing casualties, draw Russian reserves into the Bakhmut and Soledar operational areas, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties



Bakhmut Operational Area

Russian forces in [Dubovo-Vasylivka](#) tried to advance on [Hryhorivka](#) without success.²² Fighting continued on the southern edge of [Berkshivka](#) and southwest of [Yahidne](#), where Ukrainian forces made marginal gains on July 21.²³ ²⁴ ²⁵ ²⁶ Russian forces also tried to retake positions north of [Bohdanivka](#) without success.²⁷

²² <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10563> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

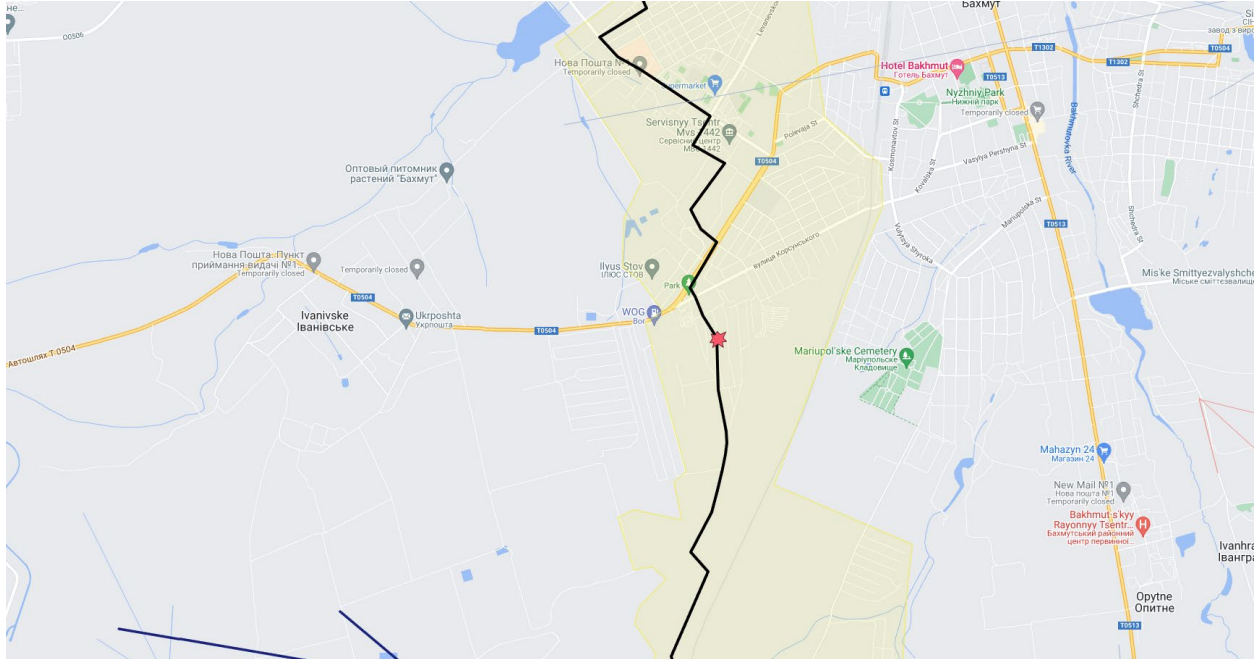
²³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

²⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891> 7/21

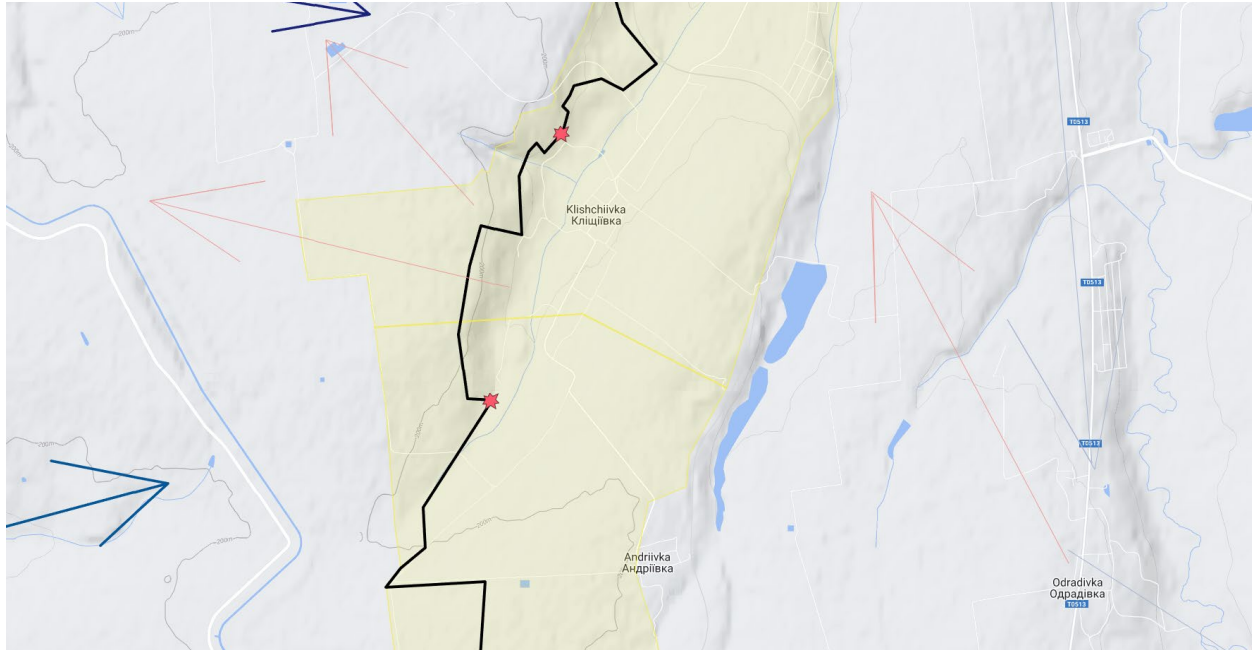
²⁵ <https://t.me/rybar/49907>

²⁶ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

²⁷ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10514>



The failed Russian attempts to advance on Ivanivske have had increasing consequences, with Ukrainian forces taking control of more regions of the community gardens in southern [Bakhmut](#). We maintain that Ukrainian forces occupy 2.5% of the city in three pockets on the southern, southwestern, and western edges.



Klishchiivka Operational Area

Ukrainian forces have entered the settlement of [Klishchiivka](#), reaching the first streets in two locations in the southwestern and western part of the Russian-occupied town.^{28 29 30 31} RMOD reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensives on the northern edge of the settlement.³² Ukrainian forces were able to take full military control of more territory west of [Andriivka](#) and continue to move east through the treelines toward the village.

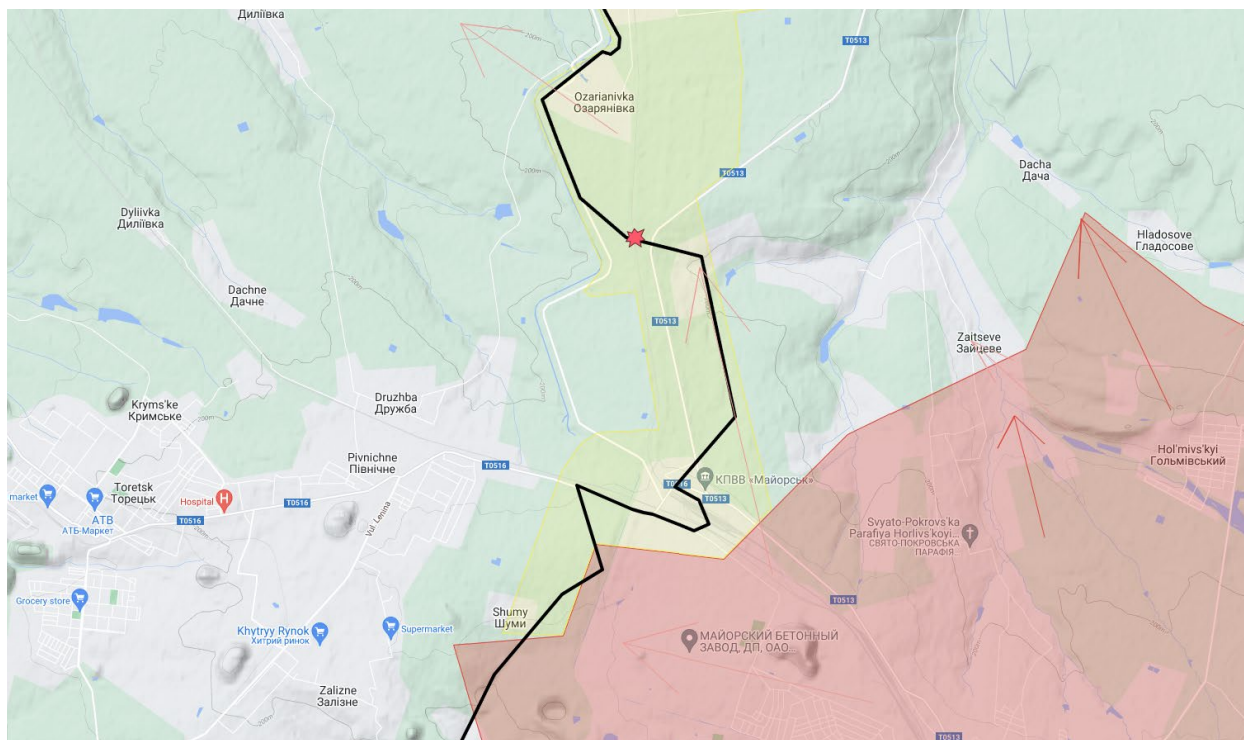
²⁸ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10514>

²⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>


³⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10539> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

³¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

³² https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]



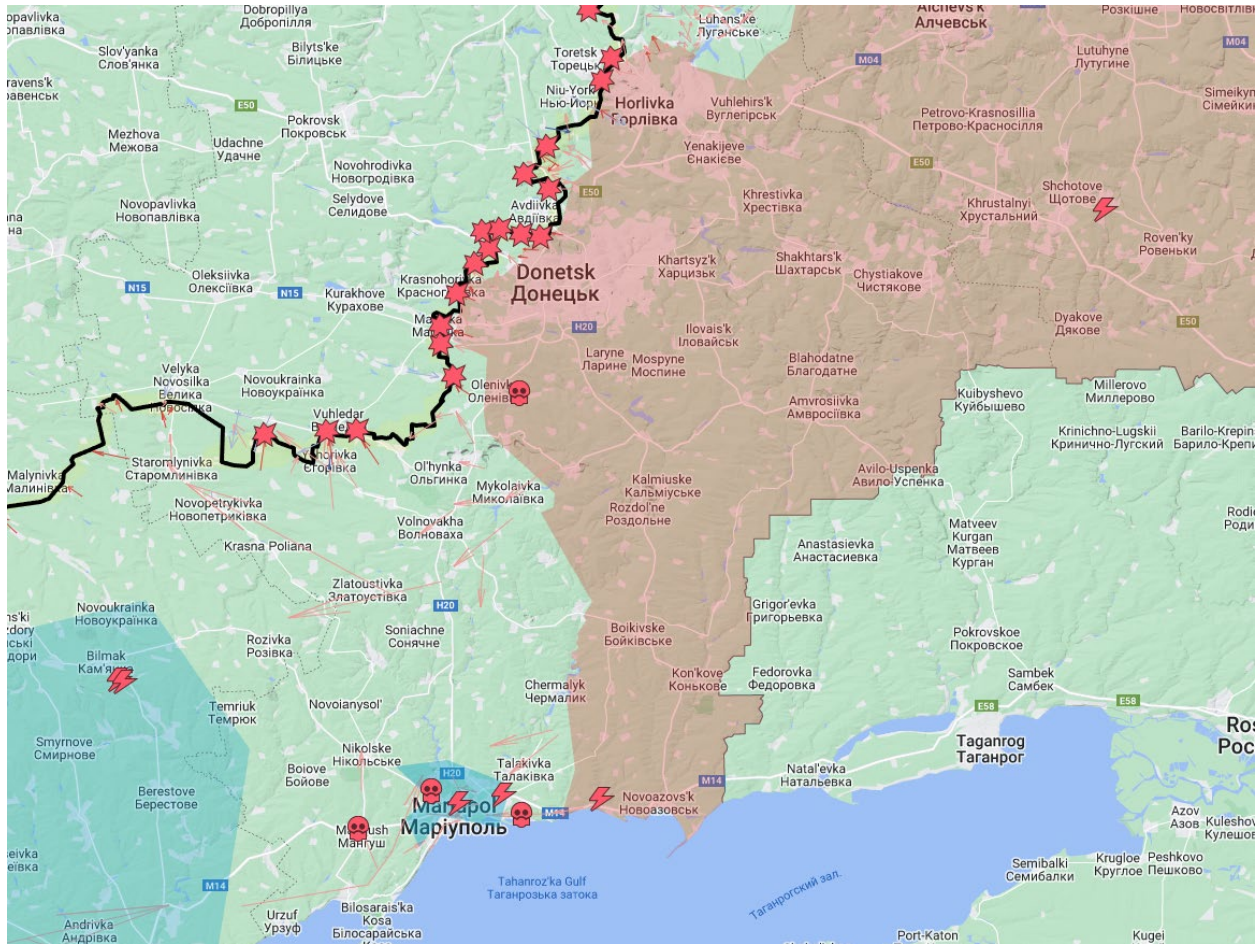
RMOD reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Mayorsk](#) but did not specify a direction.³³ The attack is likely south of [Ozarianivka](#).

A Russian command and communication post in Kodema was  [destroyed by a JDAM ER glide bomb](#), with Russian occupiers reporting significant casualties.³⁴

³³ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

³⁴ https://twitter.com/parrot_soldier/status/1682659248679923712

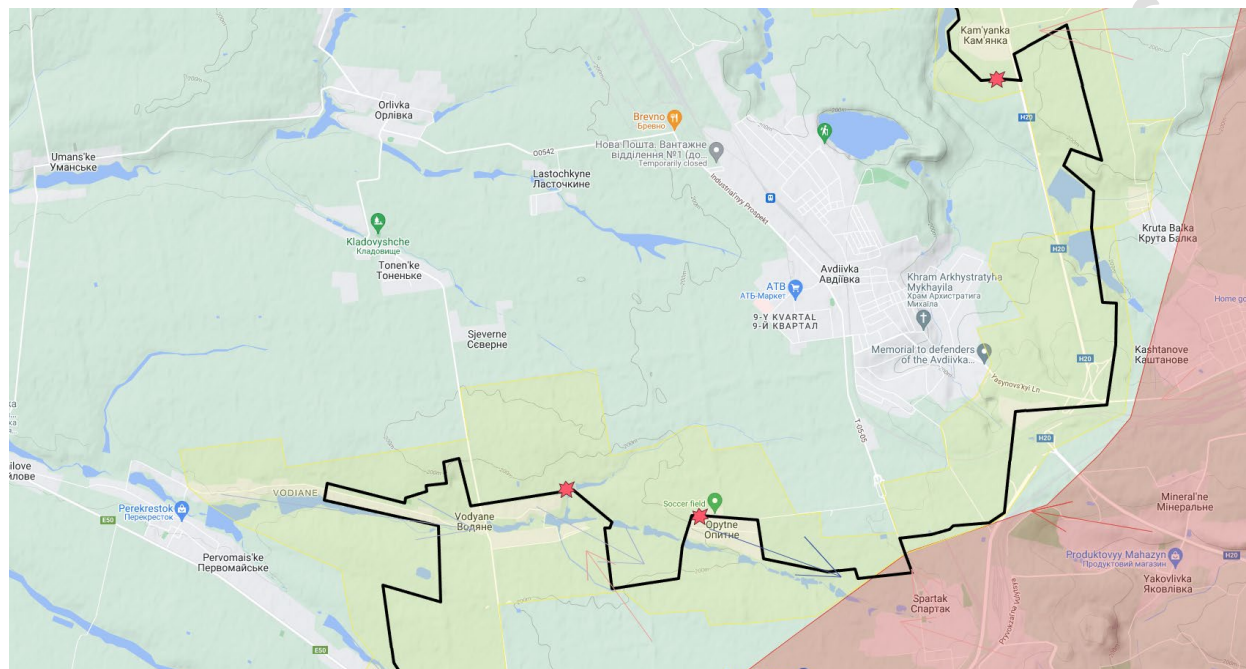
SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, set conditions for September 2023 elections, capture the remainder of the oblast

Ukrainian Objective: Set conditions for larger offensive operations, find and exploit Russian defensive weaknesses,

destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies, and disrupt logistics

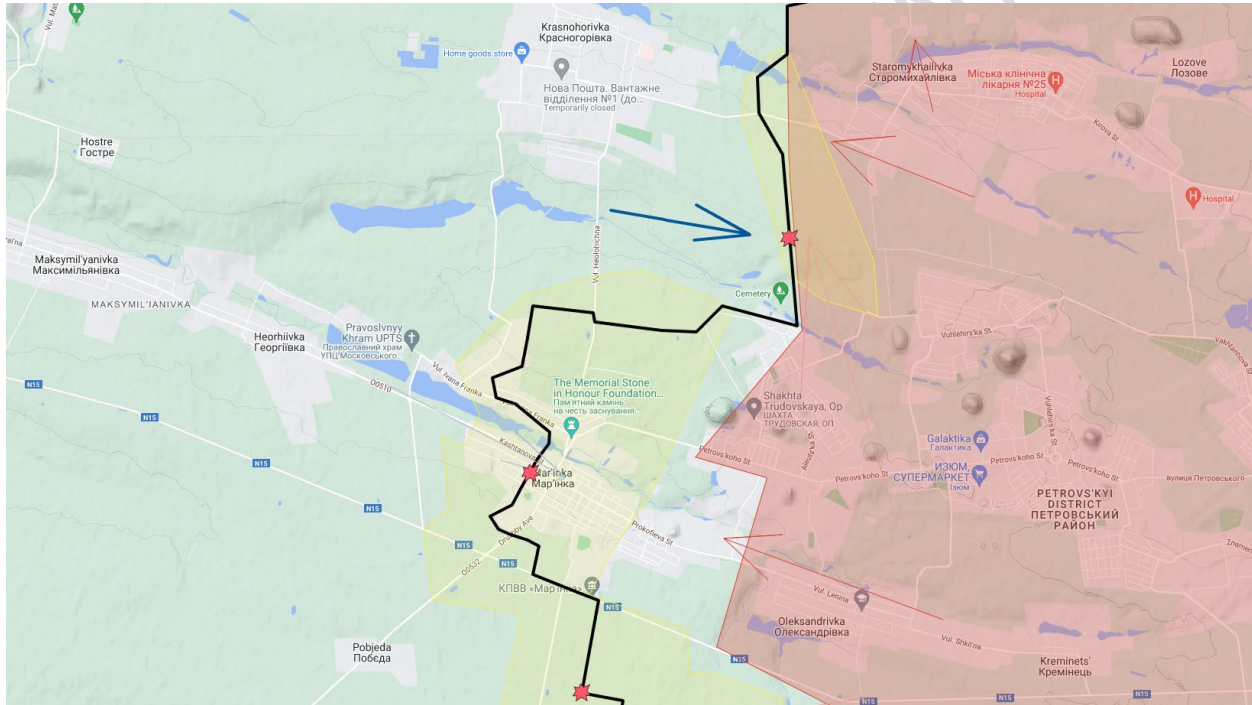


Avdiivka Operational Area

There continue to be no significant changes in the Avdiivka operational area. A number of analysts overstated Ukrainian gains in [Vesele](#) at the southern approach of the Krasnohorivka Plateau. We adjusted the line of conflict 100 meters west due to Russian forces taking military control of the southern edge of the settlement. On July 21, Ukrainian forces were reportedly attacking the same area.³⁵

³⁵ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

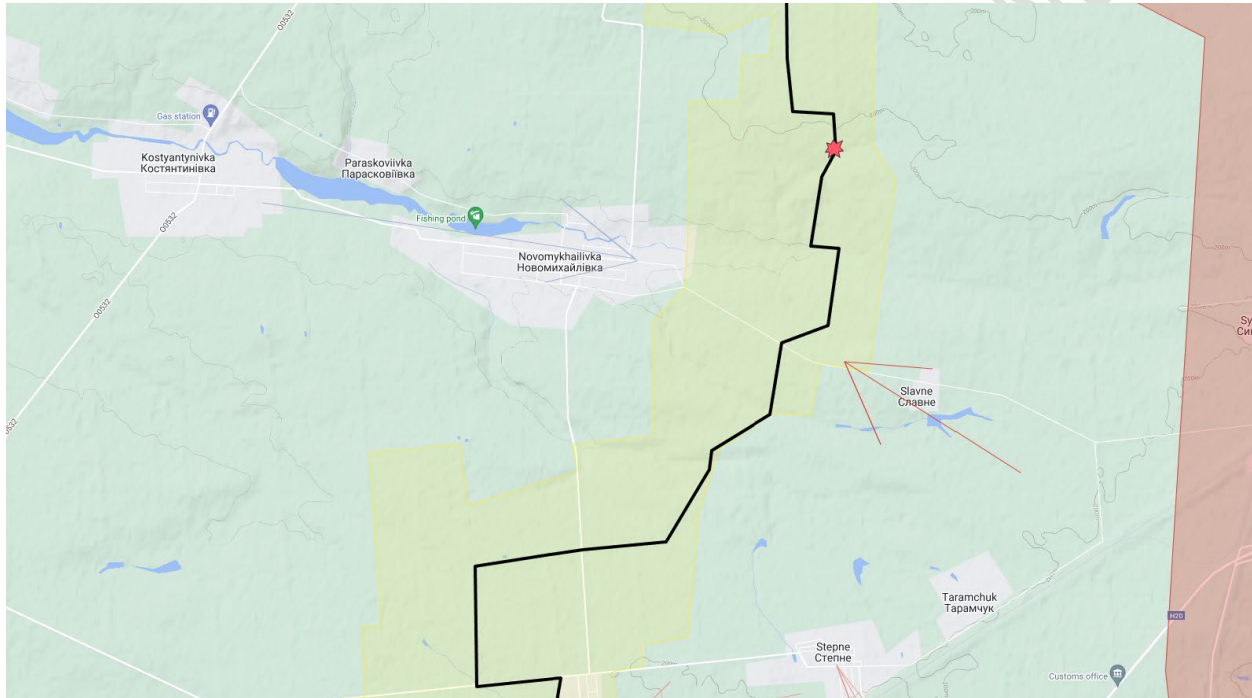
Otherwise, fighting was reported in the same areas – the gray area between [Sjeverne and Vodyane](#), south of [Pervomaiske](#) and east of [Nevelske](#).^{36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43}



³⁶ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]
³⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>
³⁸ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10563> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]
³⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>
⁴⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10514>
⁴¹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10536>
⁴² <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10539> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]
⁴³ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891>

Marinka Operational Area

Russian attacks on southern [Krasnohorivka](#) and the areas around [Marinka](#) were unsuccessful.^{44 45 46 47 48 49}



⁴⁴ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10514>

⁴⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

⁴⁶ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10563> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

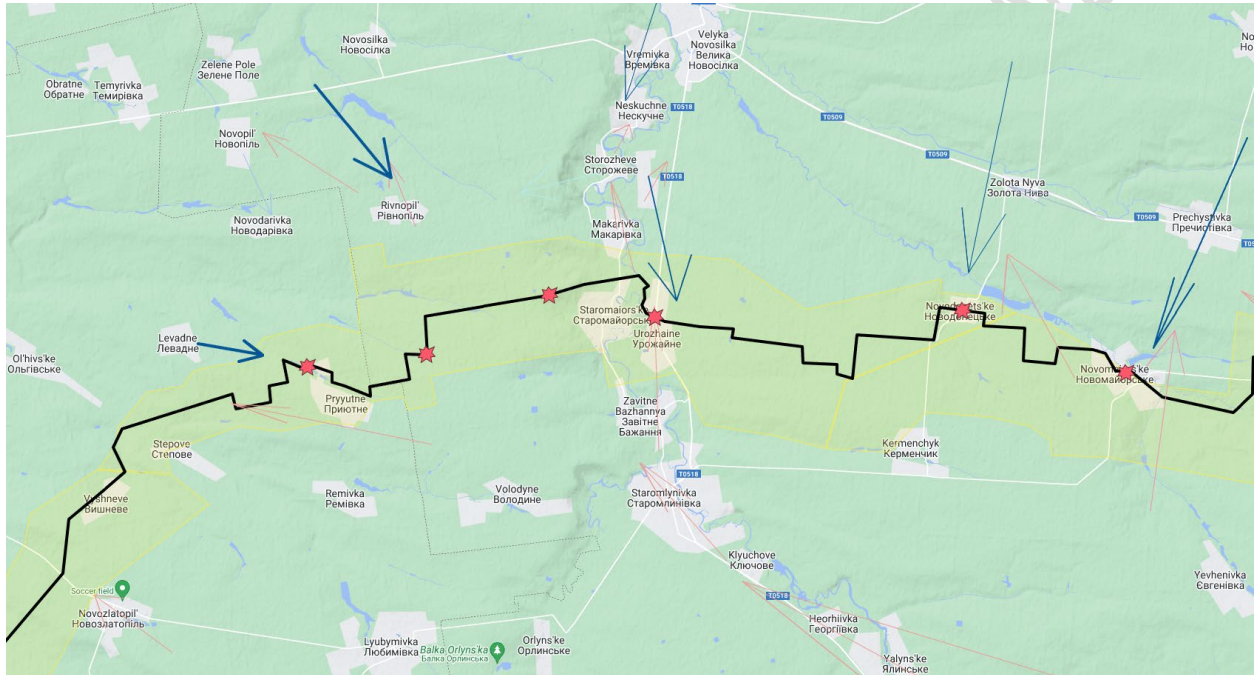
⁴⁷ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891>

⁴⁸ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10536>

⁴⁹ https://t.me/mod_russia/28507 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel 07/21/23]

Vuledar Operational Area

After a pause, Russian forces restarted their attacks east of [Novomykhailivka](#) and continued to suffer losses and retreat to their previous defensive positions.^{50 51}



Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction

There weren't any significant changes in the Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction. As with Vesele [Avdiivka area of operation], many analysts overstated Russian gains in a reported counterattack at [Staromaiorske](#) on July 19. We did not agree that Russian forces had

⁵⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10536>

⁵¹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10539> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

pushed Ukrainian troops out of the village, and multiple analysts walked back the claim today. Ukrainian forces continue to make marginal gains, occasionally withdrawing to secured areas during Russian artillery shelling.^{52 53 54 55}
⁵⁶ Russian mercenary milblogger WarGonzo reported that Ukrainian forces had made marginal gains in [Novodonetske](#), but the settlement remains a gray area.⁵⁷ Mutual fighting also continued on the northern edge of [Pryyutne](#), with Russian forces attempting to regain lost positions.^{58 59 60}

On July 21, the Russian Air Force (VKS) bombed Niu York with FAB-250 bombs, killing four civilians, including a married couple. Three more civilians were wounded in the attack, and all three were hospitalized.⁶¹

⁵² https://t.me/mod_russia/28478 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

⁵³ <https://t.me/rybar/49907>

⁵⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

⁵⁵ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

⁵⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891>

⁵⁷ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

⁵⁸ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10514>

⁵⁹ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10536>

⁶⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10539> [GSAFU July 21, 2023]

⁶¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/22/7412444/>

Occupied Donetsk

A Russian  [ammunition depot near occupied Prymiske exploded](#), with insurgents claiming they caused the blast.⁶²

63

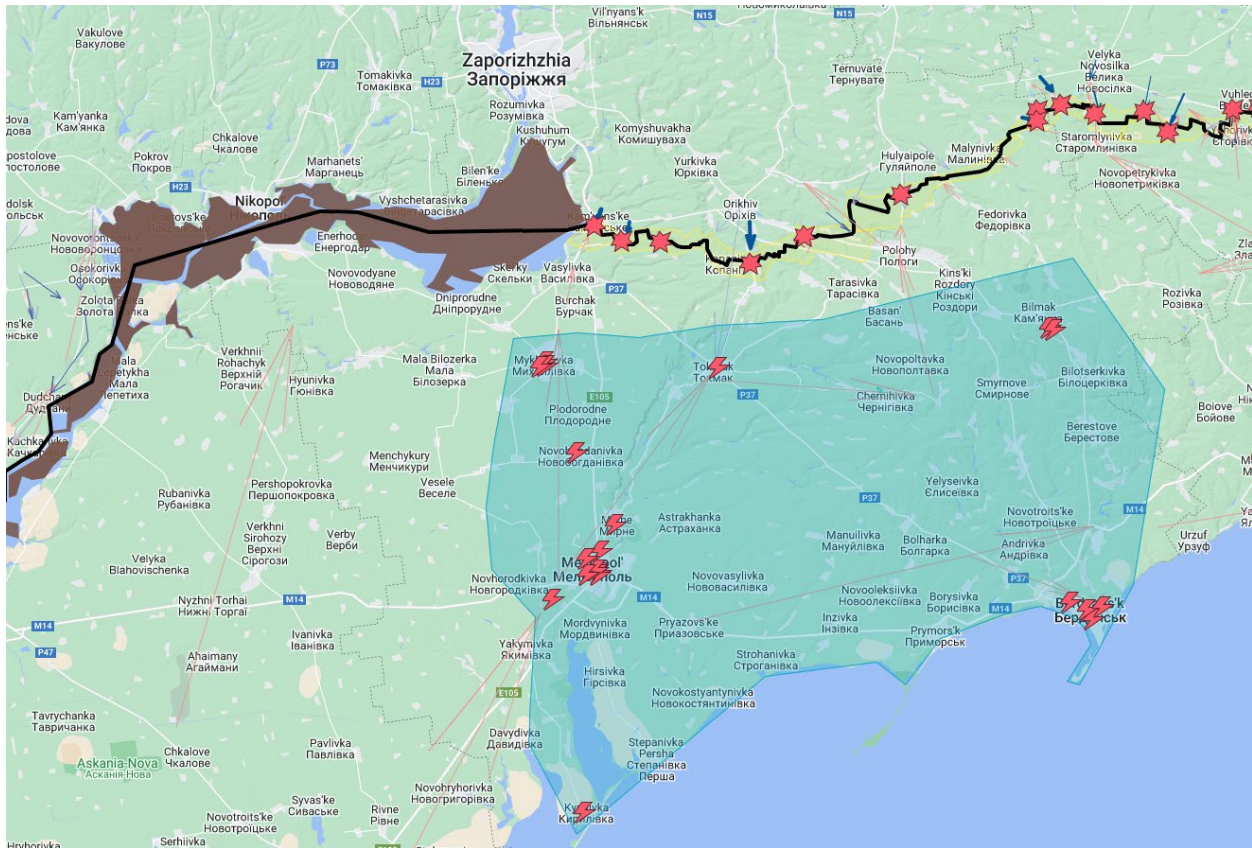
It has been almost a month since insurgents in Mariupol reported significant troop movements through the city, which have restarted. In our assessment, this is likely due to continued logistical issues on the Crimea Peninsula and the attack on the Kerch (Crimean) Bridge. Convoys of up to 20 trucks carrying unknown cargo and towing artillery pieces are moving toward Berdyansk.⁶⁴

⁶² <https://t.me/andriyshTime/11831>

⁶³ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/11831>

⁶⁴ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/11790>

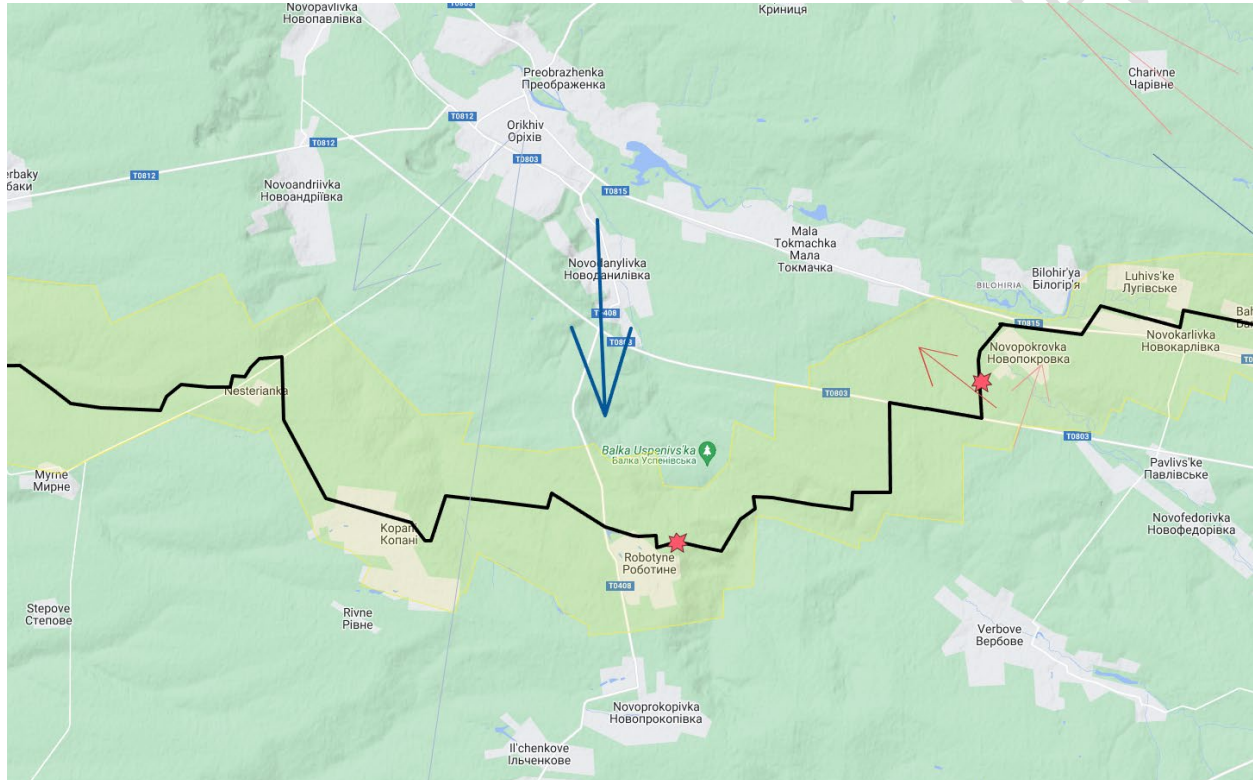
ZAPORIZHIA



Russian Objective: Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, set conditions for September 2023 elections, capture the remainder of the oblast, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians with continued attacks

Ukrainian Objective: Exploit weaknesses on the line of conflict, break Russian defensive lines, liberate Russian-occupied areas, and protect civilians

Free Zaporizhia: Ukrainian forces carried out 1,316 fire missions on Russian positions in Kherson and Zaporizhia, with Ukrainian officials claiming up to two companies of Russian troops were eliminated by artillery fire.⁶⁵




Orikhiv Operational Area

Operational tempo has slowed, with Ukrainian forces using artillery to soften Russian defenses and inflict casualties. Fighting among squad and platoon sized units continued on

⁶⁵ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412393/>

the northern edge of [Robotyne](#) and in the direction of [Verbove](#).^{66 67 68 69 70}

In a captured Russian position, Ukrainian forces found  pieces of [documentation confirming that blocking troops](#) were behind the Russian 58th Combined Arms Army to prevent any Russian retreats or desertions.⁷¹

Occupied Zaporizhia

In occupied Tokmak, the Ukrainian insurgent organization Atesh reported that Russian occupiers were interrogating mobiks, believing there's an informant within their ranks aiding Ukrainian missile and rocket attacks.⁷²

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

Rosatom has been forced to bring in nuclear engineers from Balakovo, Kalinin, Kursk, Novovoronezh, Rostov, and Smolensk Nuclear Power Plants to work at Zaporizhzhia

⁶⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13891>

⁶⁷ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17168>

⁶⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13871>

⁶⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17182>

⁷⁰ <https://t.me/rybar/49936>

⁷¹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106496>

⁷² https://t.me/atesh_ua/1334

Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) due to worsening staffing shortages.⁷³

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that inspectors have still not been permitted to inspect the turbine halls and roofs of Reactor 3 and 4 at ZNPP.⁷⁴ Inspectors reported that military trucks were parked in the turbine halls of Reactors 1, 2, and 4 but could not verify if they contained explosives and mines. Yes, the IAEA report said that inspectors could not enter Turbine Hall 4 and then said they saw trucks in there. Water levels remained adequate to support plant operations. Engineers are working to bring Reactor 4 to hot shutdown so Reactor 5 can be brought to cold shutdown for maintenance. The IAEA team did not report hearing any explosions over the past week.

⁷³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412279/>

⁷⁴ [International Atomic Energy Agency](#)

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Black Sea

The Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine, Volodymyr Gavrylov, told reporters during today's press briefing that Ukraine can back up its declaration that any vessel in the waters of the Black Sea heading in the direction of the seaports of the Russian Federation and Ukrainian seaports located on the territory of Ukraine temporarily occupied by Russia, could be considered military targets.⁷⁵ "Our capabilities are not limited to Neptune-type systems. There are other systems. We are much stronger on this issue than we were a year ago. And we are advancing in this direction even further. The longer the war drags on, the less likely it is for the Russian Black Sea Fleet to survive in the near term."

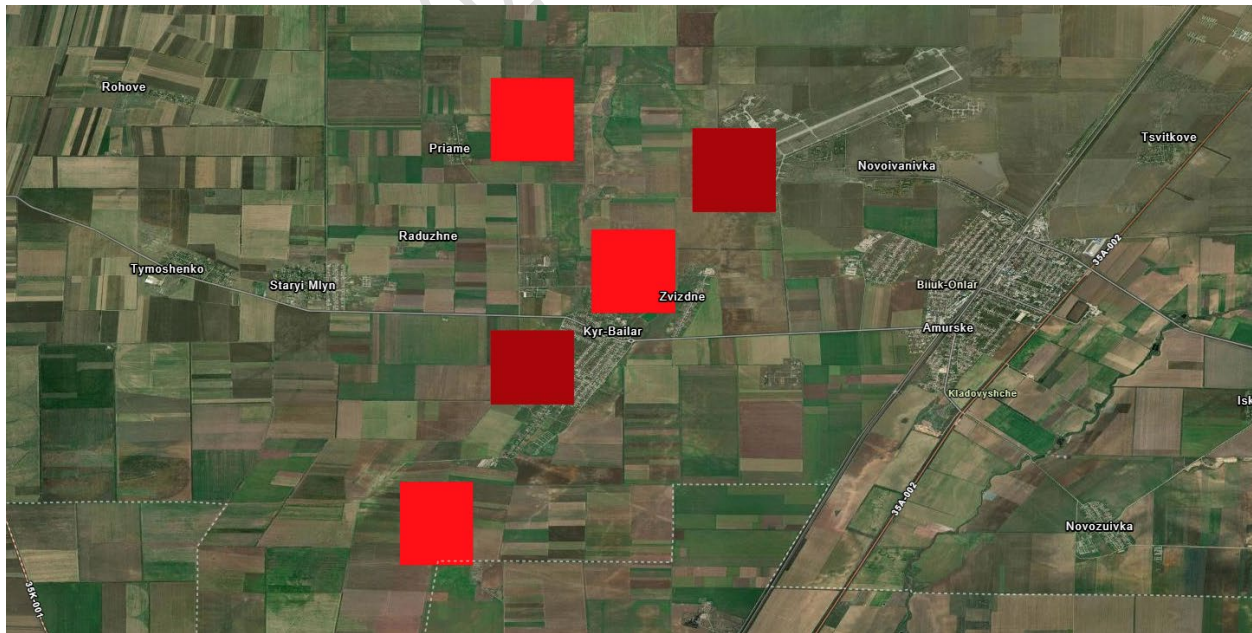
Russian forces decided to flex their muscle to the world, having the Black Sea Fleet vessel Ivanovets fire antiship missiles at a static target vessel – the Ukrainian corvette Ternopil captured in 2014.⁷⁶ The Russian Navy

⁷⁵ <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/2616>

⁷⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106511>


demonstrated its capabilities of shooting at things that can't shoot back.


Adding to the tensions, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Sergey Vershinin, warned that Russia would start inspections of all vessels passing through the Black Sea and consider all vessels carriers of military cargo. "It is about the fact that we must ensure that the ship is carrying something bad. This means an inquiry, an inspection if necessary, to make sure if it is true or not. There is no maritime humanitarian corridor anymore; now, there is a zone of heightened military danger."⁷⁷



⁷⁷ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412381/>

Occupied Crimea

Breaking news – during publication, we confirmed that Storm Shadow missiles launched by Ukraine struck the Russian airbase at Novoivanivka,  [causing a massive explosion and extended ammunition cook-off](#), which is still ongoing.⁷⁸ Munitions have launched from the site, starting fires up to 25 kilometers away, and occupation officials have started the evacuation of Oktyabrskoye.

Satellite images showed that the Russian training base and  [ammunition depot at Stary Krym was virtually destroyed](#) in the July 18 blast.⁷⁹ Up to 75% of the compound was destroyed. Residents in Abrykosivka and Krynychky, over 3 kilometers away from the ammunition depot, are finding unexploded ordnance in their yards and gardens.

There are growing reports of fuel shortages across Crimea, especially 92 octane gasoline. Residents who want to buy motor fuel now must use occupation government-issued script, indicating that unofficial rationing has started.⁸⁰ The Russian Deputy Minister of Transportation told residents

⁷⁸ <https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1682700589183160322>


⁷⁹ <https://twitter.com/Ukrainene/status/1682018323951747073>

⁸⁰ <https://t.me/investigatoua/6402>

there are no shortages and fuel shipments have not been interrupted.

Odesa

On July 20, Russian missile strikes on the center of Odesa destroyed the offices of the Ukrainian-Turkish company Sintez Group & Company, LLC. The company has been actively involved in implementing the Black Sea Grain Initiative.⁸¹

Russian forces also  [hit three grain storage facilities](#) with three Kalibr cruise missiles, destroying 100 tons of peas and 20 tons of barley awaiting shipment.⁸² Russian forces used a "double tap" attack, with the third missile striking after firefighters arrived.⁸³ Emergency services were able to evacuate before the strike, but equipment was destroyed. Two people were injured due to the attacks.⁸⁴

On July 21, infrastructure facilities in the Bilhorod-Dniester district near Zatoka were hit by seven P-800 Oniks (Onix)

⁸¹ https://t.me/our_odessa/50753

⁸² https://twitter.com/Gerashchenko_en/status/1682303404754780161

⁸³ <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/18524>

⁸⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106457>

missiles. Ukrainian officials did not provide additional information beyond the fact that there were no injuries.⁸⁵

Ukrainian officials reported that between July 17 and 21, 21 people in the Odesa region were injured in Russian missile attacks, with 14 people, including two children, hospitalized.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5517

⁸⁶ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106514>

WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

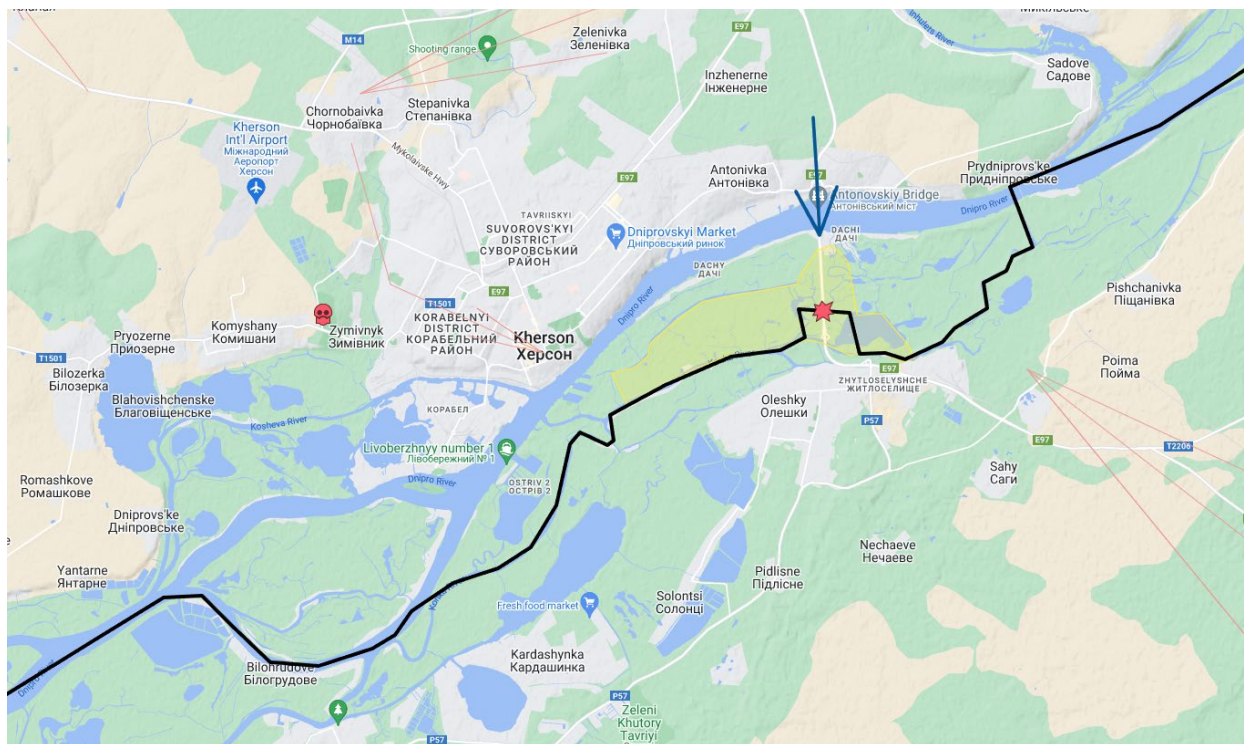
Russian Objective: Launch terror attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure to break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

Kherson

Russian forces conducted 63 fire missions on free Kherson, firing 414 artillery rounds, mortars, Grad rockets from multiple launch rocket systems, and drone-delivered IEDs, wounding one person.⁸⁷ Nine artillery rounds landed in the center of Kherson in the residential quarter.

⁸⁷ <https://t.me/olexandrprokudin/999>




Ukrainian forces continue to occupy [Dachi](#) and the surrounding areas. Russian claims of a withdrawal are false.

Dnipropetrovsk

The debris from an Iranian-sourced Shahed-136 kamikaze drone and artillery rounds struck the Nikopol raion, wounding three. A pensioner and a 57-year-old man were hospitalized with shrapnel wounds, with a third person

treated by emergency services.⁸⁸ Homes and commercial buildings were damaged in the attack.

Zhytomyr

We had reported that Iranian-sourced Shahed-136 kamikaze drones struck the Zhytomyr region during the evening of July 18 – 19.⁸⁹ In the early morning of July 19, the Soviet-era ammunition depot in Chudnov was  [hit by at least one drone, causing a massive explosion](#).⁹⁰

It is unclear if the depot had new munitions or represented another photo-ready target for the Russian Ministry of Defense. The depot was listed as a site awaiting clean-up and held munitions produced for World War II through the 1970s.^{91 92} Like other made for camera strikes, the explosion did not produce long-term secondary explosions, and the orange smoke indicates fuel, fertilizer, or other nitrates blowing up. The video circulating appears to have been manipulated, but based on satellite images is likely authentic.⁹³

⁸⁸ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106568>

⁸⁹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/19/7411930/>

⁹⁰ <https://twitter.com/sentdefender/status/1682528412663967744>

⁹¹ <https://twitter.com/OSINTMISCIF/status/1682560423076265985>

⁹² <https://twitter.com/OSINTMISCIF/status/1682563099008671744>

⁹³ <https://t.me/vysokygovorit/12316>

NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE

Russian Objective: Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

Ukrainian Objective: Complete the liberation of the Kharkiv oblast, maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

Chernihiv

A Russian missile  [struck the Palace of Culture](#) in Honcharivske, killing two women.⁹⁴

RUSSIAN FRONT

Russian Objective: Stabilize government control and civil order, prevent further insurrection, repel Russian partisan attacks, secure the state border


⁹⁴ https://t.me/ok_pivnich1/4023

Ukrainian-Backed Russian Partisan Objective: Motivate other Russians to fight against the Putin regime, accelerate the downfall of the Russian government, foment civil unrest

Belgorod Region

We had reported that the vice-governor of the Belgorod region, Konstantin Polezhaev, had been fired two weeks ago. Today, Polezhaev, formerly in charge of housing and communal services, was arrested under suspicion of taking a bribe of an especially large scale. He was fired two weeks ago "for systematic failure to fulfill his duties, including poor organization of work to restore housing in Shebekino and Novaya Tavolzhanka."⁹⁵

Moscow Region

In Moscow, hundreds of Muslims  [spontaneously protested against the actions of Russian security forces](#).⁹⁶ People shouting "Allahu Akbar" walk through the center of the capital. The protest was in response to the July 7 riot police raid on a prayer house in Kotelnyky. Russian security

⁹⁵ https://t.me/shot_shot/54433

⁹⁶ <https://t.me/ShrikeNews/9604>

forces did not remove their shoes during the raid and forcibly broke up ongoing Friday prayer services.

Colonel General Ramzan Kadyrov admonished the protesters.⁹⁷ "Today, an unauthorized rally of Muslims, including migrants, took place in Moscow in protest against the actions of the security forces in Kotelnyky and Dzerzhinsky. I will say right away that I do not support such spontaneous initiatives, even if they are made with a good purpose. In addition to violating the code of laws, unauthorized rallies can lead to negative consequences. There will always be paid instigators who will do anything to provoke riots. I wouldn't be surprised if there really were. This also becomes a pretext for artificially inflating the topic by foreign agents paid for by the West."

THEATERWIDE

On July 21 – 22, Russian forces launched five Shahed-136 kamikaze drones, and Ukrainian air defenses shot them down without incident.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ https://t.me/RKadyrov_95/3769

⁹⁸ https://t.me/our_odessa/50767

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy held a Stavka with a public readout. Topics included the situation with grain shipments, the battlefield, Wagner's activities in Belarus, and intelligence on Russian military plans.⁹⁹

United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Burns, speaking at Aspen, Colorado, told the audience that Russia suffers from significant "structural weaknesses," including low morale, poor command, and "disarray" among the leadership, both political and military. "It is going to be a tough slog, but we're going to do everything we can as an intelligence agency to provide the kind of intelligence support and sharing that's going to help the Ukrainians to make progress."¹⁰⁰


The head of the Main Department of Mine Action, Civil Defense and Environmental Security for Ukraine, Colonel Ruslan Beregulya, said that the "aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine could be considered the first case of targeted ecocide during war in this century."¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412341/>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412281/>

¹⁰¹ <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/2596>

The Ukrainian 155 mm self-propelled howitzer, Bohdan, has officially been adopted by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and brought to serial production.¹⁰² At the start of Russia's escalation of its war of aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, there was only one Bohdan prototype which Ukraine almost destroyed to prevent its capture. That unit was involved in the liberation of Snake Island in June 2022 and has proven worthy in battle. The number of Bohdan SPGs is estimated to be in the single digits.

Russian President Vladimir Putin  [is rewriting world history again](#) and threatened Poland with future military action.¹⁰³ "Poland seized part of Lithuania, took its historical lands from Russia, took advantage of the civil war, and took part in the partition of Czechoslovakia. [The aggressive policy] resulted in the national tragedy of 1939, when Poland was left by the Western Allies to be eaten by the German war machine and effectively lost its independence and statehood, which was restored to a great extent thanks to the Soviet Union. Poland wants to tear off part of the western territory of Ukraine and Belarus under the umbrella of NATO. This is a dangerous game...the western territories of present-day Poland are Stalin's gift

¹⁰² https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5529

¹⁰³ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1682364918337601538>

to the Poles, have our friends in Warsaw forgotten about it? We will remind you."¹⁰⁴

Josef Stalin and Adolf Hitler signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in August 1939, partitioning Europe between the two tyrants. On September 17, 1939, hours after signing a non-aggression pact with Japan, Stalin ordered the invasion of eastern Poland to support the German Nazis, killing hundreds of thousands, deporting 1.3 million people, mostly Jews, to Siberia, and executing 25,000 Polish military officers.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen noted the significant pace of Ukraine's reforms at a time when it is defending itself from a full-scale Russian invasion, confirming our previous assessment. "I must say it is amazing to see how fast and determined Ukraine is implementing these reforms despite the war." While Ukraine is making amazing progress, they still have significant work to do to reach E.U. membership.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5522

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/21/7412411/>

United States intelligence believes that Russian tactical nuclear weapons have been forwarded deployed to Belarus.¹⁰⁶

In some news of the weird, a French tourist on a months-long kayak trip got disoriented and strayed into Ukrainian territory.¹⁰⁷ The man paddled into the port of Reni on day 51 of his trip and was intercepted by border guards. He will be escorted back to the Romanian side of the border once administrative measures have been completed.

Germany confirmed that the first ten Leopard 1A5 tanks had been delivered to Ukraine almost a month behind schedule. Another 90 have been allocated.¹⁰⁸

The Parliament of Bulgaria has authorized the transfer of 100 BTR-60PB-MD1. They're fitted with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine and added smoke grenade launchers. Ukraine has some BTR-60s in service, first introduced in 1961, and operates them outside the main areas of conflict.

¹⁰⁶ <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/89072>

¹⁰⁷ <https://t.me/DPSUkr/12521>

¹⁰⁸ <https://t.me/ShrikeNews/9594>

Russia threatened to attack the Rheinmetall tank factory it plans to build in Ukraine, with the German arms manufacturer declaring to bring it on. According to company officials, the threats don't alter Rheinmetall's plans, stating it will protect the plant with its own air defense systems.¹⁰⁹

The Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg have agreed to provide Ukraine with an unspecified number of M113 armored personnel carriers.¹¹⁰

The table for equipment losses was **updated on July 21, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24. Russian losses are accelerating with the ratios improving in most categories.

¹⁰⁹ <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/18534>


¹¹⁰ https://t.me/Nazars_look/15416

RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to July 21, 2023. 11,305 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 3,942 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main Battle Tanks	2016	237	8.50:1	↑
Medium Duty Tanks	140	342	0.41:1	—
Armored fighting Vehicles	928	297	3.12:1	↑
Infantry Fighting Vehicles	2553	637	4.01:1	—
Armored Personnel Carriers	335	303	1.11:1	—
MRAPs	46	127	0.36:1	↓
Infantry Mobility Vehicles	198	338	0.59:1	—
Command and Communications Vehicles	244	15	16.26:1	—
Engineering Vehicles	323	72	4.49:1	—
Towed Artillery	261	138	1.89:1	↓
Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars	460	181	2.54:1	↑
MLRS	243	48	5.06:1	↑
SAMs	129	116	1.11:1	↑
Mobile Radars	38	69	0.55:1	—
EW/ECW	44	4	11.00:1	↑
Winged Aircraft	84	68	1.25:1	—
Helicopters	106	31	3.42:1	—
Naval Vessels	12	26	0.46:1	—

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR


Russian milblogger and drone operator Misha Luchin became somewhat famous after hackers hijacked his drone fundraiser and used the funds to send him thousands of sex toys – butt plugs, specifically. Joining with WarGonzo, Luchin was acting as a mercenary reporter while also being a company commander of a drone unit. He was killed in one of  [Ukraine's first cluster munition artillery strikes](#) near Klishchiivka.¹¹¹

RIA Novosti war reporter and former original leader of the self-declared so-called Donetsk People's Republic, Rostislav Zhuravlev, was killed in Zherebyanky, Zaporizhia, when the military unit he was embedded with came under artillery fire.¹¹² ¹¹³ RIA Novosti reported that photojournalist Konstantin Mikhalchevsky was wounded in the same attack. Zhuravlev was part of Edward Limonov's "Other Russia" Party and had worked side by side with Igor Strelkov Girkin.

¹¹¹ https://twitter.com/family_martyn/status/1682064261948882947

¹¹² <https://t.me/wargonzo/13922>

¹¹³ <https://www.urdupoint.com/en/world/ria-novosti-war-correspondent-rostislav-zhura-1727356.html>

We reported in a Flash Report that the Russian FSB had arrested former FSB Colonel and convicted war criminal Igor Strelkov Girikin,  [who is being detained until his next hearing](#) on September 18, 2023.¹¹⁴

Girkin's charges stem from two posts on Telegram about Crimea and non-payment to military units. In the posts, he "expressed an opinion on the issues related to Crimea and on the fact that the military personnel of the 105th and 107th airborne regiments are not paid." For sharing the information, the FSB has labeled him as an extremist.¹¹⁵

Dmitry Petrovsky, ex-deputy of the municipality of Yaroslavl and surgeon of PMC Wagner Group, filed the complaint against Girkin. "Yes, I wrote a statement to the prosecutor's office against Strelkov [sic] four days ago. And yes, I really am an employee of the Wagner PMC. I twice went on a business trip as a surgeon. I consider Strelkov [sic] a "military Blinovskaya." He collects large donations allegedly to help our guys but does not report on the money spent. The last straw, of course, was Strelkov's [sic] words about our President Vladimir Putin. I think that insulting the first person of the state is a crime. I can't say

¹¹⁴ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106517>

¹¹⁵ <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40101>

for sure yet whether they detained him after my statement or not. The General Prosecutor's Office does not report to a simple surgeon. But, I hope that it was I who set the case in motion."¹¹⁶ ¹¹⁷ ¹¹⁸

The reference to "Blinovskaya" is the disgraced positivity and life coach and former Instagram influencer Elena Blinovskaya who was arrested three months ago for fraud and tax evasion.¹¹⁹ ¹²⁰

Alexey Kalugin, Part of Direct Action Z and the Other Russia Party, wrote a post condemning the arrest of Girklin and attacking Kremlin leaders.¹²¹ "The arrest of Igor Ivanovich Strelkov [sic] destroyed the consensus between the authorities and the patriotic community. All those who in one way or another contributed to this lawlessness will go down in history as traitors to the interests of Russia. A man with a hidden face who escorted Igor Ivanovich should have taken off his cap with the letter "Z", because in his position an aziva cap would have looked much more appropriate. If the authorities do not understand how many

¹¹⁶ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/37140>

¹¹⁷ https://t.me/shot_shot/54432

¹¹⁸ <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40106>

¹¹⁹ https://t.me/shot_shot/54415

¹²⁰ <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/04/27/popular-russian-instagrammer-detained-at-border-on-tax-fraud-accusations-a80960>

¹²¹ <https://t.me/adirect/16869>

people have turned their backs on them after today's events, then this government is not able to win this war due to its weak mental abilities. If the government understands all this, but still takes such steps, then it is not able to win this war due to the lack of intentions to achieve such a goal. With any of these options, I see no way to support these pests, who decided at such a difficult moment for the country to piss against the wind. I would like to express my special thanks to all the pro-Kremlin litters who have shown their true colors. Now we know exactly who should not shake hands."

Russian milblogger Mikhail Polynkov wrote, "Before, as a patriot, I was just angry. And I sublimated my anger at the enemy along the front. But the enemy in the rear brings my anger to a state of rage. Perhaps it's time to shift priorities slightly and return to the capital. In which, apparently, it becomes more dangerous to be a patriot than at the front."¹²²

In a stunning post, Petro Andryushchenko, the exiled advisor to the mayor of Mariupol, acknowledged that Girkin provided critical insights. "For general understanding. Girkin (Strelkov) sometimes complained very amusingly.

¹²² https://t.me/soldiers_truth/10137

Sometimes through this, it was possible to look under the fog of war. But he was and remains a Russian chauvinist and a staunch enemy of Ukraine. Therefore, it is not a pity and it is possible to do without his moans. But the global repression of Russia is another, much more interesting situation. Girkin is definitely not the first, but demonstrative. This level of repression against the complete impunity of the Wagnerites is the best indicator of the collapse of the empire's power in its current state."

On the subject of Wagnerites, CIA Director Burns also told the audience in Aspen that Prigozhin may end up poisoned. "If I were Prigozhin, I wouldn't fire my food taster," Burns said, adding that President Putin is "the ultimate apostle of payback" and that we would be "surprised if Prigozhin escapes further retribution."¹²³

Reportedly the 11 missing Russian generals returned to their homes today, except General of the Army Sergey Surovikin.¹²⁴

Russian source Cheka-OGPU reported that members and leaders of PMC Wagner offshoot PMC Whirlwind, based out

¹²³ https://twitter.com/Gerashchenko_en/status/1682376407639375873

¹²⁴ https://twitter.com/Gerashchenko_en/status/1682476568998805509

of occupied Crimea, were disarmed and detained.¹²⁵ Local officials were reportedly fearful of a mutiny led by the group. The camp of the Whirlwind battalion was cordoned off, and every fighter searched.

¹²⁵ <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40086>


Notes on Sourcing Information


Malcontent News uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, the foundation for the Russian-Ukraine War Report Podcast. There are some notable sources that we frequently use and others that we don't. The most common sources currently, or in the past, we have used for the Theater of War section of the Situation Report include the following.


⚠️ **Russian Ministry of Defense Morning Report:** We use the RMOD Morning Report to identify combat reports, shelling locations, and territorial control change claims. We do not consider claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed valid without videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation, or third-party confirmation from recognized Western news outlets or trusted Ukrainian sources.


⚠️ **Rybar:** We consider Rybar a mercenary organization because they are staffed by former Russian Ministry of Defense public relations officers who actively provide target information to the Russian military. Their operational budget is \$20,000 a month, while they claim they receive no government funding. We use their reports and maps to identify combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. We do not use claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed because of a documented and historical pattern of producing fabrications. They frequently engage in blatant misinformation and disinformation and consistently deny all Russian war crimes.


⚠️ **War Gonzo:** We consider War Gonzo a mercenary organization because their employees have recorded themselves actively engaging in direct combat, specifically in Marinka. Recently, War Gonzo admitted in their daily report to leveraging the information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They intermix combat reports with their own on a 24-hour delay. We use their reports for *unique claims* about combat, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. Although the War Gonzo daily reports are moderately accurate, they occasionally engage in blatant disinformation and misinformation.

 **Readovka:** We consider Readovka to be a Kremlin-aligned propagandist organization. Their daily reports are a word-for-word repeat of the RMOD Morning Report and provide no value to our analysis. They occasionally provide credible information through videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

 **Igor "Girkin" Strelkov:** We consider Strelkov to be a convicted war criminal who is highly informed, specifically about the situation in the Donbas. We use his combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement information. In the Donbas, we consider his reports to be highly accurate. The fidelity of information he provides in Zaporizhia, Kherson, and Kharkiv appears to come from other social media channels with a history of spreading misinformation and is of lower quality. Reports he shares outside of the Donbas provided by Russian Federation 1st Army Corps units have greater fidelity.

 **Andrei Morozov:** Morozov is a pro-Russian milblogger and a radio communications and logistics specialist with the Russian 2nd Army Corps. We consider him a provider of high-quality information, especially within his fields of specialty. In the fall of 2022, Morozov was detained by OMON for up to three weeks due to his content and has had his online material censored by the Kremlin several times over the last 11 months.

 **Private Military Company Wagner Group Social Media:** We consider reports from PMC Wagner of Russian victories as overstating gains and reports of Russian failures, particularly among the Russian Ministry of Defense and the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the Russian Army, as overstating problems. We do not consider claims of territorial control changes from Wagner as authentic without pictures, videos, or **unique** Russian State Media reports that include a video that can be geolocated.

 **Luhansk People's Republic Joint Center for Control and Coordination:** We only use their reports about large-scale artillery and HIMARS strikes in the occupied territories.

⊖ **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.

⚠ **Donetsk People's Republic People's Militia:** We only use their reports for videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

⊖ **Donetsk People's Republic Territorial Defense:** We do not use combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from their public relations and social media channels. They have repeatedly engaged in misinformation and disinformation.

⊖ **Denis Pushilin:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.

⚠ **Ramzan Kadyrov:** The contribution and impact of Chechen forces in Ukraine have become minimal, and Akhmat no longer produces large volumes of video content that can be geolocated. We continue to monitor his channels.

✅ **General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine:** We consider the morning and evening reports, specifically combat reports, territorial control changes, and troop movements, from GSAFU to be high quality. The Ukrainian General Staff uses clever wording to create plausible deniability of battlefield failures. Combat reports start with "repelled attacks of the occupant forces in the vicinities of," which negates reporting fighting in areas where territory was lost. Instead of misinformation or disinformation, GSAFU engages in omission. Reports about problems within the Russian military are given more weight if the SBU or GUR reinforces them or if there is added confirmation in the Russian milblogger information space.

✅ **DeepState:** We use the Daily Report from DeepState for combat reports and territorial control changes. They frequently support their claims with geolocated, time, date, and weather-confirmed pictures and videos, making them a high-quality Ukrainian-based source. They occasionally overstate Russian territorial control claims but never present disinformation or

misinformation. Combined with the reports from GSAFU, gaps in combat reports are filled. We support DeepState through their Patreon at \$10 a month.

✔ **Institute for the Study of War:** We occasionally leverage the map and territorial control change information produced by the ISW when there is conflicting data. Their presentation of Russian-assessed, Ukrainian-assessed, and Russian-claimed information is helpful when our analysts have to make a judgment call due to the absence of verifiable information. We do not copy from their map but take their territorial control information as an additional data point when assessing our own changes.

⚠ **Ivan Fedorov:** We use information about insurgent activity and HIMARS strikes in Zaporizhia provided by Fedorov, the exiled mayor of Melitiopol.

✔ **Vitaly Kim:** When there are reports of potential air raids in Ukraine, we monitor Kim, the Mykolaiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, for real-time reports. Kim is consistently one of the first, if not the first, Ukrainian government official to confirm kamikaze drones or missiles have been launched toward Ukraine.

⊖ **Oleksiy Arestovych:** We no longer use the information provided by Arestovych after being fired from his role as the Chief Advisor to the President of Ukraine. Before being terminated, Arestovych had developed a reputation for providing exaggerated, unverified, and false claims for Ukrainian successes and failures.