

# MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

August 15, 2023





# Malcontent News

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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## **SUMMARY – DAY 537**

It has been 3,457 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 172 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

- Deputy Minister of Defense Hanna Maliar reported that the number and intensity of Russian attacks on the “Kupyansk and Lyman” fronts have declined
- Ukrainian forces were reported to be on the offensive near Synkivka and Vilshana
- Fighting continues east of Petropavlivka
- Evacuations in the Kupyansk raion and the west bank of the Oskil River in Kharkiv continued
- Ukrainian forces restarted offensive operations in the Kykolaivka direction
- Ukrainian forces made marginal gains in Klishchiivka after Russian forces suffered heavy losses on August 13 – 14
- Russian missiles struck a wholesale food distributor warehouse in Kramatorsk, destroying the facility
- Russian missiles struck the already damaged and closed Zeus Ceramics Plant in Slovyansk
- Low-intensity fighting continued in the Avdiivka and Marinka areas of operation (AO)
- Ukrainian forces liberated Urozhaine

- Ukrainian forces attack Zavitne Bazhannya using reconnaissance in force
- A Russian firebase in the Petrovskiy District, located within 500 meters of three hospitals, was attacked by Ukrainian drones
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with multiple units and commanders in Zaporizhzhia
- The Russian air force bombed their own troops near Dorozhnyanka
- Ukrainian forces have advanced further into Robotyne and toward Verbove
- Several S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack struck the suburbs of Zaporizhzhia
- Russian OMON kidnaped Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant Shift supervisor Serhii Spartesnyi on July 18, and he is being held without charges
- Russia attacked the Odesa ports of Izmail and Reni with Shahed-136 kamikaze drones
- Online reports that Ukraine deployed two pontoon bridges over the Dnipro River are false
- Crimean Tartar insurgent organization Atesh reported that Russian troops in Hola Prystan are at a heightened state of readiness
- A Russian collaborator in occupied Kozachi Laheri went online to beg for Russian forces to remove her from the settlement

- At least two Russian cruise missiles struck a sports complex in Dnipro, with another two striking an industrial complex
- Homes were damaged in Ivano-Frankivsk due to missile debris on the night of August 14
- Self-declared illegitimate president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko calls the border situation "unprecedentedly tense" and is glad he has nuclear weapons
- Latvia is mobilizing its border forces due to the "hybrid threat" created by Belarus
- Private Military Company Wagner Group circulated a fake photo claiming they had crossed the Lithuania border
- The number of PMC Wagner Group mercenaries in Belarus has dropped, confirming earlier reports of a partial withdrawal
- NATO Secretary-General Chief of Staff, Stian Jenssen, enraged Ukrainian government officials suggesting that NATO membership could be accelerated in a land for peace deal with Russia
- NATO officials later stated there had been no change in their position on providing Ukraine with continued military support
- Deputy Minister of Defense Mailiar reported the M-777 155 mm howitzer is fully integrated into the armed forces

- During the August 15 media briefing, Ukrainian Colonel Petro Chernyk said the Russia-Ukraine war is still 95% artillery
- The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) made more anti-corruption arrests among the commissariat structure and National Guard commanders
- Sweden announced a new military aid package
- Russia displayed captured military equipment at Patriot Park in Moscow
- Russian Lieutenant General Bladislav Ershov is accused of disrupting Russian logistics in Kherson due to a feud with area commanders
- Commander of the Russian Maykop Air Training Regiment, Colonel Vadym Gurov, was killed in a training accident during a check flight
- Russian State Duma Chairman Vyacheslav Volodin asked deputies not to speculate publicly about another wave of mobilization
- Russian contract soldiers in Tartarstan are being promised a one-time 500,000 rouble payment for enlistment
- PMC Convoy, created by former Wagner Group commander Sergei Aksenov, has deep connections to multiple Russian banks and businesses, preventing integration into the Russian Ministry of Defense
- Chechen and Dagestani troops engaged in fratricide in occupied Mykhailivka

- Russian Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu said a priority of the so-called 'special military operation' is the release of Russian POWs
- Retired FSB Colonel Mikhail Polyakov, the administrator for the propaganda channel Kremlin Laundress, had his criminal case transferred from Moscow City Court to the Military Investigation Department and was remanded back into custody
- General of the Army Sergey Surovikin is reportedly still under house arrest
- Russian milbloggers are furious with battalion commander Major Yuri Tomov who is collaborating with Ukraine after his capture
- A woman in occupied Donetsk was caught on video during a racist rant directed at Russian soldiers in a café and was later forced to make an apology video
- Former GRU Colonel Vladimir Kvachkov and leader of the Crossbow Rebellion was fined 40,000 roubles in a Moscow court for discrediting the Russian Federation Armed Forces in 2022
- Russian forces shelled the Kherson regional oncology dispensary and surgical center
- Humanitarian aid volunteers Andrew Bagshaw of New Zealand and Chris Perry of the United Kingdom were likely tortured and executed by PMC Wagner mercenaries after their January 2023 capture



- Poland flexed its military muscle at the largest Armed Forces Day Parade in the nation's history
- India will not invite Ukraine to the September 9 – 10 G20 Summit
- Forty-five Russian diplomats were expelled from Chisinau, Moldova
- Ukraine is considering suspending visa-free travel with Israel due to security concerns, accusations of aiding Russia by sharing Ramstein Working Group information with Moscow, and the deportation of Ukrainian refugees
- Pakistan has suspended all future oil imports from Russia because Urals crude oil isn't the right weight and sweetness for their refineries
- The Central Bank of Russia raised interest rates 350 basis points to 12.0% in an attempt to prop up the collapsing rouble
- Up to a third of migrant workers in the Russian Federation are considering leaving because of the weak rouble

## **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

We assess the following:

1. We remain concerned about Ukraine's capacity to turn tactical gains into operational success and strategic victories.
2. We assess the next phase of the summer offensive may be starting in up to three operational areas but require more data before making a firm declaration.
3. It is unlikely that Ukraine will execute a wet crossing of the Dnipro River with a battalion-sized or larger force.
4. Our assessment that the loss of the road bridges at Henichesk and Chongar, and the previous damage to the railroad bridge at Syvash, would degrade Russian logistics appears to be accurate, with fuel shortages worsening and growing complaints of ammunition shortages. This is the last day of this entry.
5. Due to a lack of troop rotation, growing ammunition shortages, and weak commanders, Russia is pushing combat ineffective and combat destroyed units to the forwardmost line of friendly troops (FLOT), engaging in attritional warfare against Ukrainian units.
6. Despite Ukraine's potential start of the next phase of its summer offensive, we maintain that Western partners are not meeting their promised military training, heavy equipment, and ammunition dates, negatively impacting Ukraine's military capabilities.
7. We assess that Russian and Belarusian aggression and threats on the borders of Ukraine, Poland, Latvia,

- Lithuania, and the Black Sea coast will continue to expand and lead to an international incident if Ukraine's allies do not take a stronger posture.
8. We assess Russian President Vladimir Putin's stature, both inside and outside of Russia, remains weakened after the failed Prigozhin Insurrection, and there continues to be a small but very real possibility of another insurrection or coup attempt. Additionally, his weakened state, coupled with economic uncertainty, makes it more difficult to do another wave of formal mobilization.
  9. Our assessment that 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, was accurate, with continued reports of fighting between units, fratricide, and desertions.
  10. 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.
  11. 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.



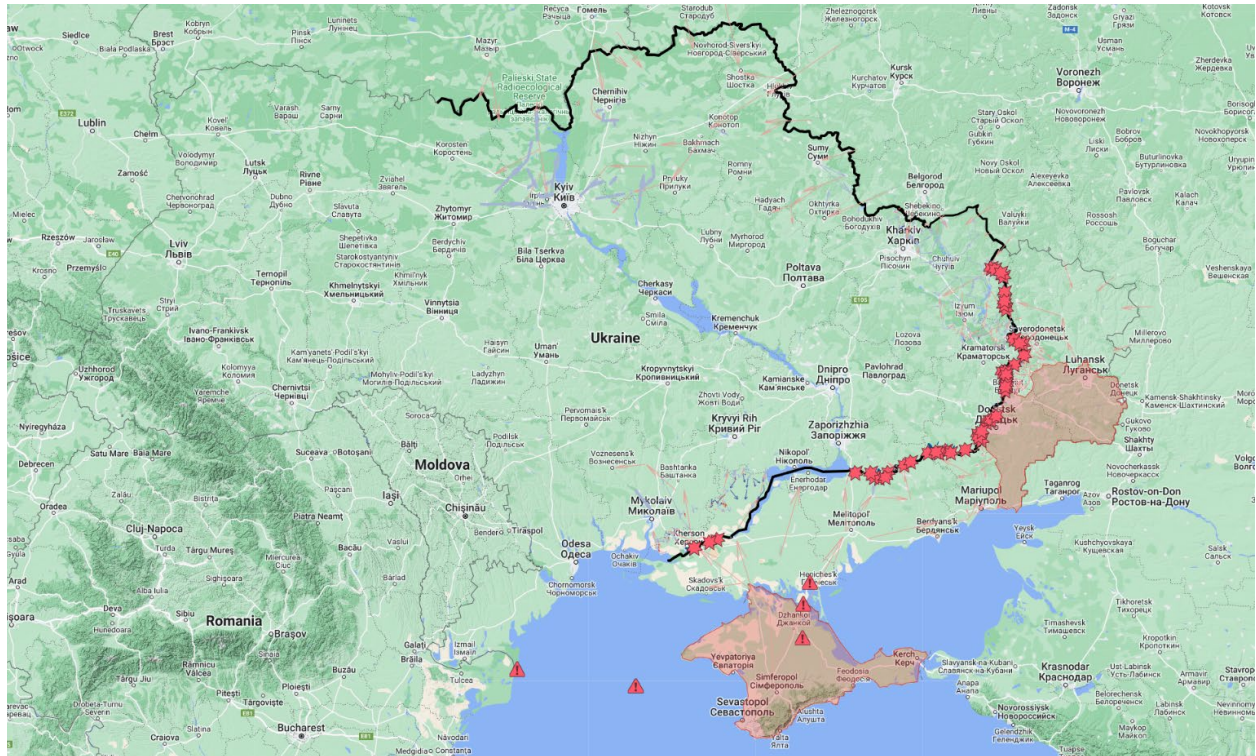
12. While the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the threat should be taken seriously.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

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# TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

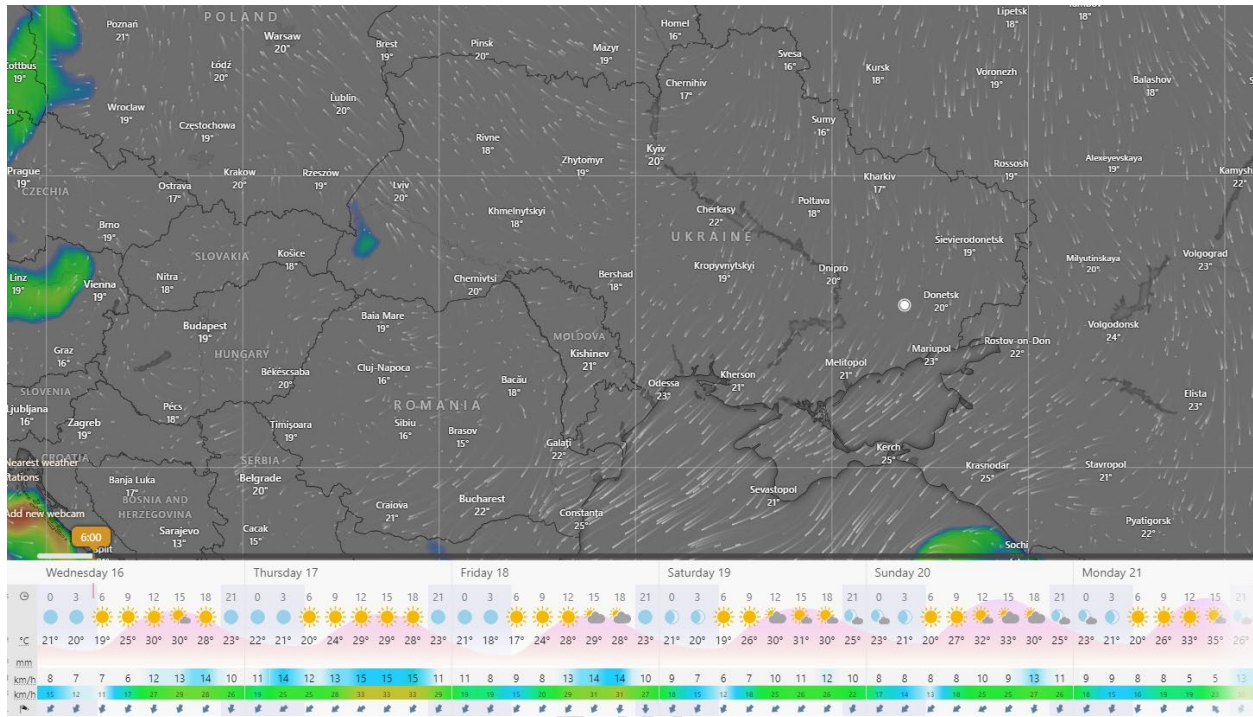


**About the maps:** Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict.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



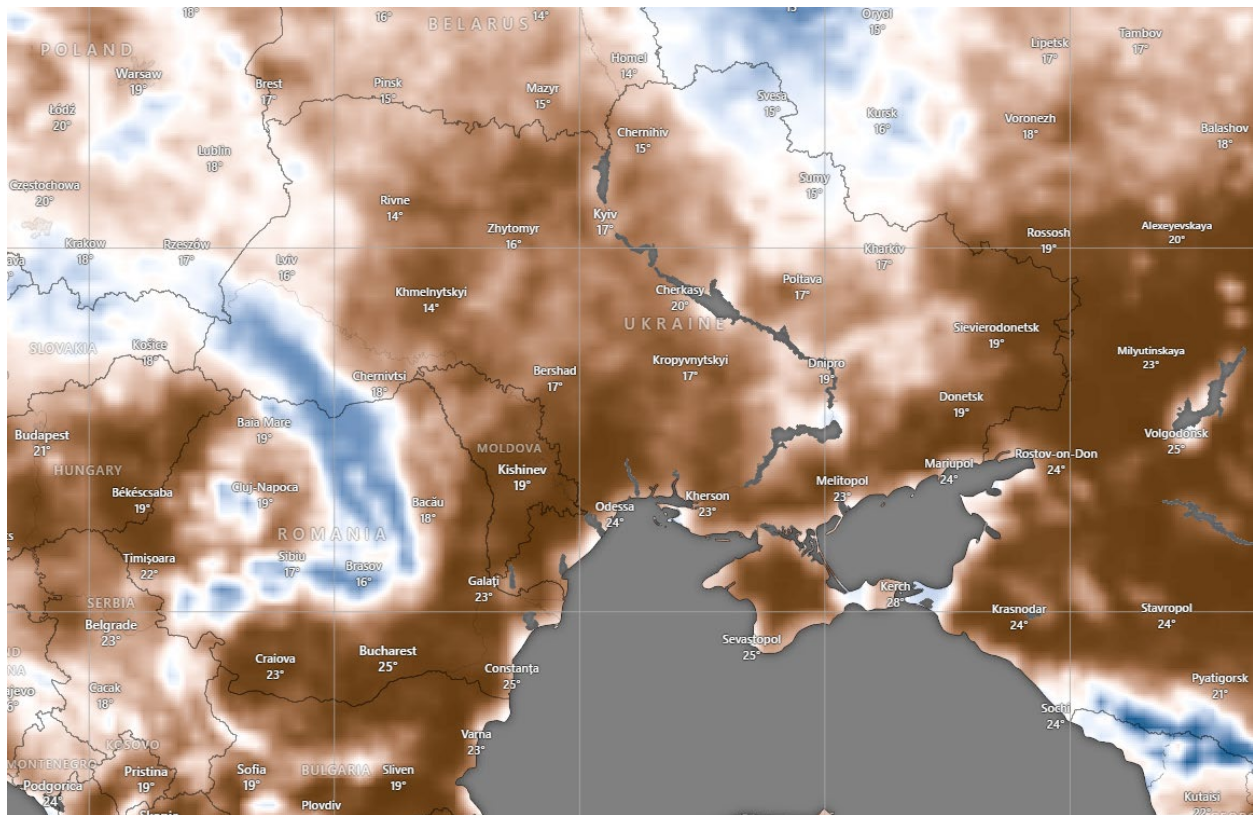
# UKRAINE WEATHER



The ECMWF ensemble forecast model predicts a hot and dry weather pattern through August 21, with a small chance of seasonal afternoon pop-up showers and thunderstorms. High temperatures will be between 26° and 41° Celcius, with record-high temperatures possible on August 20 and 21. Low temperatures will be between 14° to 24°.



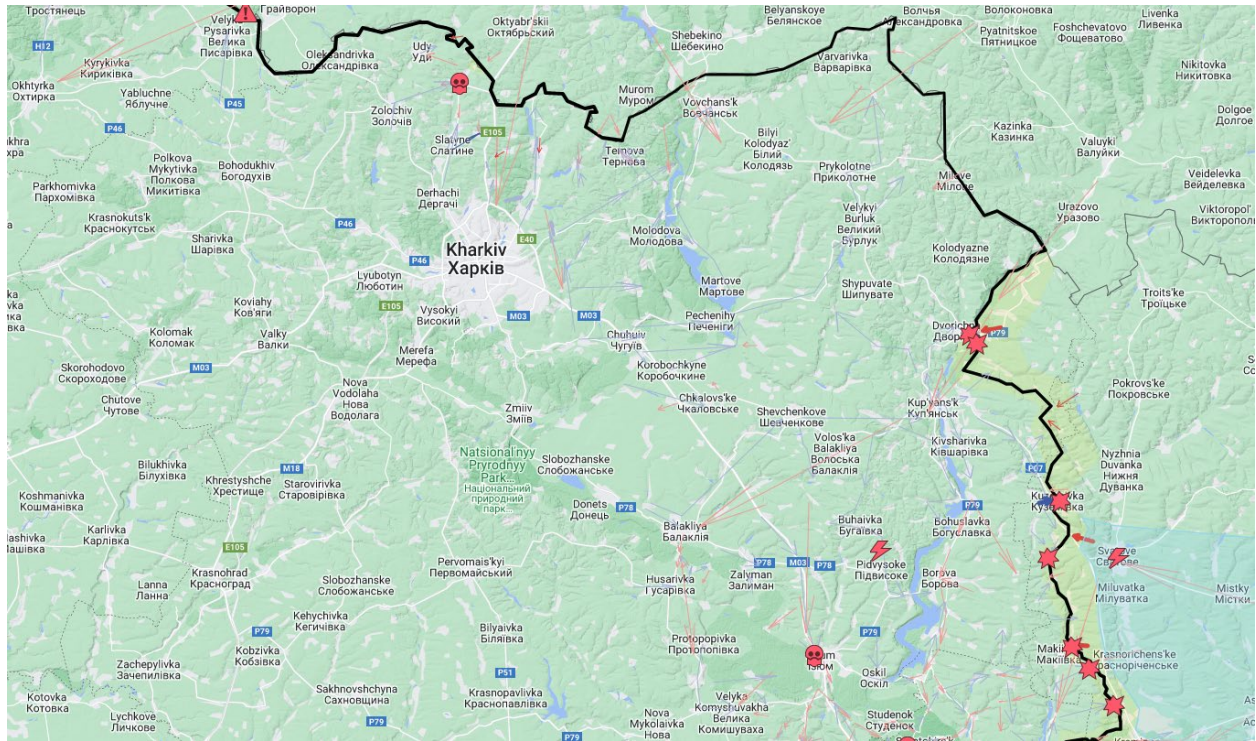
## SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY



*The GFS model for August 23, 2023, predicts soil saturation to 40 centimeters will be between 0% and 30% across the theater of war.*

***The soil saturation model does not consider the lakebed of the Kakhovka Reservoir.*** In the theater of war, soil saturation is between 5% to 40%. No significant rain is in the forecast model through August 20.

# 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 Dvorichna and Kupyansk Operational Areas, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure



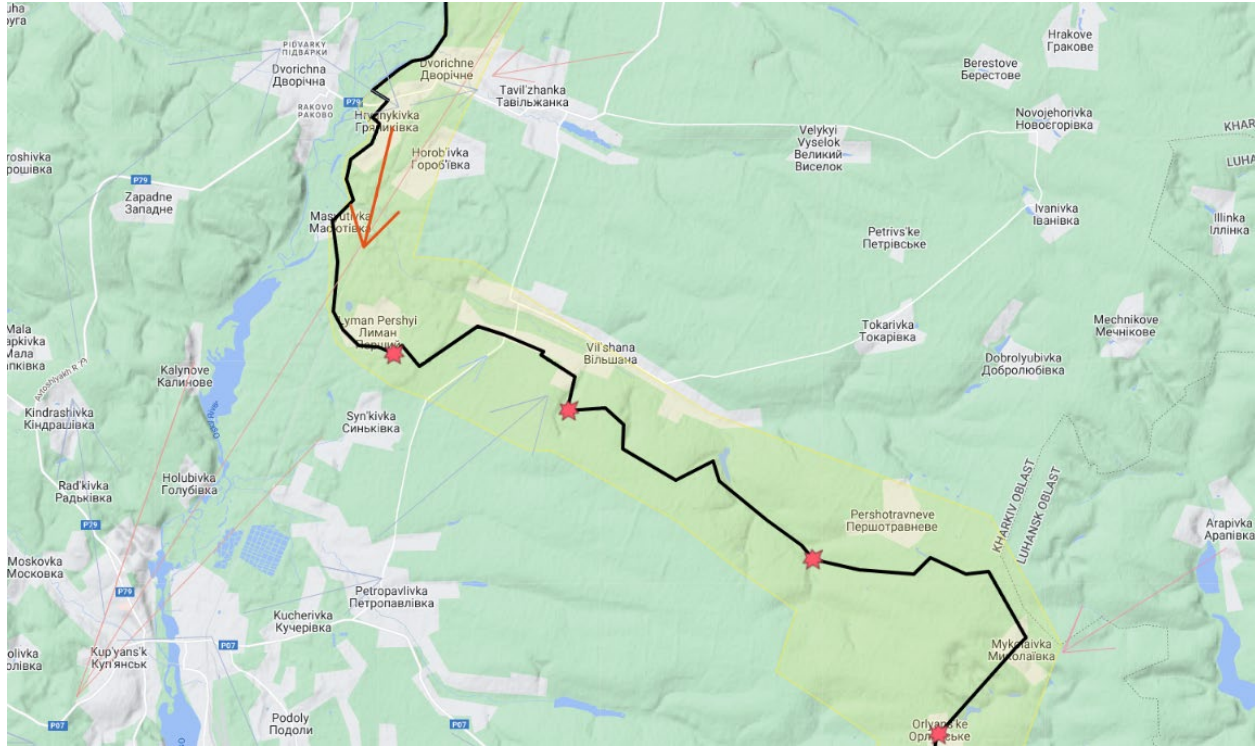
## Free Kharkiv/Luhansk

The spokesperson for Operational Command East (OKE), Colonel Serhiy Cherevaty, reported that Russian forces fired 612 artillery rounds, mortars, Grad and Smerch rockets, drone-delivered IEDs, and bombs from Dvorichna [Kharkiv] to Bilohorivka [Luhansk] and carried out 17 airstrikes. There were no reports of major fighting.

Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine Hanna Maliar confirmed our August 14 assessment that the Russian combat potential is exhausted and forces are regrouping. "Over the past week and even yesterday...we have recorded a quantitative decrease in attacks and the number of attacks in the east. But this does not mean that the enemy is 'backing off' or that the enemy has abandoned its plans. It's just that our troops attacked the enemy very powerfully when they became more active on the Kupyansk and Lyman fronts. Indeed, our soldiers have stopped them very effectively there, killing [many] enemy fighters and destroying a lot of equipment."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7415623/>

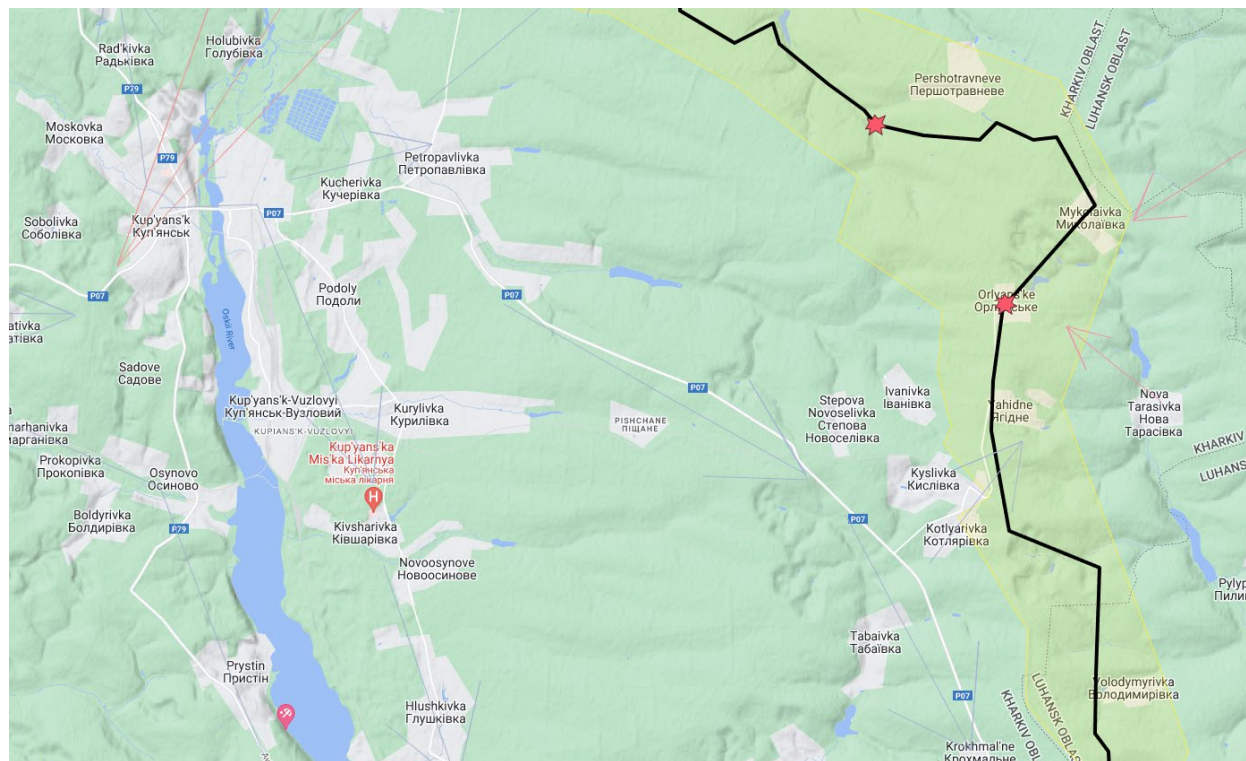


## Dvornichna Operational Area

Ukrainian forces were reportedly on the offensive northeast of [Synkivka](#), and mutual fighting continued southeast of [Vilshana](#).<sup>2 3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/11123>



## Kupyansk Operational Area

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) reported a Russian attack in the forested areas southwest of [Pershotravneve](#) was repulsed.<sup>4</sup>

Kharkiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Oleg Sinegubov reported that another 96 people, including 21 children and four people with limited mobility, departed from the Kupyansk raion due to the mandatory evacuation order.<sup>5</sup>

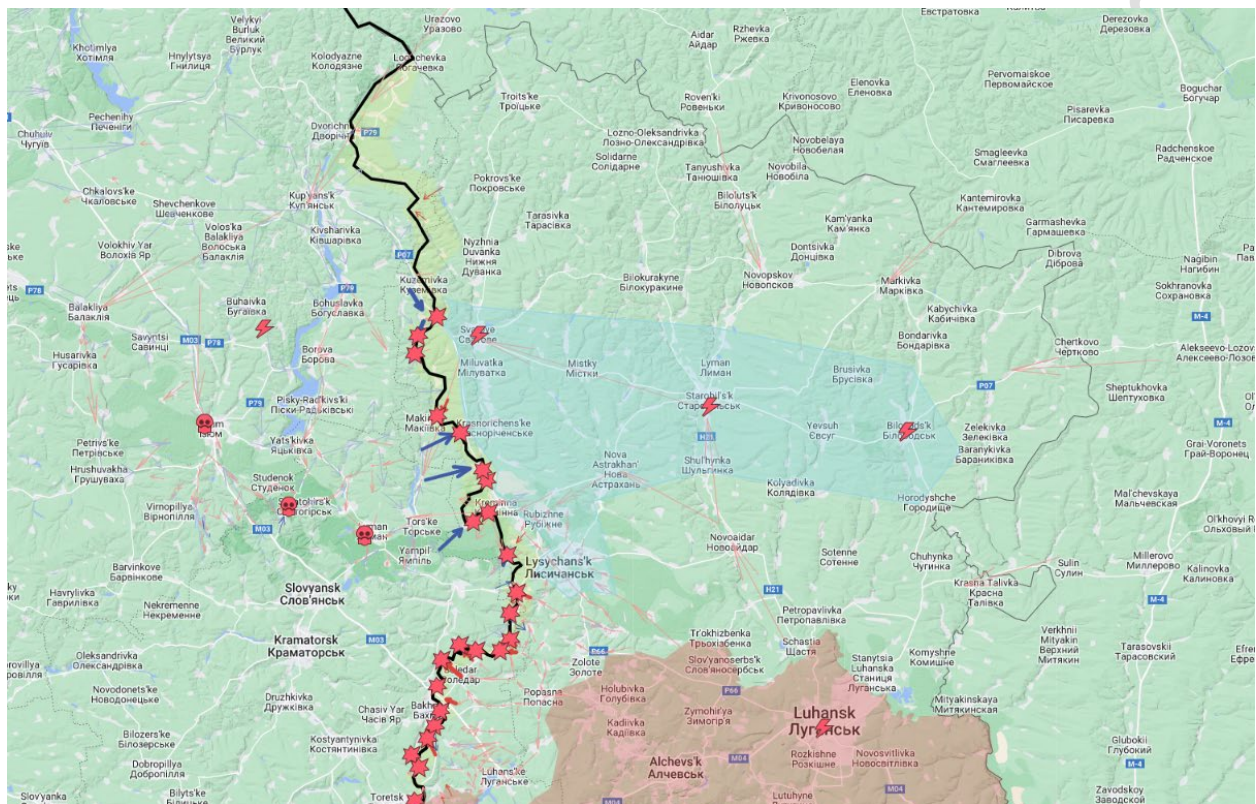
<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/11123>

<sup>5</sup> <https://t.me/synegubov/6839>



# DONBAS REGION

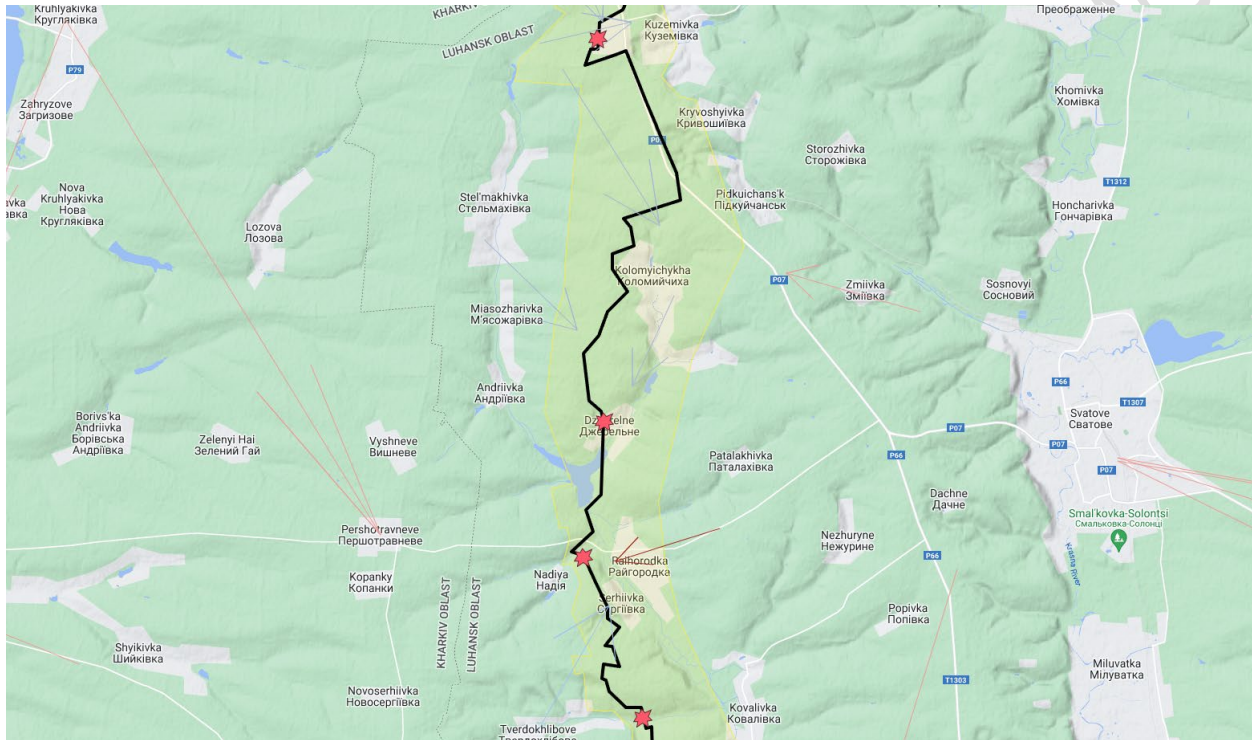
## LUHANSK



**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



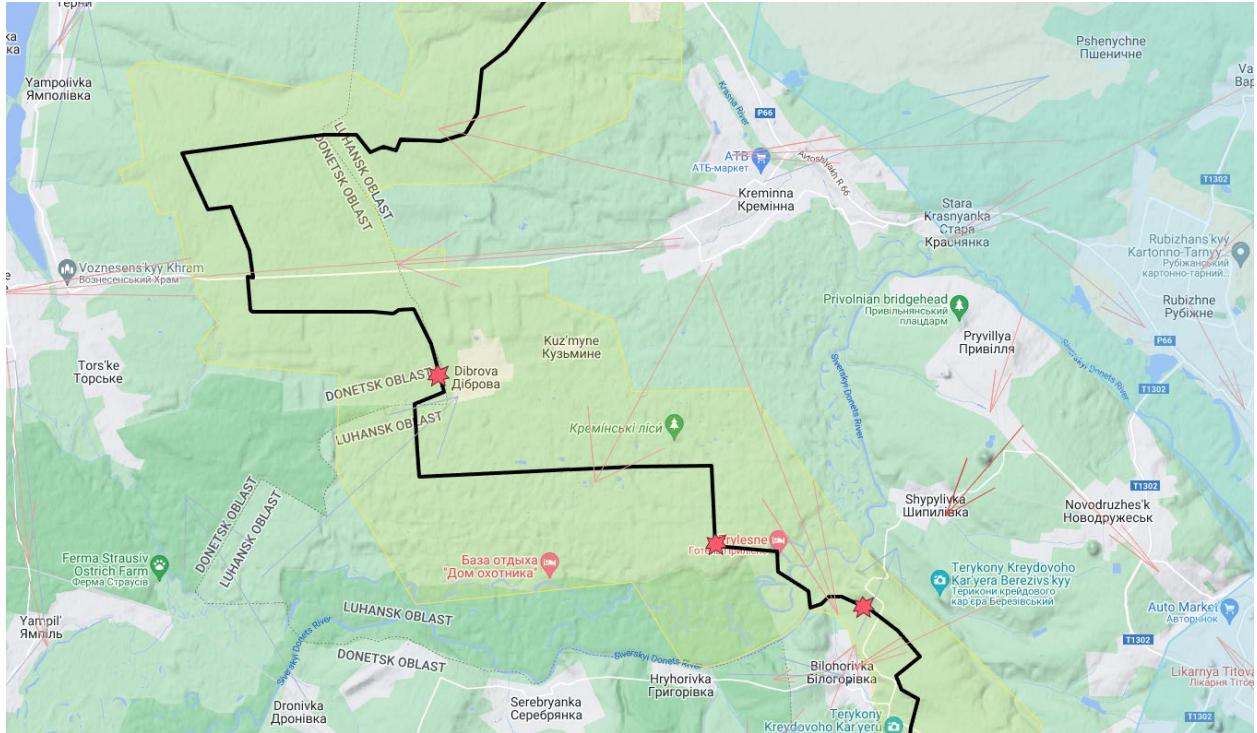
**Ukrainian Objective:** Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents



## Svatove Operational Area

The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported that Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in [Novoselivske](#) and that Ukrainian forces were attacking in the direction of [Kovalivka](#).<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

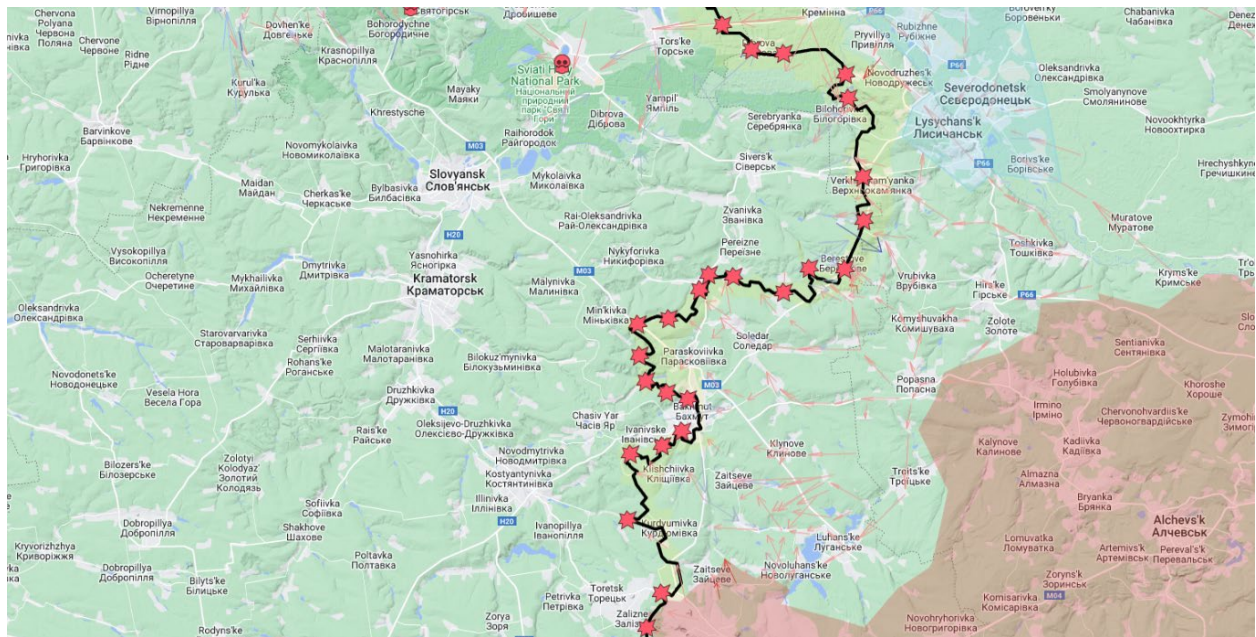


## Kreminna Operational Area

RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces were on the offensive in the area of [Kuzmyne](#) while positional fighting dominated by artillery continued in the [Serebryansky Woods](#).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

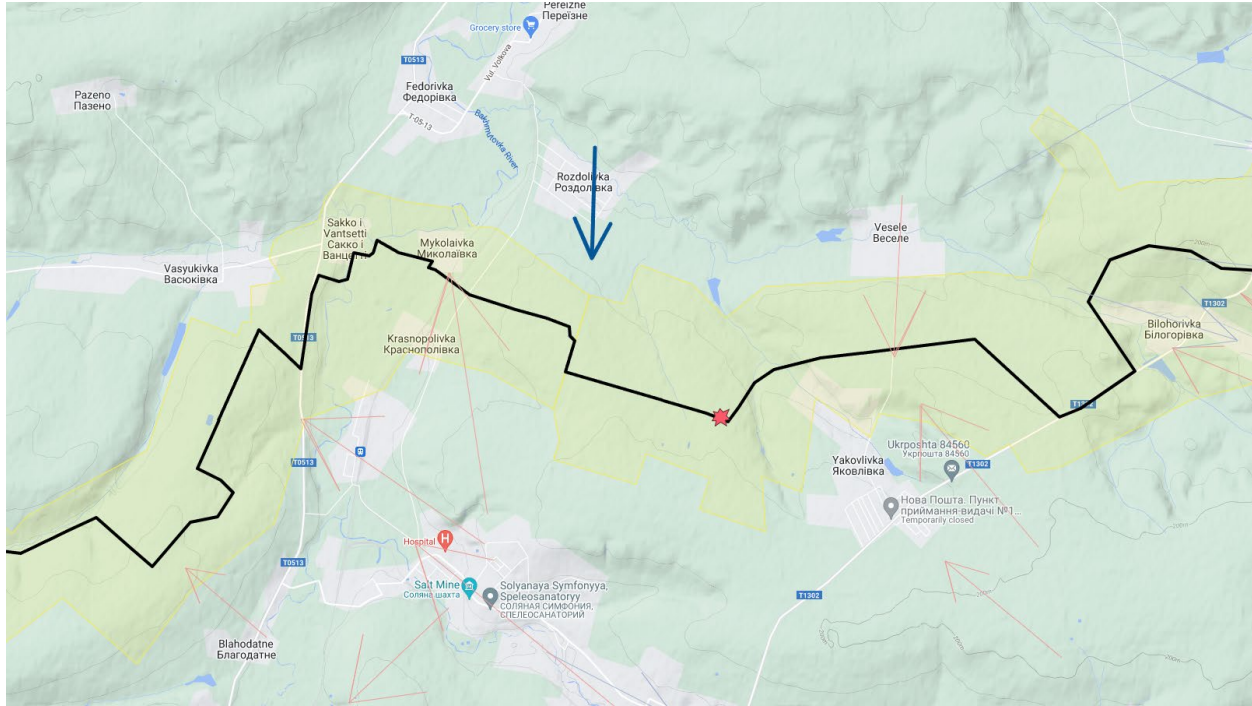
# NORTHEAST DONETSK



**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





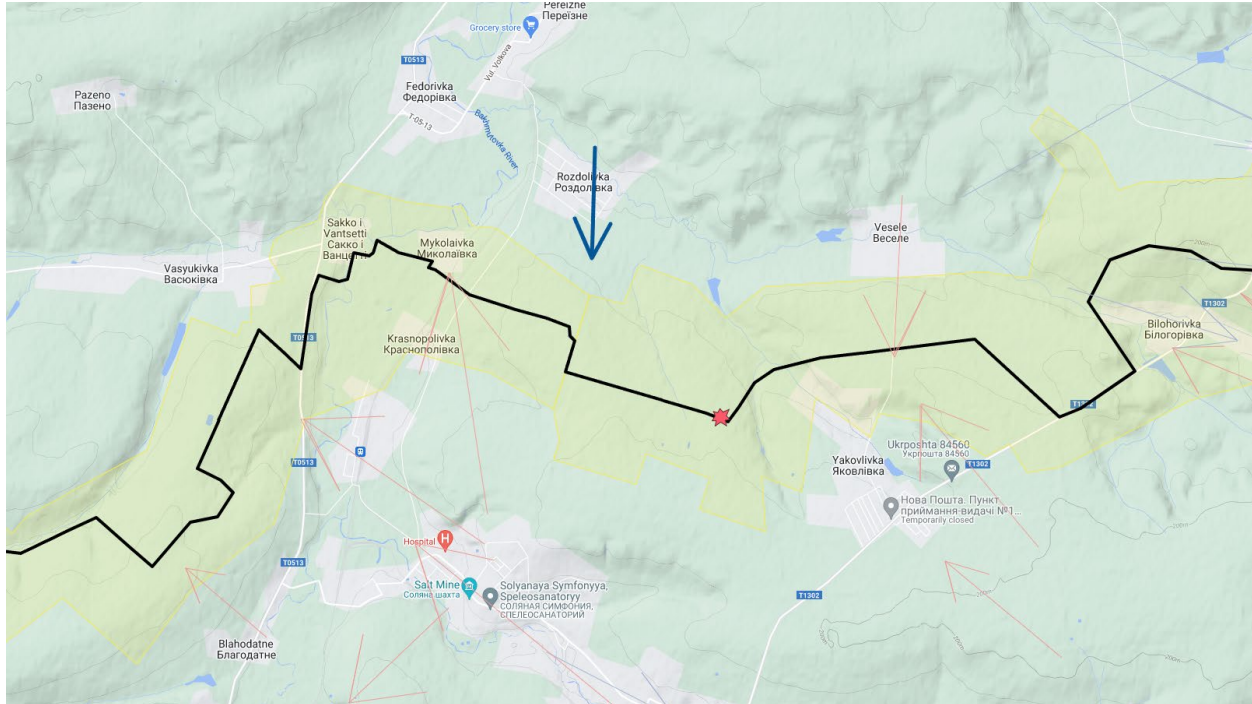
## Siversk Operational Area

RMOD claimed that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive in the area of [Bilohorivka](#) [Donetsk].<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]





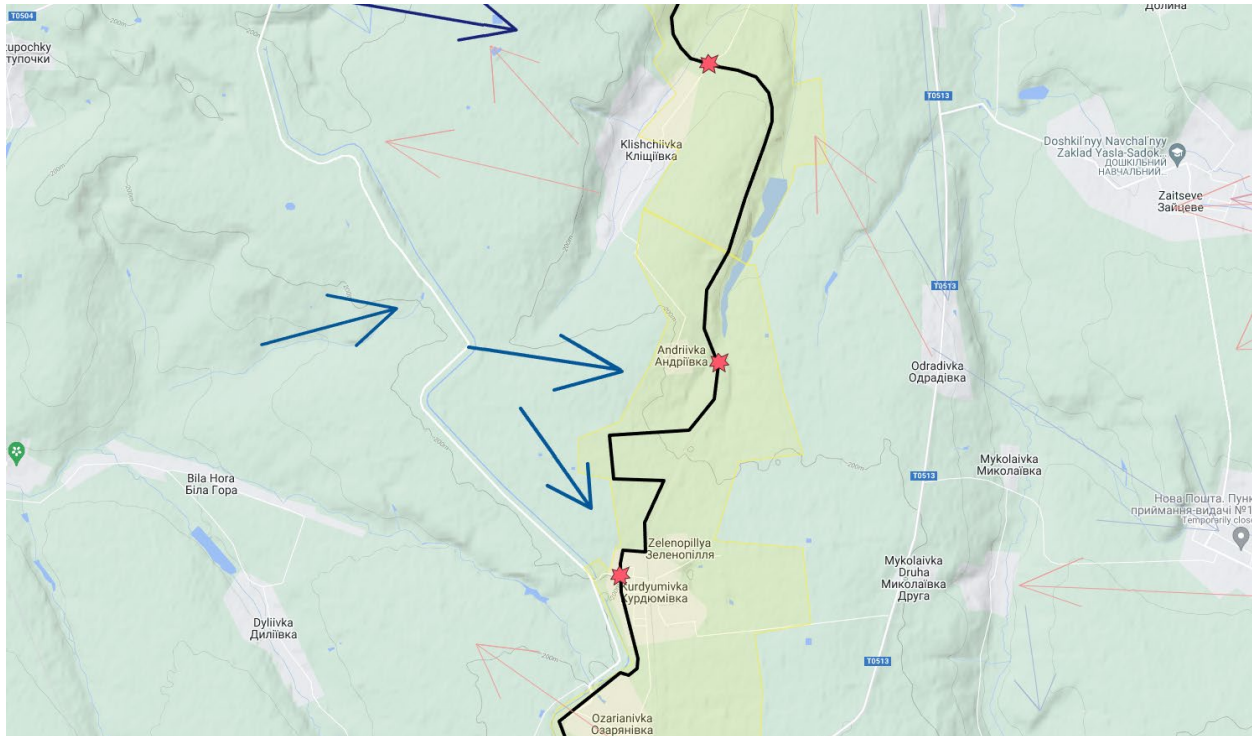
## Soledar Operational Area

RMOD also reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive in the direction of [Mykolaivka](#).<sup>9</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:** While the Russian Ministry of Defense considers drone strikes, touches, and harassment attacks as Ukrainian offensives in their morning reports, Moscow has been reporting Ukrainian activity from Mykolaivka to Yakovlivka for a week. Historically, this has indicated not only Ukrainian offensive action but the potential for

<sup>9</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]


Ukrainian tactical gains since the Kremlin has an official policy of always reporting they are advancing.




## Klishchiivka Operational Area

Ukrainian forces made marginal gains in [Klishchiivka](#) as fighting in the gray zone continued. While Ukraine has full military control of the highlands to the west of the settlement, Russian forces use the berm the railroad tracks sit on as a defensive line, leaving Klishchiivka in a bowl between the two zones.

## Free Donetsk

On the night of August 14, Russian missiles, likely S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack,  [destroyed a wholesale food distribution center](#) in Kramatorsk.<sup>10</sup> The attack killed two employees and injured one.<sup>11</sup>

The same night in Slovyansk, a Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missile used for a ground attack struck the already badly damaged Zeus Ceramics Plant,  [causing additional damage](#).<sup>12</sup> The factory has been idle since April 2022; no casualties were reported.

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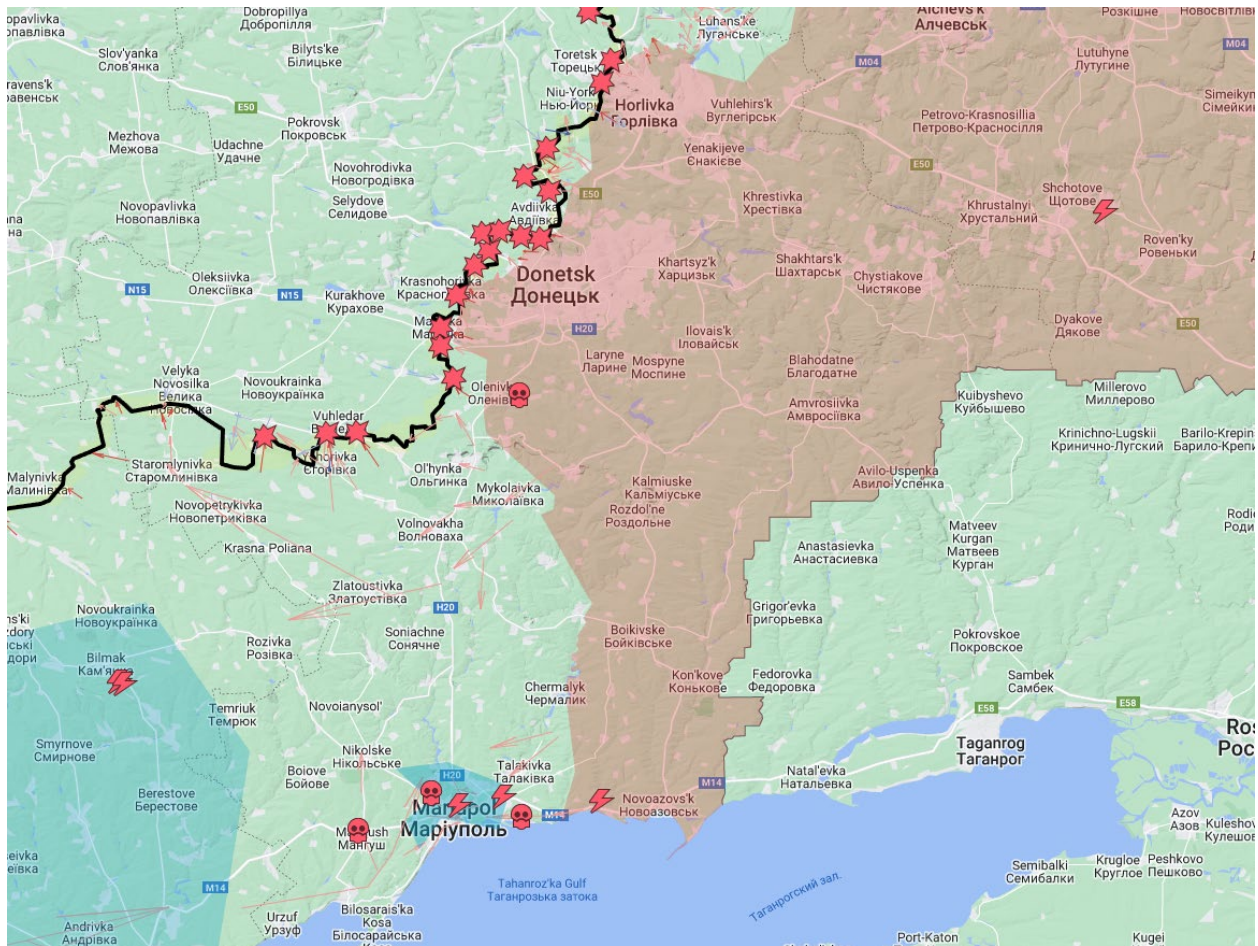
<sup>10</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110154>

<sup>11</sup> [https://t.me/kramatorsk\\_rada/14062](https://t.me/kramatorsk_rada/14062)

<sup>12</sup> [https://t.me/kramatorsk\\_rada/14055](https://t.me/kramatorsk_rada/14055)



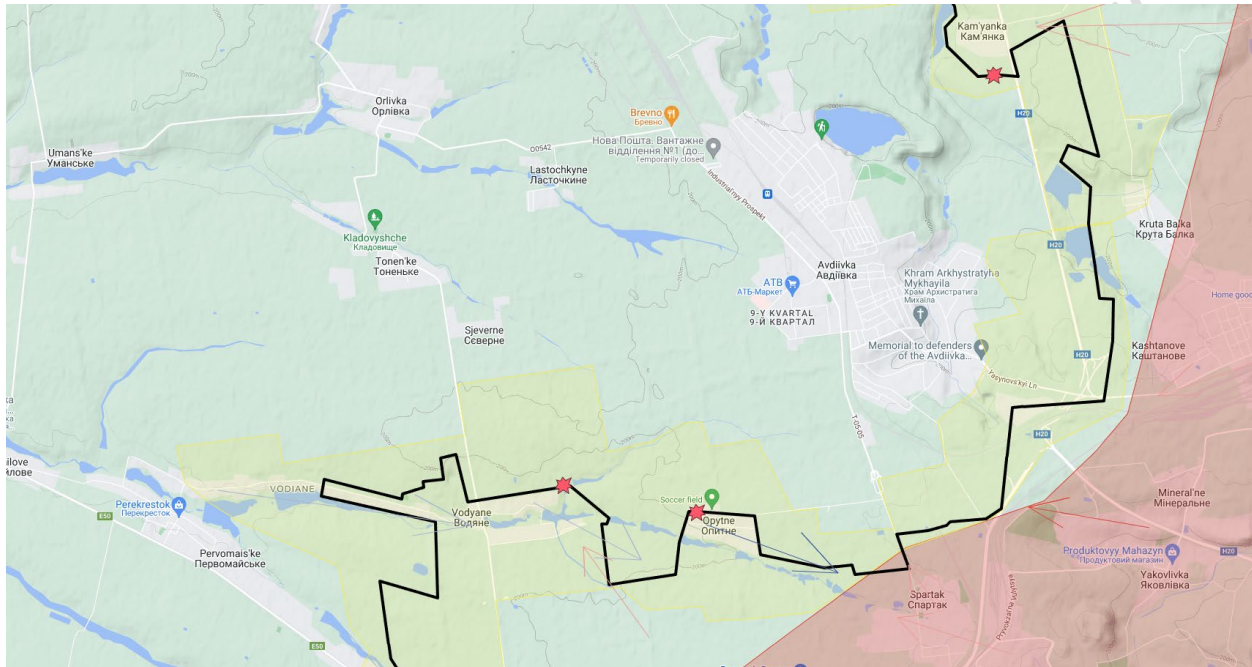
# SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



**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

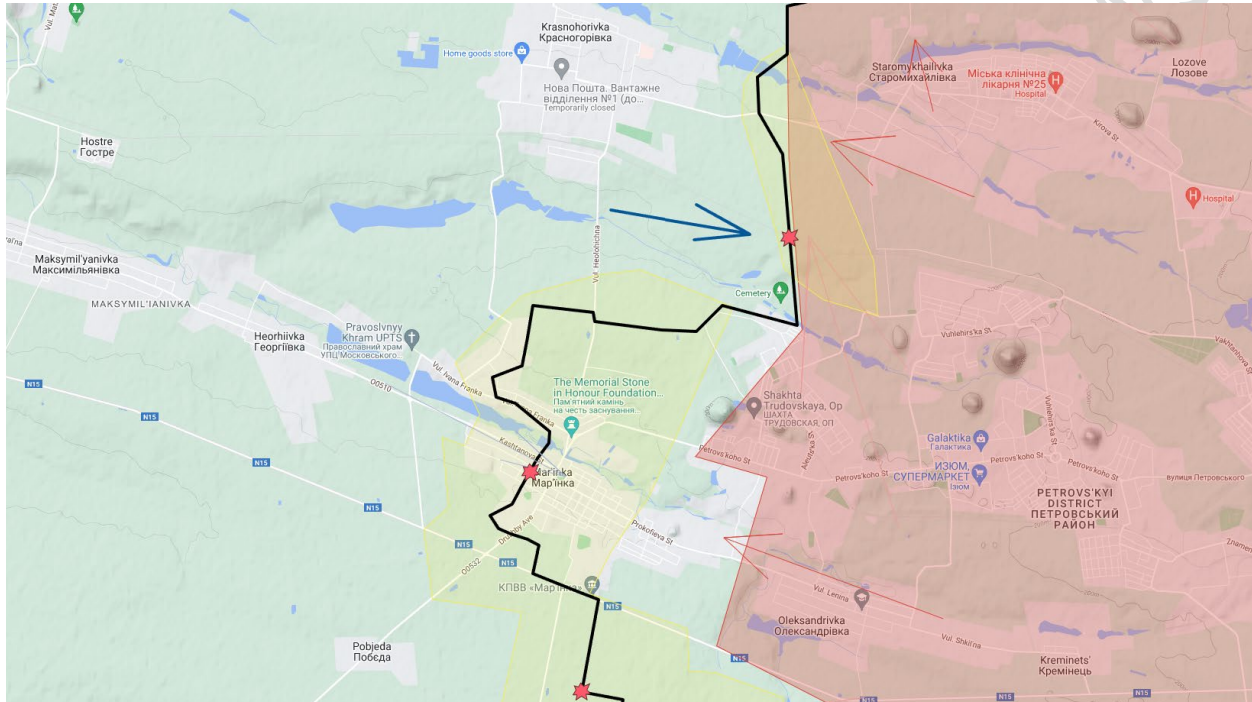
Only positional fighting was reported in the area of operation (AO), with a Russian offensive from Spartak in the direction of [Avdiivka](#), supported by the Russian air force and army aviation (VKS), failing.<sup>13</sup> RMOD reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Nevelske](#).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/11123>

<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29318](https://t.me/mod_russia/29318) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



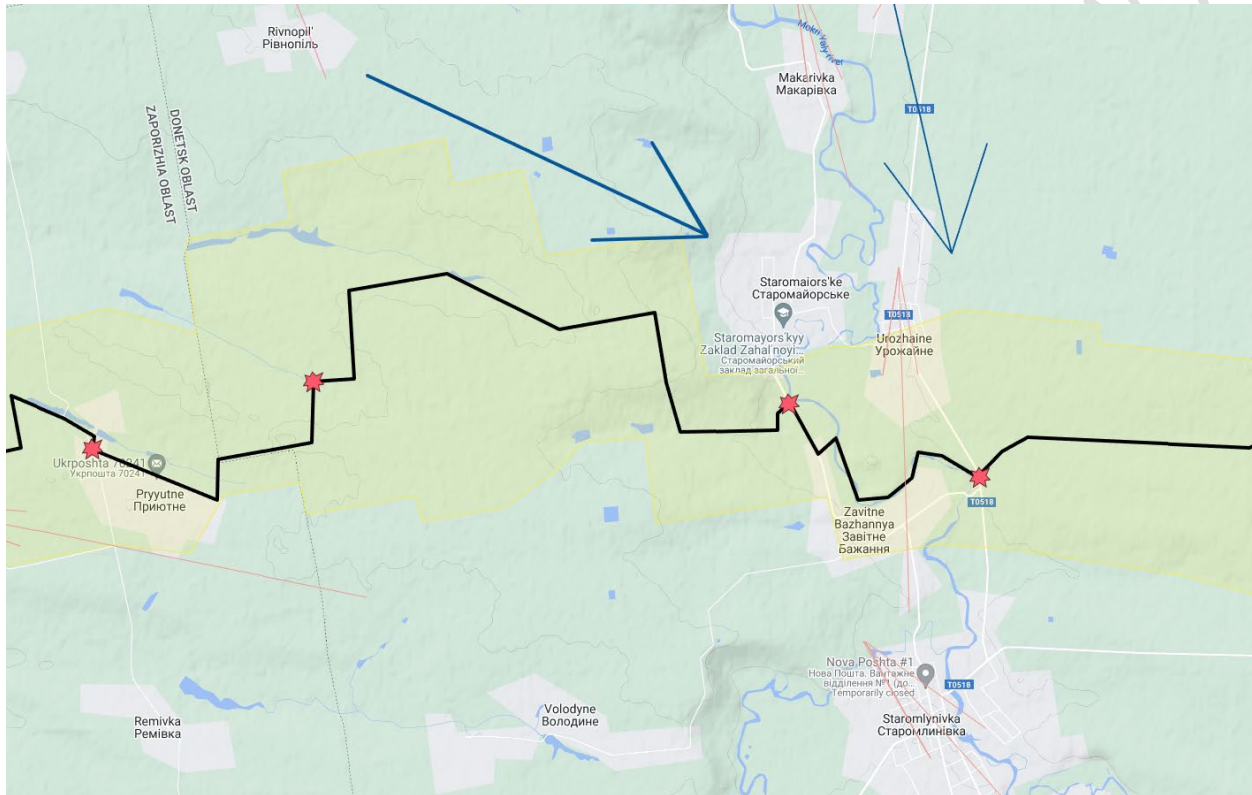
**ASSESSMENT:** We maintain that until the Russian Federation Armed Forces bring in reserves or rotate the currently combat ineffective units for reconstitution, Russian combat potential is exhausted in the AO.



## Marinka Operational Area

Russian forces continued attempts to advance on [Krasnohorivka](#), with support from the Russian air force and

army aviation (VKS), and positional fighting continued in [Marinka](#), with no change to the situation.<sup>15</sup>



## Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Area

Russian counterattacks “in the area” of [Urozhaine](#) failed, and at the time of publication, Deputy Minister of Defense Maliar announced the settlement had been liberated.<sup>16</sup> The [online map was updated](#).<sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> Russian milblogger Sergey

<sup>15</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/11123>

<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/annamaliar/1016>

<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/11123>

<sup>18</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/50771>

Markov and Deputy Commander of OMON forces of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, Alexander Khodakovsky, reported that Ukrainian troops probed [Zavitne Bazhannya](#) using reconnaissance in force, and fighting had started.<sup>19 20</sup>

Due to the liberation of Urozhaine, the Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction has been renamed the Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka AO.

## Occupied Donetsk

In the occupied city of Donetsk, a Russian firebase in the Petrovskyi District, located within 500 meters of three hospitals and a grocery store, was [attacked by drone-delivered munitions](#).<sup>21</sup> This is another documented case of Russian military positions being "danger close" to civilians and critical civilian infrastructure in the western part of the city.

Local residents in Yalta reported a major explosion. It was unclear at the time of publication if this was due to a Storm

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<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/logikamarkova/7819>

<sup>20</sup> [https://t.me/aleksandr\\_skif/2847](https://t.me/aleksandr_skif/2847)

<sup>21</sup> [https://twitter.com/666\\_mancer/status/1691429842422497281](https://twitter.com/666_mancer/status/1691429842422497281)



Shadow missile strike, partisan activity, or a sonic boom from an aircraft.<sup>22</sup>

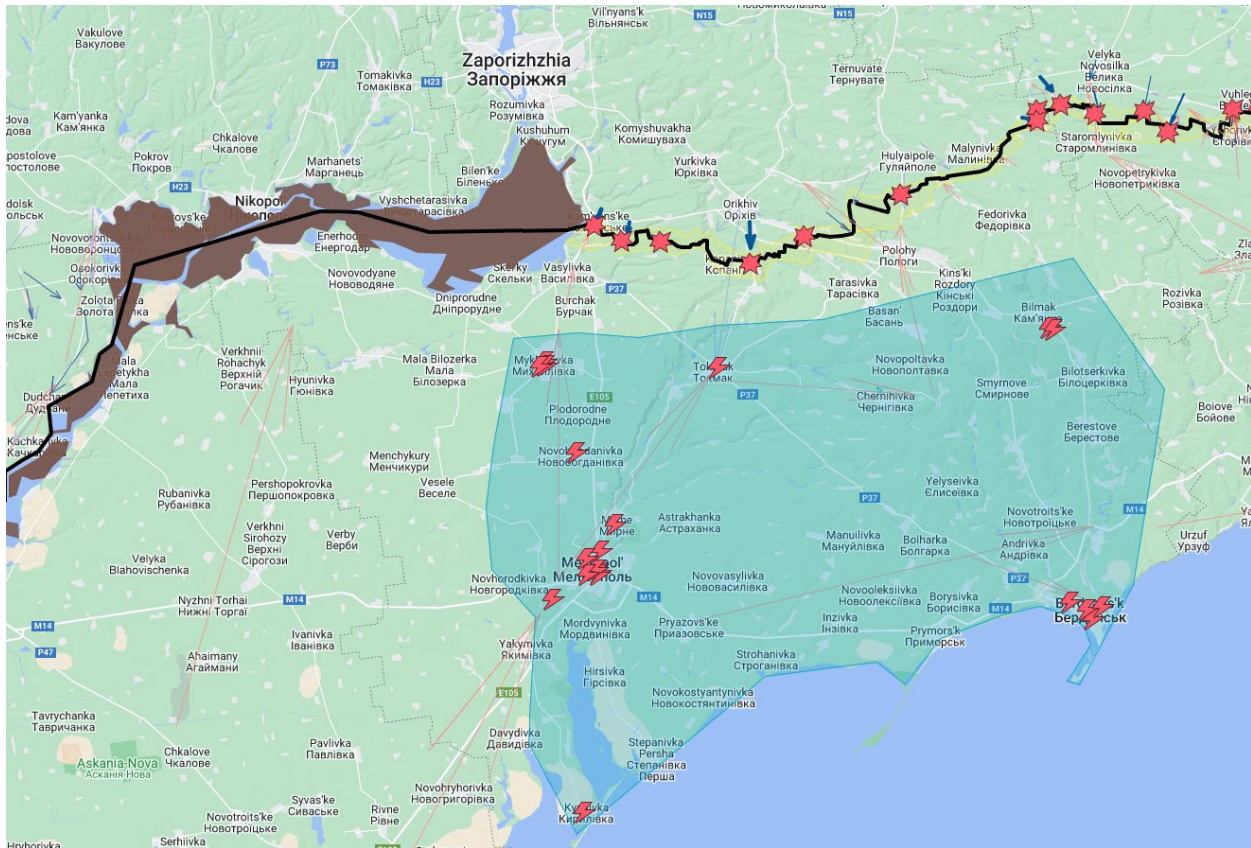
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<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/andriyshTime/12624>

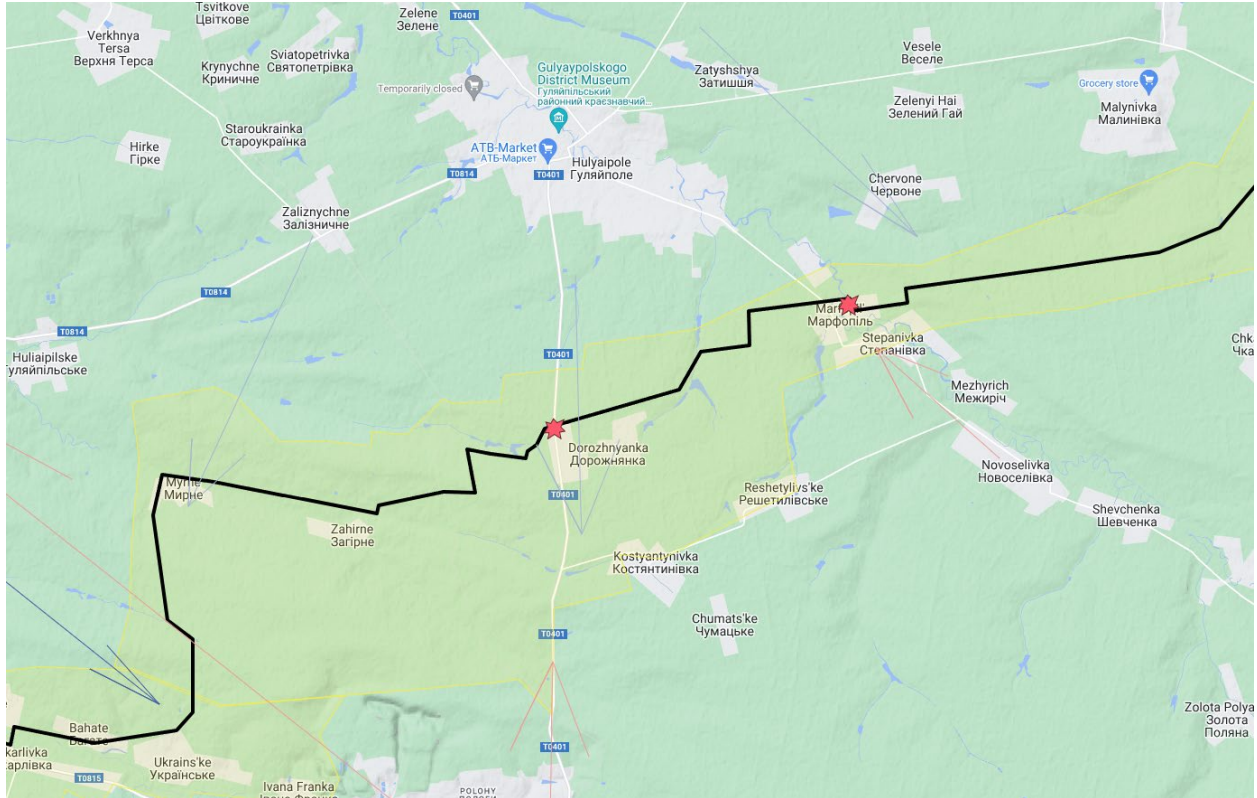


# ZAPORIZHIA





**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

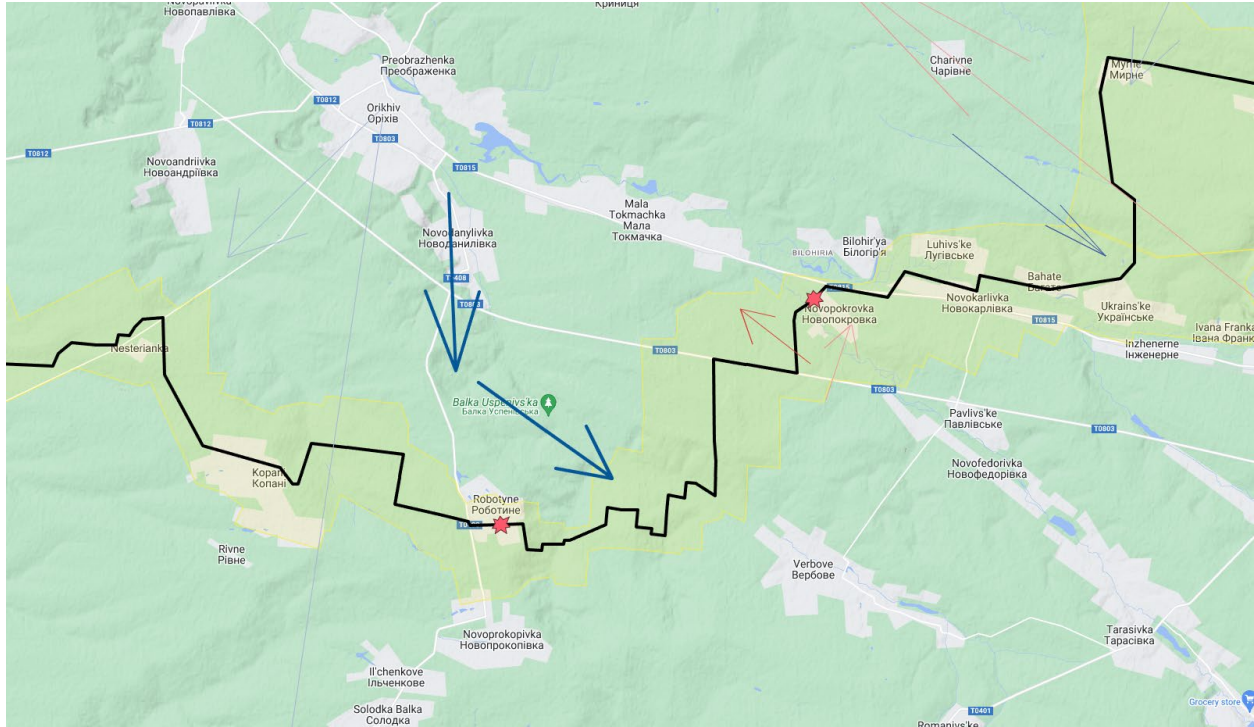


## Hulyaipole Operational Area


The Russian VKS fired on their own troops in the [Drozhnyanka](#) area on August 14. Graphic pictures showed there were at least several casualties. Some people may find the images disturbing. You can view them by   [clicking here](#).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/gistapapapa/76049>



## Orikhiv Operational Area

Multiple videos released in the last 24 hours by Ukrainian and Russian sources confirm our map in [Robotyne](#), where Ukrainian forces are breaching Russian defenses. Some Russian milbloggers have started to set conditions in the information space for a withdrawal from the settlement, declaring it is relatively unimportant and that Ukraine forces have already exhausted their combat potential. The Russian VKS struck Ukrainian troops trying to slow the advance, and a  [Lancet kamikaze drone struck a NATO-provided Stryker](#) armored personnel carrier (APC) with the 82nd Mechanized Infantry Brigade, indicating that at least



elements of the unit have been activated in the AO.<sup>24</sup> The video ends right after impacting, suggesting the APC was only lightly damaged.

**ASSESSMENT:** The rapid speed of the lone Stryker east of Robotyne indicates that the area, pocked with the chaotic pattern of Russian artillery, has been demined. While the Stryker continues moving unabated after the hit, that does not mean it was completely undamaged, as it could have continued rolling forward due to momentum. While significant visual evidence shows Ukrainian forces are moving through Robotyne quickly, we did not adjust the map as we remain uncertain if a sustained presence is being maintained.

Ukrainian forces reportedly made additional gains in the direction of [Verbove](#) and continued to use the terrain to probe south of Robotyne in the direction of [Novoprokopivka](#).

The city of Zaporizhzhia was hit by four Russia S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack, damaging a

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<sup>24</sup> <https://twitter.com/RALee85/status/1691340418590429184>



gymnasium, school, and private homes. One person was injured.<sup>25</sup>

## Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

Almost a month ago, Russian occupiers kidnapped Serhii Spartesnyi, shift supervisor of the turbine department of the operational unit at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP).<sup>26</sup> Energoatom reported, "Armed Russian military came to his home and took him by force to a local occupying police department. Multiple searches were conducted in Serhii's home, and the Russians were constantly checking his computer, mobile phone, and social media." Spartesnyi is believed to be still held in Enerhodar and has not been publicly accused of any crime. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) did not release a statement. There were no other updates on the status of ZNPP.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110191>


<sup>26</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7415661/>

## BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

### Black Sea

Neither Operational Command South (OKS) nor insurgents in Sevastopol reported on the composition of the deployed vessels of the Black Sea Fleet.

### Occupied Crimea




The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) shared a video with the United States news agency CNN, showing that the  [Mk.5 version of their internally developed uncrewed surface vessel \(USV\)](#) struck the Kerch (Crimean) Bridge on July 17.<sup>27</sup> The Mk.5 USV, called Sea Baby, carries 450 kilograms of explosives and are the same guided drones used to strike the large landing ship (LLS) Olenegorsky Gornyak and the Russian-owned and flagged fuel tanker, SIG.

### Odesa

At least 15 Shahed-136 kamikaze drones attacked the Ukrainian ports at Izmail and Remi on the Danube River,

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7STLTtOEOM>

bordering Romania.<sup>28 29</sup> The Ukrainian air force reported 13 UAVs were shot down. Warehouses and granaries were hit in both ports, causing fires. Videos recorded from Romania showed  [at least one Shahed-136 struck Remi](#), and another  [hit Izmail](#).<sup>30 31</sup> Pictures released by the Armed Forces of Ukraine showed  [multiple grain hangars were destroyed](#).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> [https://t.me/our\\_odessa/52406](https://t.me/our_odessa/52406)

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110259>

<sup>30</sup> [https://twitter.com/sham\\_syrianews/status/1691682347488256386](https://twitter.com/sham_syrianews/status/1691682347488256386)

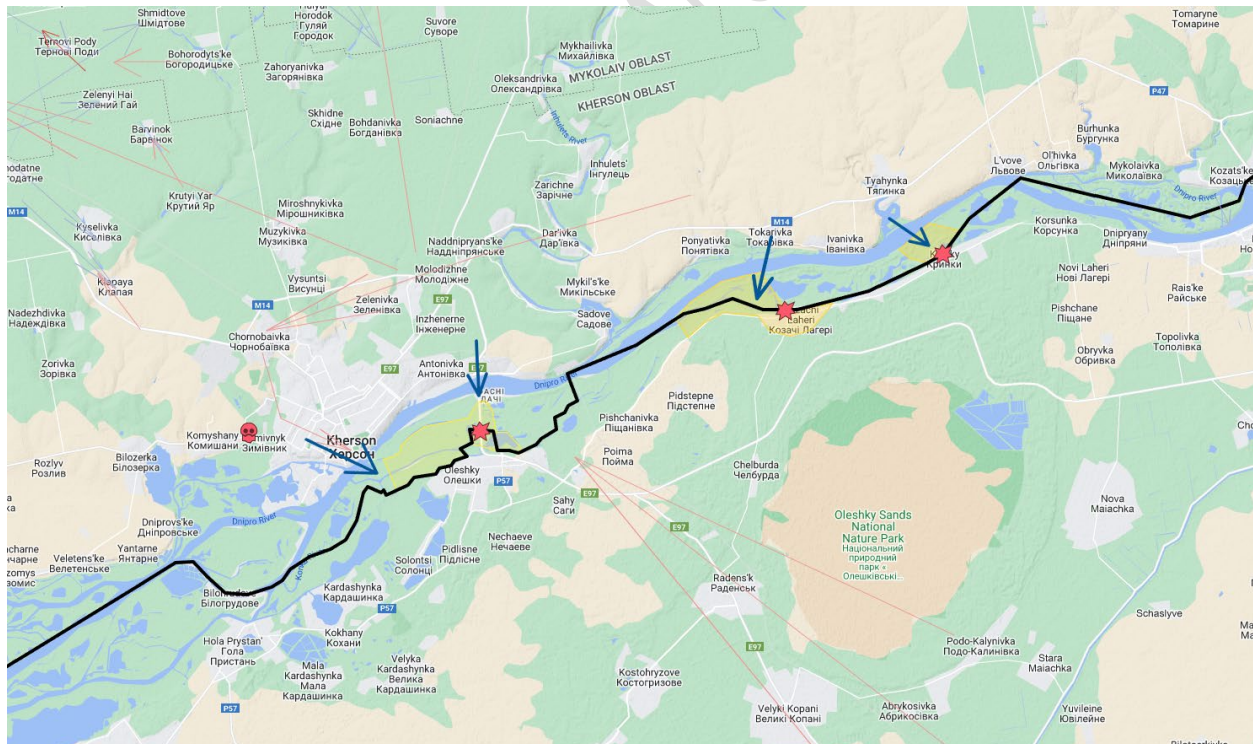
<sup>31</sup> [https://t.me/our\\_odessa/52419](https://t.me/our_odessa/52419)

<sup>32</sup> [https://t.me/our\\_odessa/52420?single](https://t.me/our_odessa/52420?single)

# KHERSON

**Russian Objective:** Prevent Ukrainian advances into eastern Kherson, terrorize the civilian population in free Kherson, prepare the region for illegitimate elections in September 2023, and maintain GLOCs to Zaporizhzhia

**Ukrainian Objective:** Deter attacks on Ukrainian civilians, lock Russian troops and military assets in place, and protect civilian lives





Online reports that Ukrainian forces had established two pontoon bridges over the Dnipro River were false. Ukrainian forces maintained their presence from [Dachi](#) to [Kozachi Laheri](#) on the left (east) bank of the Dnipro River.

## Occupied Kherson


Crimean Tartar insurgent organization ATESH reported Rosgvardia units in Hola Prystan were placed on high alert, with all but the Nova Zburivka entrance closed. Russian units were reportedly improving defensive positions around the settlement.<sup>33</sup>

Russian collaborator Ludmilla Sergiivna Imshenytska, currently the head of the Cultural Center in Kozachi Laheri, appealed to the illegitimate administration of occupied Kherson led by Gaudieter Vladimir Saldo and complained they were not responding to her requests to be evacuated despite her "long time" cooperation with Russian occupiers. She claimed she is getting death threats, including a warning that she'll be hung from the willow trees on the banks of the Konka River. "I need to get out somehow; they won't let me live here."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> [https://t.me/atesh\\_ua/1537](https://t.me/atesh_ua/1537)

<sup>34</sup> [https://t.me/ukrarmed\\_forces/5905](https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5905)


West of occupied Oleksandrivka, a Ukrainian  [HIMARS strike destroyed an S-300 anti-aircraft complex](#), including two launchers and two radar stations.<sup>35</sup> It is one of the deepest documented HIMARS strikes to date, 17 kilometers west of the Armyansk border control checkpoint between Crimea and Kherson. The attack likely occurred in late July, with the video released today.

## 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

### Dnipropetrovsk


On August 14, based on Ukrainian reports, we reported the city of Dnipro was attacked by Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack. A video published by a local resident showed  [four Russian cruise missiles](#)

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<sup>35</sup> <https://twitter.com/EjShahid/status/1691489507076452352>

[striking the city](#).<sup>36</sup> At least two missiles struck  [near a sports facility used for competition and training](#), including for the Olympics, causing significant damage.<sup>37</sup> The other two struck an industrial area and damaged a factory.

## Ivano-Frankivsk

On the night of August 14, debris from a shot down Russian cruise missile  [landed on a home and nearby farm buildings](#) near Kolomyysk.<sup>38</sup>

## Khmelnyskyi

On August 14, Russian cruise missiles bypassed the Starokostyantynov military airfield, striking deeper in western Ukraine.

## Lviv

Lviv officials verified five Russian cruise missiles struck the city and one was shutdown during the night of August 14,

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<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/20505>

<sup>37</sup> [https://t.me/mykola\\_lukashuk/5971](https://t.me/mykola_lukashuk/5971)

<sup>38</sup> [https://t.me/zinkevich\\_igor/7711](https://t.me/zinkevich_igor/7711)

with the number of wounded climbing to 19, including five hospitalized.<sup>39 40</sup>

## Volyn

Carl Bjernstam, a spokesperson for the Swedish-owned bearing maker SKF, confirmed that a Russian cruise missile hit its factory in Lutsk on the night of August 14.<sup>41</sup> SKF is the world's largest producer of industrial bearings, with the Lutsk factory responsible for less than 1% of its global production.

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<sup>39</sup> <https://t.me/investigatorkua/6705>

<sup>40</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110161>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7167599/>



## **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

There wasn't any significant activity reported.

## **RUSSIAN FRONT**

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

**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**

A drone was shot down near Shebekino, with debris landing on a home, causing minor roof damage.<sup>42</sup>

### **Kaluga**

Russian officials claim three drones were shot down in the Kaluga region. There was no other information at the time of publication.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/vvgladkov/3314>

## Occupied Dagestan

The death toll climbed to 35, with over 100 wounded after a fertilizer-filled warehouse exploded next to a gas station with outdoor storage tanks in Makhachkala. Eldar Nasrulayev was arrested and accused of running an illegal warehouse in the same building as a car repair center, storing 100 tons of saltpeter. Russian officials believe a fire in the car repair garage spread to the fertilizer warehouse, causing an explosion spraying gasoline in a 50-meter radius, incinerating onlookers.<sup>43 44</sup>

## BELARUSIAN FRONT

The illegitimate self-declared president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, declared the tactical nuclear weapons stored in his country an adequate response to what he ironically called “the accelerated militarization of Eastern Europe.”<sup>45</sup> He called the border situation “unprecedentedly tense” and declared “practically all known challenges and threats have become aggravated.”


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<sup>43</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40879>

<sup>44</sup> [https://t.me/shot\\_shot/55653](https://t.me/shot_shot/55653)

<sup>45</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/145729>

In Latvia, the mobilization of border forces has been announced to strengthen its border with Belarus.<sup>46</sup> Riga said the growing "hybrid threat" and a growing number of attempts to cross the border necessitated the deployment of additional troops.

Private Military Company Wagner Group circulated an edited picture  [alleging they had crossed the border into Lithuania](#).<sup>47</sup> The poorly manipulated photo was taken in 2020 and publicly available on the Internet, with the arm holding a PMC Wagner patch added.

During today's Military Media Center of Ukraine briefing, Serhiy Naev reported that 6,500 mercenaries with Wagner Group remained in Belarus.<sup>48</sup> This is a 1,500-person reduction from July, supporting reports that 500 mercenaries departed for Lybia and two other groups of 500 to 600 mercenaries returned to Russia in the first two weeks of August.

**ASSESSMENT:** In our assessment, the equivalent of six battalions does not represent a significant threat to

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<sup>46</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110241>

<sup>47</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10082>

<sup>48</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110168>



Ukraine, Poland, Latvia, or Lithuania, even as a fully mobilized force. The larger threat comes from smaller groups conducting surveillance, intelligence gathering, and sabotage.

## THEATERWIDE

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited multiple military units in Zaporizhzhia and a frontline surgical unit providing acute medical intervention to wounded Ukrainian soldiers. "Up to 200 wounded are treated there every day. I inspected the wards and equipment, talked to the staff and combat medics, and discussed their needs. Thank you for your service. Thank you for protecting Ukraine in such an important southern direction, saving the lives of our guys. And please take care of yourselves."<sup>49</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:** This is the first indication of the number of casualties Ukrainian forces are suffering in eastern Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, with up to two to three companies being wounded or killed daily. Artillery is causing the most injuries, followed by landmines.

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<sup>49</sup> [https://t.me/V\\_Zelenskiy\\_official/7391](https://t.me/V_Zelenskiy_official/7391)

The chief of staff for NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, Stian Jenssen, angered Kyiv, suggesting that Ukraine could become a NATO member in a land for peace deal with the Russian Federation. In an interview with the Norwegian newspaper VG, Jenssen said, "I think that a solution could be for Ukraine to give up territory and get NATO membership in return." The chief of staff added, "It must be up to Ukraine to decide when and on what terms they want to negotiate," suggesting that there were ongoing discussions for such a plan.

Member of the Committee on National Security, Defense, and Intelligence for Ukraine (NSDIU), Davyd Arahamia, said in response, "We can already see this from the first reactions from Moscow. They like the idea because it legitimizes wars of aggression and undermines international law. It leads to the defeat of democracy and the triumph of totalitarian regimes. Giving up territories does not mean the end of the war. It guarantees new conflicts in different parts of the globe."<sup>50</sup>

NSDIU Secretary Oleksii Danilov expressed puzzlement. "No country since the Second World War has undergone such tests. Of course, you can give advice. Today, another

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<sup>50</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110234>

activist made a statement about our lands. Quite weird, in my opinion. We must do our part and drive the enemy out of our territory. The statement [by] one of the NATO's clerks, who said that we should consider...ceding our territories in exchange for membership in NATO? Such a strange throw-in. It is absolutely unclear why this was done."<sup>51</sup>

A spokesperson for NATO tried to defuse the situation, declaring, "We fully support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as NATO leaders reaffirmed at the Vilnius Summit in July. We will continue to support Ukraine as long as necessary, and we are committed to achieving a just and lasting peace...clearly, there is a need for security arrangements that would ensure that the war does not happen again."<sup>52</sup>

Deputy Minister of Defense Maliar said that Ukrainian forces had fully integrated the M-777 155 mm towed howitzer into the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with troops now capable of doing field service and minor repairs independent of Western assistance.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7415719/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7415708/>

<sup>53</sup> <https://t.me/annamaliar/1011>

During today's press briefing, military analyst Colonel Petro Chernyk discussed the latest military aid package from the United States and Ukraine's needs.<sup>54</sup> "We definitely need ammunition for HIMARS. It is now a very serious tool for destroying their [*Russian – Ed.*] ammunition in the rear," adding, "Artillery projectiles are also necessary because the war is still 95% an artillery war."

Ukraine's ongoing anti-corruption crackdown continued, with the SBU detaining the head of the military medical commission of the Zhytomyr Oblast. The manager is accused of selling fake medical exemptions for \$2,500 to \$5,000, depending on how urgently the recruit needed the documentation. More than \$35,000 and forged documents were found during his arrest.<sup>55</sup>

The SBU also exposed REMF commanders of the National Guard of Ukraine, who illegally enriched themselves with more than 14 million hryvnias through illegitimate claims for hazardous duty pay. From February 24, 2022, through August 2022, the 20 military leaders added 100,000

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<sup>54</sup> <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/2868>

<sup>55</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110206>



hryvnias a month to their pay, despite not serving in a combat zone. The group faces up to eight years in prison if convicted.<sup>56</sup>

Sweden announced a \$300 million military aid package to Ukraine, including ammunition, and spare parts for CV-90 infantry fighting vehicles (IFV), Archer 155 mm self-propelled howitzers, and Stridsvagn 122 main battle tanks (MBTs).<sup>57</sup>

The table for equipment losses was **updated on August 14, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24.

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<sup>56</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110185>


<sup>57</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110197>

## RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

*Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to August 14, 2023. 11,687 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,145 Ukrainian*

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
<b>Main Battle Tanks</b>	2086	258	8.09:1	↑
<b>Medium Duty Tanks</b>	145	350	0.41:1	—
<b>Armored fighting Vehicles</b>	946	306	3.09:1	—
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicles</b>	2645	688	3.84:1	—
<b>Armored Personnel Carriers</b>	343	320	1.07:1	—
<b>MRAPs</b>	46	135	0.34:1	—
<b>Infantry Mobility Vehicles</b>	201	353	0.57:1	—
<b>Command and Communications Vehicles</b>	246	16	15.38:1	↑
<b>Engineering Vehicles</b>	332	74	4.49:1	↑
<b>Towed Artillery</b>	277	145	1.91:1	↑
<b>Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars</b>	488	199	2.45:1	—
<b>MLRS</b>	255	50	5.10:1	↑
<b>SAMs</b>	144	121	1.19:1	—
<b>Mobile Radars</b>	41	72	0.57:1	—
<b>EW/ECW</b>	49	4	12.25:1	↑
<b>Winged Aircraft</b>	85	69	1.23:1	—
<b>Helicopters</b>	108	32	3.38:1	↑
<b>Naval Vessels</b>	13	27	0.48:1	—

## RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR

At Patriot Park in Moscow, Russia, RMOD  [exhibited captured Western military equipment](#), including a destroyed Australian Bushmaster infantry mobility vehicle, an M-777 155 mm towed howitzer, an M-113 armored personnel carrier, a Swedish CV90-40 IFV, a French AMX-10RC light tank (scout car or tank destroyer), a British Husky MRAP, a British Mastiff infantry mobility vehicle (IMV), and a British Saxon IMV.<sup>58</sup> There was also a jet-black HMMWV on display, but it was unclear if it was captured in Ukraine.

The former commander of the Russian 6th Combined Arms Army (CAA), Lieutenant General Vladislav Ershov, is reportedly causing logistical and supply problems in the Orikhiv AO due to a personal conflict with the command of the 35th CAA.<sup>59</sup> Ershov, now a local commander, has sent military police patrols to stop any civilian or military vehicle looking for reasons to detain individuals or impound equipment.

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<sup>58</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/29323](https://t.me/mod_russia/29323)

<sup>59</sup> <https://twitter.com/KilledInUkraine/status/1691010126549864449>

Russian Colonel Vadym Gurov, the Kaykop Air Training Regiment commander, was killed when an L-39 trainer jet crashed in Krasnodar during a check flight with senior flight instructor Major Mikhail Lipatkin.<sup>60</sup> <sup>61</sup> During landing, the aircraft missed the runway, killing Gurov and seriously wounding Lipatkin, who was at the controls. Russian state media reported that Lipatkin was intoxicated at the time of the accident.

Vyacheslav Volodin, the speaker of the State Duma, asked the deputies "not to speculate" about the need for a new wave of mobilization in the Russian Federation because doing so would "help the country's enemies."<sup>62</sup> The September 21, 2022, partial mobilization order was never rescinded by the State Duma, giving Russian President Vladimir Putin the blanket authority to continue adding mobiks to the Russian Federation Armed Forces.

A military registration and enlistment office in Mendeleevsky, Tatarstan, offered a 500,000 rouble lump sum bonus to volunteer soldiers who agree to sign a contract before August 18.<sup>63</sup> This is in addition to an

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<sup>60</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110189>

<sup>61</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/20488>

<sup>62</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/145329>

<sup>63</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/145712>



existing 200,000 rouble bonus and is more than six months' pay for the average Russian.

Created in occupied Crimea by former PMC Wagner leaders, PMC Convoy continues to operate outside the Russian Ministry of Defense due to deep connections with Russian banks, business leaders, and Russian President Vladimir Putin.<sup>64</sup> Founder Sergei Aksenov received 300 million roubles from VTB Bank and a business associate close to Putin-ally Arkady Rotenberg. Six weeks later, Aksenov received another 437 million roubles. PMC Convoy is registered in St. Petersburg, Russia, under the name St. Petersburg Cossack Society Konvoy, which acts as a shell company to transfer funds to LLC Military Security Company Convoy. Each month 65 million roubles is transferred to the head of the PMC, Konstantin Pikalov, as "loans." Moscow has not been able to bring Convoy under unified command with the Russian Ministry of Defense, despite the July 1, 2023 mandate, which contributed to the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23. Aksenov is a former PMC Wagner commander that publicly has had no connection with Yevgeny Prigozhin or Dmitry Utkin since 2018, but that's been called into question. PMC Convoy is currently deployed in the Chongar region of Crimea.

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<sup>64</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/39606>

In the occupied town of Mykhailivka in Zaporizhzhia, it was reported that Chechen Kadyvorites got into a gun battle with Russian-aligned soldiers from occupied Dagestan in the central park. During a verbal altercation, an unknown person fired into the air, causing a clash that involved small arms and grenades. It is reported that up to 20 Russian-aligned troops were killed and 40 wounded. We could not independently verify the casualty claim.<sup>65</sup>

During a speech, Russian Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu said, "One of the top priority humanitarian tasks of the 'special military operation' is the release of Russian servicemen from Ukrainian captivity."<sup>66</sup> It is the first time the Kremlin has publicly acknowledged that Russian troops have been captured outside of announced prisoner exchanges and appeared to hint that a growing number of Russian soldiers are in captivity.

Former FSB Colonel Mikhail Polyakov, the former head of the Telegram propaganda channel "Kremlin Laundress," had his criminal case for personal enrichment transferred from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Military


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<sup>65</sup> <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/19115>

<sup>66</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1691428889841549312>

Investigative Committee.<sup>67</sup> The Moscow City Court determined that it did not have jurisdiction over the case because Polyakov is an active employee of the Federal Security Bureau. Polyakov's lawyer, funded in part by Russian propagandist Vladimir Solovyov, requested house arrest, but the court remanded Polyakov to the infamous Lefortovo pre-trial detention center. As the administrator of Kremlin Laundress, Polyakov sold advertisements and appears to have made the grievous error of not providing a cut to the right people.

Russian source Cheka-OGPU reported that General of the Army Sergey Surovkin remains under house arrest but has been allowed to talk with his subordinates.<sup>68</sup> Kremlin watchers suggested that Moscow may be hoping for a new crisis or for people to "forget" about Surovkin, so he can quietly return to service or retire from the military.


Russian milbloggers are furious after learning that Battalion Commander Major Yuri Tomov, captured by Ukrainian forces around August 9, appears to have  [become a collaborator](#).<sup>69</sup> In addition to showing where Russian strongpoints, firebases, and logistical nodes were


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<sup>67</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40824>

<sup>68</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40796>

<sup>69</sup> [https://t.me/ukrarmed\\_forces/5876](https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5876)

located, as well as Russian losses, the prospects of the Russian Federation to win the war, and the attitude of residents in occupied Kherson towards Russian troops. He said that his unit is poorly trained with many refusniks. As an editorial practice, we normally do not share videos of prisoners of war unless they are in large groups, are victims of a war crime, or we have assessed they are in imminent danger, and sharing proof of their capture can help keep them alive. We are  [sharing the video](#) because Major Tomov appears to have voluntarily assisted Ukraine.<sup>70</sup>

A viral video showed pro-Russian women in a cafe in occupied Donetsk going on a racist tirade directed at Russian soldiers from Buryat. Through any lens, her taunts and racist attacks are, in a word, horrifying. She makes a point to brag that she owns six shops and two houses in Donetsk. She warns that if they "come here again" and "when our boys return from war, we will bury you." The Russian soldiers show remarkable restraint. Some people will find this content offensive, so viewer discretion is advised. You can watch the video by  [clicking here](#).<sup>71</sup>


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<sup>70</sup> [https://t.me/ukrarmed\\_forces/5879](https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5879)

<sup>71</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1690678394071986176>



***Editor's Note:*** *She will be very disappointed when Johnny Ivan does not come marching home. Urrah! Urrah!*

Twenty-four hours later, after a visit by nice young men from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the self-style "Katherine"  [read a prepared statement](#) claiming she isn't racist, was drunk and said stupid things, and had no intent of discrediting the Russian Federation Armed Forces.<sup>72</sup>

The Russian Ministry for Migration has reported that for the second time in 12 months, there is a shortage of passports equipped with microchips, and new or renewal passports can't be updated until at least September.<sup>73</sup>

The District Court of Moscow fined retired GRU Colonel, Igor Stelkov Girkin's ally, and leader of the Crossbow Rebellion, Vladimir Kvachkov, 40,000 rubles for discrediting the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Kavachkov was charged due to posts he made on the Internet in 2022.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> <https://t.me/informnapalm/18466>

<sup>73</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40871>

<sup>74</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/20494>

## WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

On August 13, the Kherson regional oncology dispensary and surgical center was shelled by Russian forces. While under fire, doctors continued to work with patients. "We operate throughout the war. We will not leave a patient on the table," says a surgeon who would only go by his first name of Mykhailo. "We survived the occupation [and] we will survive this too."<sup>75</sup>

Forensic examination determined that humanitarian volunteers Andrew Bagshaw of New Zealand and Chris Perry of the United Kingdom were executed while in captivity with PMC Wagner Group in January 2023 and not killed in an artillery strike, as Yevgeny Prigozhin claimed. Records showed that both men were violently tortured, and Bagshaw's phone was turned on two days after his capture.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/23330>

<sup>76</sup> [Stuff – New Zealand](#)

## GEOPOLITICS

Poland celebrated Armed Forces Day and flexed its military muscle with the largest display of military hardware in its history. Almost 200 pieces of military equipment were involved, including 92 aircraft, M1A1 Abrams and K2 MBTs, M142 guided multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), better known as HIMARS, and Patriot air defense systems.<sup>77</sup>

During the parade, Andrzej Duda, President of Poland, told his nation, "If someone in Poland does not understand why we help Ukraine, thanks to their struggle, we are free."<sup>78</sup>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that despite threats from the Kremlin in December 2022, no additional Russian troops or equipment had been moved to the Finnish frontier. The head of the Finnish Foreign Ministry, Elina Valtonen, said, "It seems that these efforts are not progressing very quickly. Russian resources are currently deployed elsewhere."<sup>79</sup>


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<sup>77</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110212>

<sup>78</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110232>

<sup>79</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/110243>

India will not invite Ukraine to the G-20 Summit scheduled for September 9 - 10. Russian President Putin is invited and expected to attend.<sup>80</sup>

In Chisinau, Moldova, 45 staffers of the  [Russian embassy left in compliance with an earlier order](#) that listed them as persona non grata.<sup>81</sup> President Maia Sandu's government has accused Moscow of trying to destabilize the government. Moldova has been stuck in a 31-year-long frozen conflict, with the unrecognized enclave of Transnistria occupied by approximately 1,500 Russian "peacekeepers."

Ukraine is reportedly considering suspending visa-free travel with Israel, citing Rosh Hashanah, which starts in September. Ambassador of Ukraine to Israel Yevhen Korniychuk explained that Uman expects thousands of pilgrims but cannot guarantee their safety from Russian missile and drone attacks, which have targeted Uman this year. Korniychuk also cited the increasing number of Ukrainian refugees deported by Israel and the announcement from Tel Aviv that health insurance benefits would be canceled. Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen

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<sup>80</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/23407>

<sup>81</sup> <https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1691233487884627979>



promised Kyiv that his country would not exclude Ukrainians from their health coverage.<sup>82 83</sup>

On August 13, the Armenian consulate in Odesa was damaged by a Russian missile strike, breaking doors and windows.<sup>84</sup>

## ECONOMIC

Pakistan has ended discounted Russian oil imports after concluding that their refineries were not optimized to the weight and sweetness of Urals crude. The Pakistani Oil Refinery (PRL) found that Russian oil yielded significantly less gasoline than oil from the Middle East.<sup>85</sup>

***Editor's Note:*** Refineries are calibrated to refine specific crude oil based on its weight, light or heavy, and how much hydrogen sulfide it contains. Sweet oil has little hydrogen sulfide, while sour oil can contain dangerous amounts.

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<sup>82</sup> <https://t.me/ShrikeNews/9976>

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/08/15/7415700/>

<sup>84</sup> [https://t.me/our\\_odessa/52315](https://t.me/our_odessa/52315)

<sup>85</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/144986>

After the rouble tumbled to an exchange rate of 102 for 1 US dollar, the Central Bank of Russia raised interest rates 350 basis points from 8.5% to 12.0%. The rouble improved to 96 in anticipation of the announcement and settled at an exchange rate of 97 for 1 US dollar.<sup>86</sup> <sup>87</sup> The sharp increase is an attempt to cool an already shaky economy that has seen non-durable goods inflation on fuel and food increase as much as 25% in the last month.

The weakening rouble is creating an additional problem as up to one-third of Russia's migrant workers are considering leaving the country. The weak rouble is eroding the higher salary benefits for Uzbeks and Tajiks, who send part of their pay back to their homes. Due to the strength of the US dollar, low-paying jobs in retail, catering, cleaning, catering, delivery, and agriculture are reaching pay parity in their native countries.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> <https://t.me/ShrikeNews/9977>

<sup>87</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/145371>

<sup>88</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/39626>

## 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 only use their reports to identify combat locations. We no longer consider their territorial control changes due to a three-month pattern from June to August 2023 of repeated publication of blatant disinformation and a years-long pattern of denying 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 realtime 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.