



MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

July 24, 2023



Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

7/24/23 23:59* PST

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SUMMARY – DAY 515

It has been 3,435 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 150 days – 17 months – since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

- Extreme weather is possible on July 29 as a cold front moves across Ukraine
- There are map changes in the Bakhmut, Klishchiivka, and Orikhiv areas of operation (AO)
- The table for Russian vs. Ukrainian equipment losses based on the Oryx Database was updated on July 24
- Russian forces were stopped east of Novojehorivka, and Ukraine stabilized the defense lines
- Ukrainian forces are adding pressure on Dubovo-Vasylivka from the west and northwest
- The entire settlement of Berkhivka is an unoccupied gray zone
- Ukrainian forces held positions on the edge of the Rose District of Bakhmut
- Ukrainian forces have secured the southern part of Klishchiivka, with fighting continuing and Russian forces are suffering heavy casualties
- At the time of publication, multiple reports indicated that Ukrainian forces had reached Andriivka
- Three words – Chechen TikTok Brigade

- Ukrainian forces advanced 1,700 meters southeast of Robotyne, creating a wedge between Robotyne and Novopokrovka
- Ukrainian forces advanced toward Luhove by bypassing Zherebyanky from the north
- Ukrainian forces made marginal gains in Kamyanske
- Russian forces in the Donbas are complaining about more acute ammunition shortages
- The IAEA reports that Russian forces have mined parts of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in violation of the May 30, 2023 agreement
- Rosatom is bringing Reactor 4 at ZNPP to hot shutdown so Reactor 5 can receive deferred maintenance
- Ukrainian Storm Shadow missile strike on July 23 – 24 also struck the Russian military equipment repair base in Novostepove
- Ukrainian President Zelenskyy reported that the armed forces were preparing to enter the next phase of the summer offensive
- Russian Colonel Yevhen Vashunin was killed in action
- Tartarstan students, some as young as 15, are being forced to assemble Shahed-136 kamikaze drones
- Politico EU reported that Russia has bought \$225 million of body armor from Shanghai H Win; we have an exclusive report on why that isn't as bad as it sounds

- Support for Igor Strelkov Girkin has collapsed, with at least one close ally abandoning him
- We have praised Russian war correspondent Mariana Batkovna for her coverage despite operating within the restriction of the RIA – she's graduated to propagandist
- The Russian Ministry of Defense has ordered all remaining Wagnerites out of occupied Ukraine
- Russian Smerch rocket wounds six children and kills one
- American journalist Dylan Collins was wounded near Bakhmut
- South Africa has issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin

DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

1. We assess Russian complaints of ammunition shortages, which have spread from Zaporizhzhia to the Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction, are likely caused by the disruption of Russian logistics and the targeted destruction of large ammunition depots.

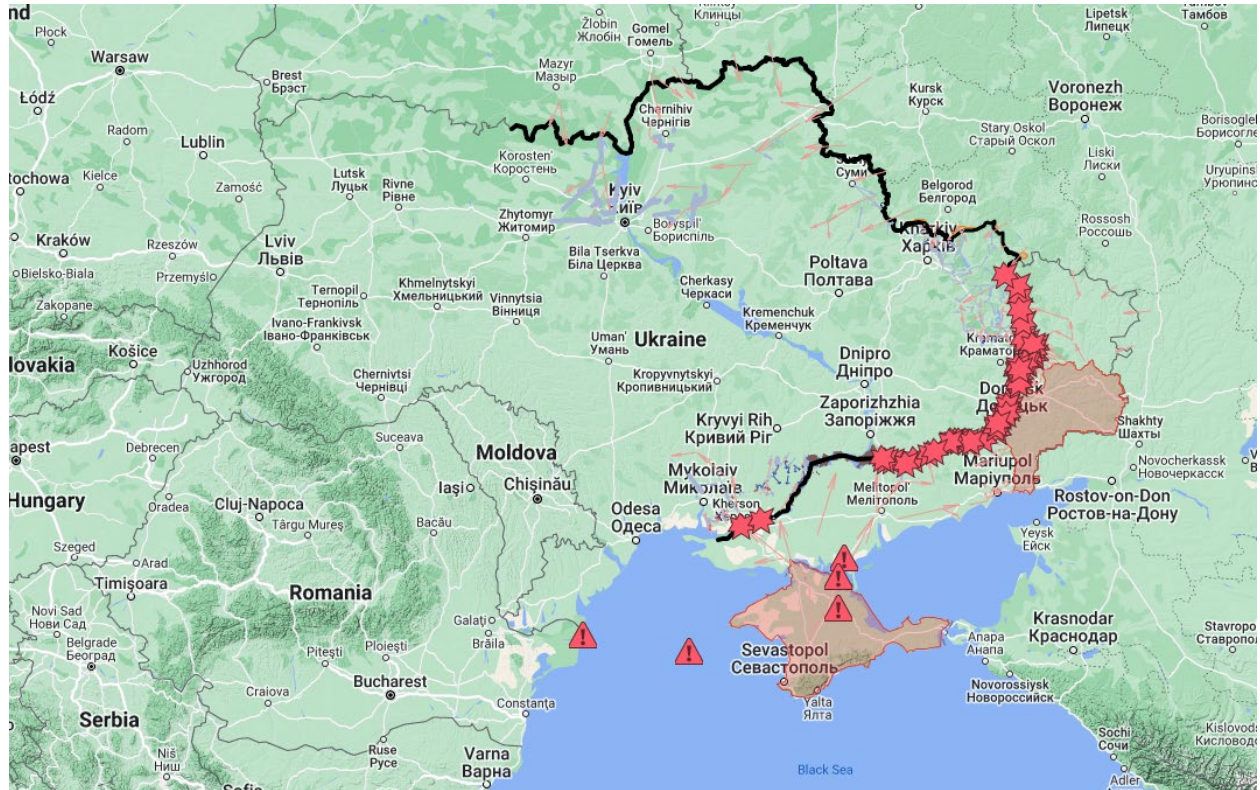
2. Our earlier assessment that the Russian Federation's defacto blockade of the western Black Sea would put shipping in the territorial waters of Bulgaria and Romania at risk was, regrettably, accurate, with leaders from Romania and Moldova expressing concern and outrage over Russian drone strikes on the Danube River. In our assessment, if the European Union, United Nations, and/or NATO do not respond with any action, preferably non-military, Russian aggression on the border nations of Ukraine will continue to expand and eventually lead to an international incident.
3. Ukrainian forces shift to an artillery-centric war of attrition against Russian forces, leveraging an advantage in range, accuracy, capacity, and in the Zaporihia region, firepower.
4. The current Ukrainian military activity is subordinate offensives and shaping operations, and the main operation has not started.
5. In our assessment, signals from Kyiv that the next phase of the summer offensive is being prepared is accurate and not part of disinformation directed at the Russian Federation or a public relations campaign targeting Western allies.
6. Despite Ukraine's plans to move to the next phase, we maintain that Western partners are not meeting their promised military training, heavy equipment, and

- ammunition dates, negatively impacting Ukraine's military capabilities.
7. While public support for former FSB Colonel Igor Strelkov Girkin has rapidly faded, it still indicates that Russian President Vladimir Putin has been weakened after the failed Prigozhin Insurrection and continues to face a small but very real possibility of another insurrection or coup attempt.
 8. 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.
 9. 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.
 10. 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.
 11. 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.

12. We assess the threats and suggestions made by Russian President Vladimir Putin and the self-declared President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, of potential military action against Poland as empty rhetoric. This is the last day for this entry unless Putin, Lukashenko, or Prigozhin continue their rhetoric.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

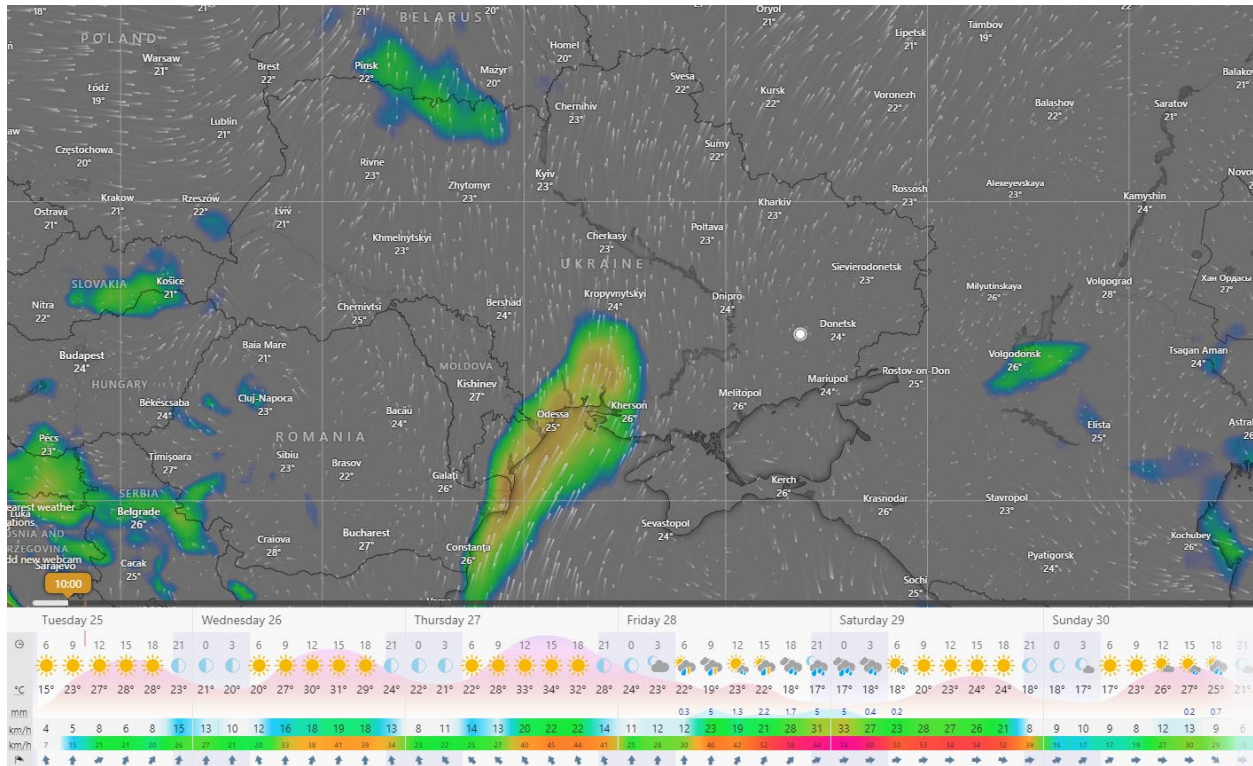
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



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.

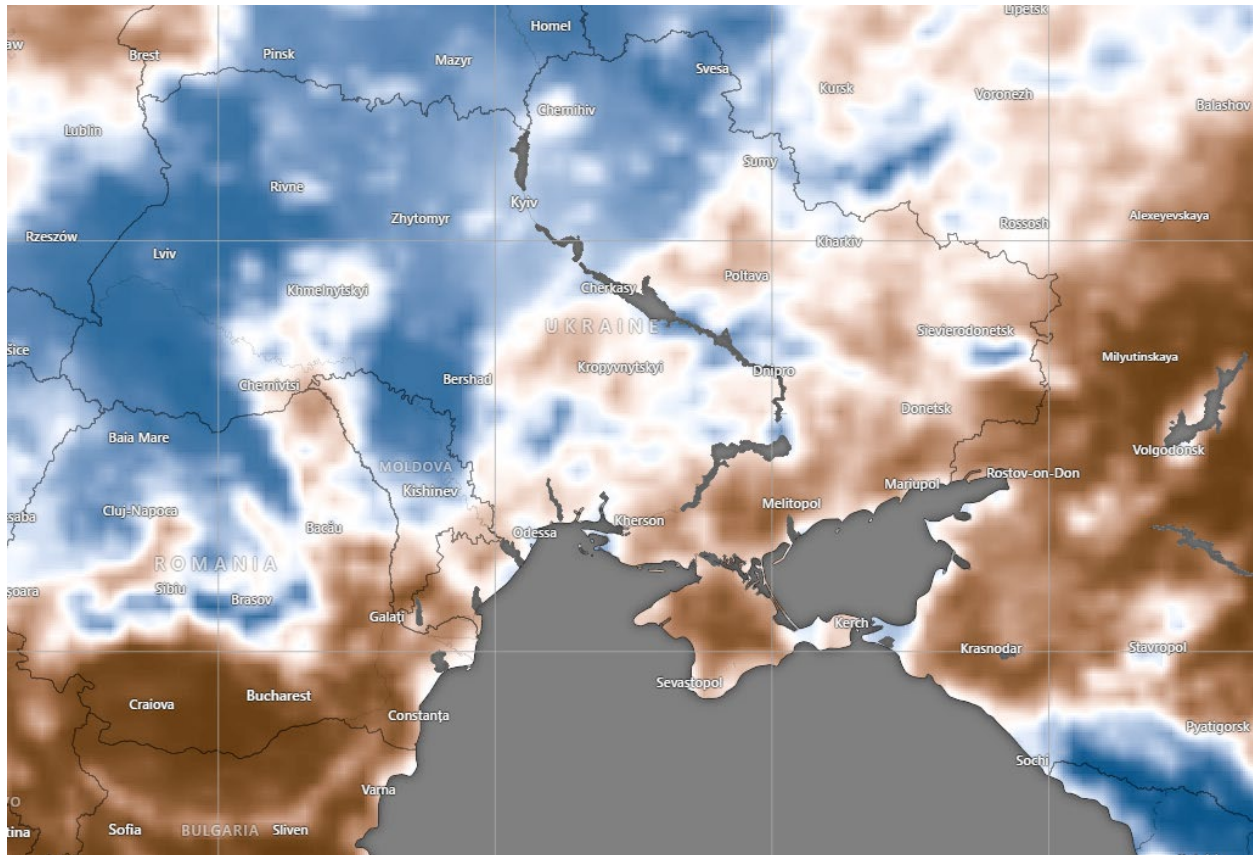
[Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)

UKRAINE WEATHER



Dry and hot weather is expected through July 28, with the ECMWF ensemble weather model predicting extreme weather for July 29. It is too far out to make a firm determination but winds up to 75 kph with heavy rain are possible as a cold front moves through the country. Through July 28, high temperatures will be from 25° to 37° Celcius, and low temperatures between 17° to 24°.

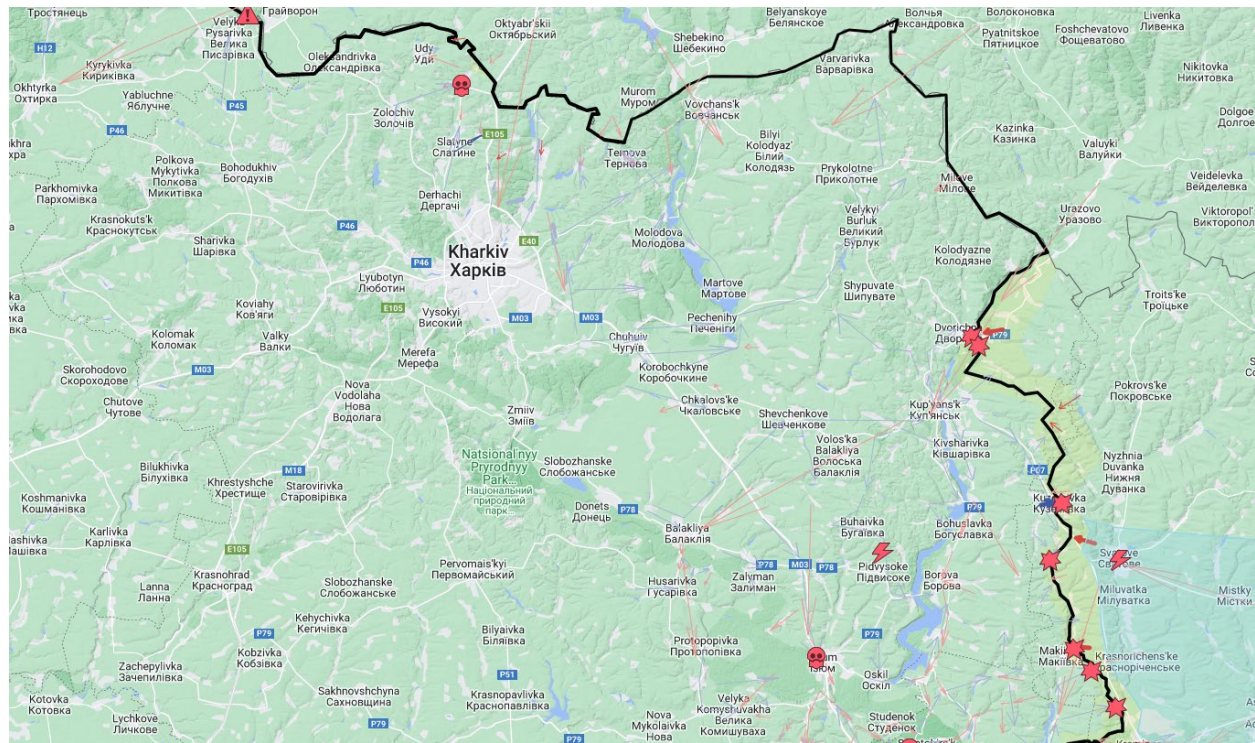
SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY



August 1, 2023, GFS has dried out, with soil saturation projected between 20% to 45% in the theater of war.

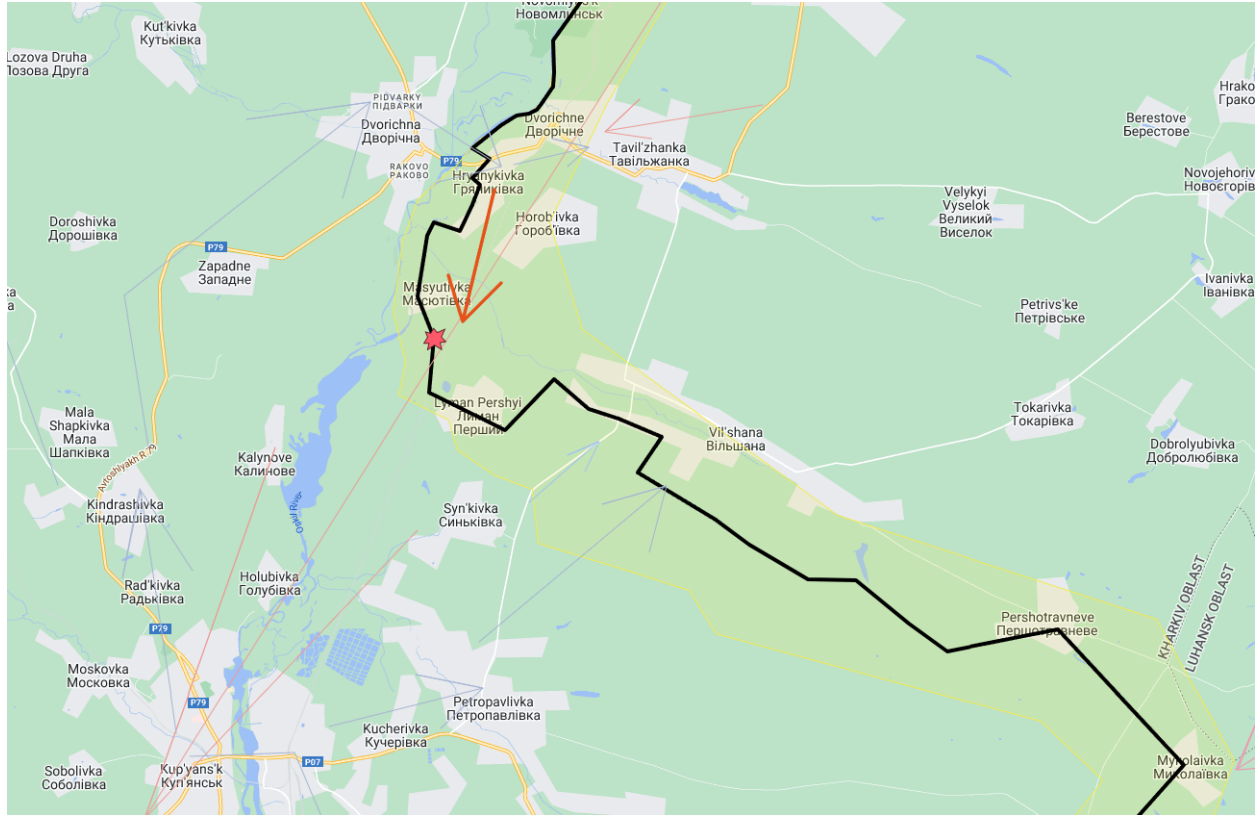
The soil saturation model does not consider the lakebed of the Kakhovka Reservoir. Soil saturation is between 5% to 35% Throughout the theater of war. Dry weather is expected through July 28.

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 Dvorychna and Kupyansk Operational Areas, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure



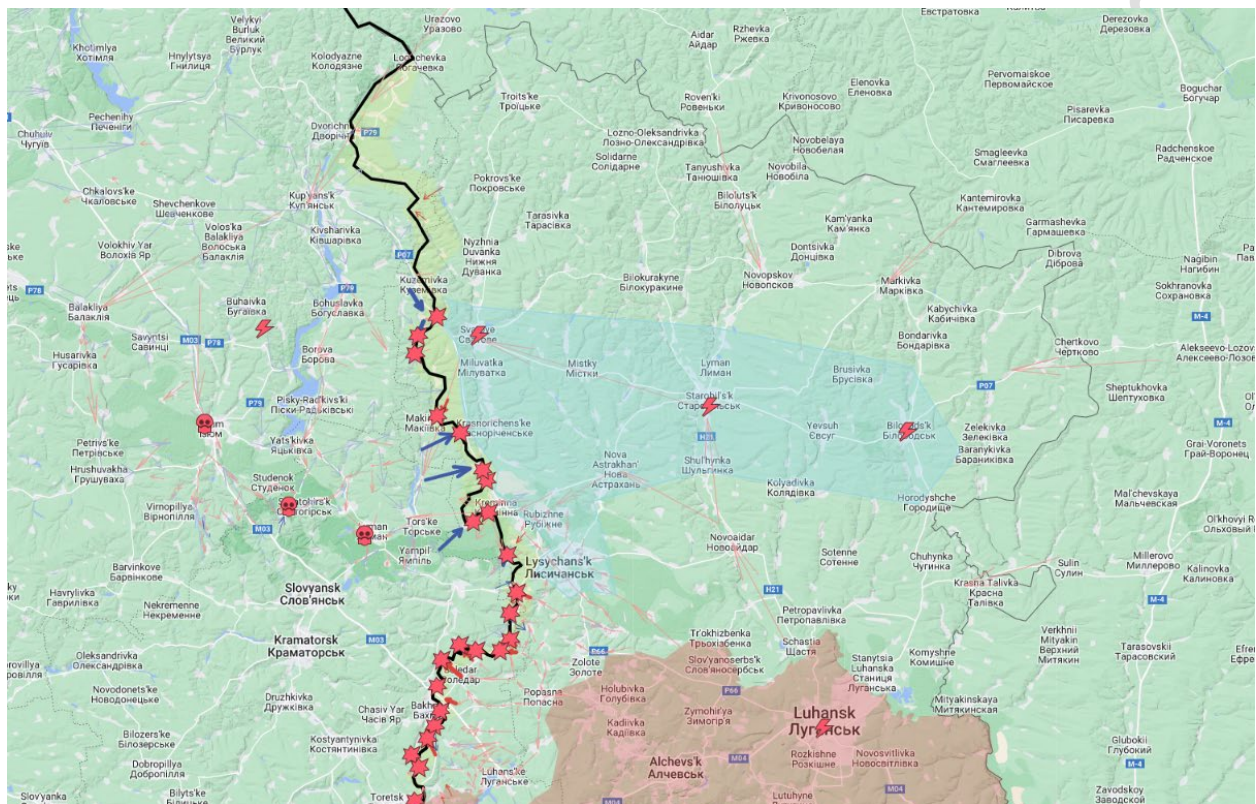
Dvorichna Operational Area

There were no specific or verifiable claims about advances of Russian forces in the Dvorichna AO, where the map remains unchanged. Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defense Hanna Maliar stated that fighting continued south of Masyutivka and that Ukrainian forces held the existing defensive lines.¹

¹ <https://t.me/annamaliar/954>

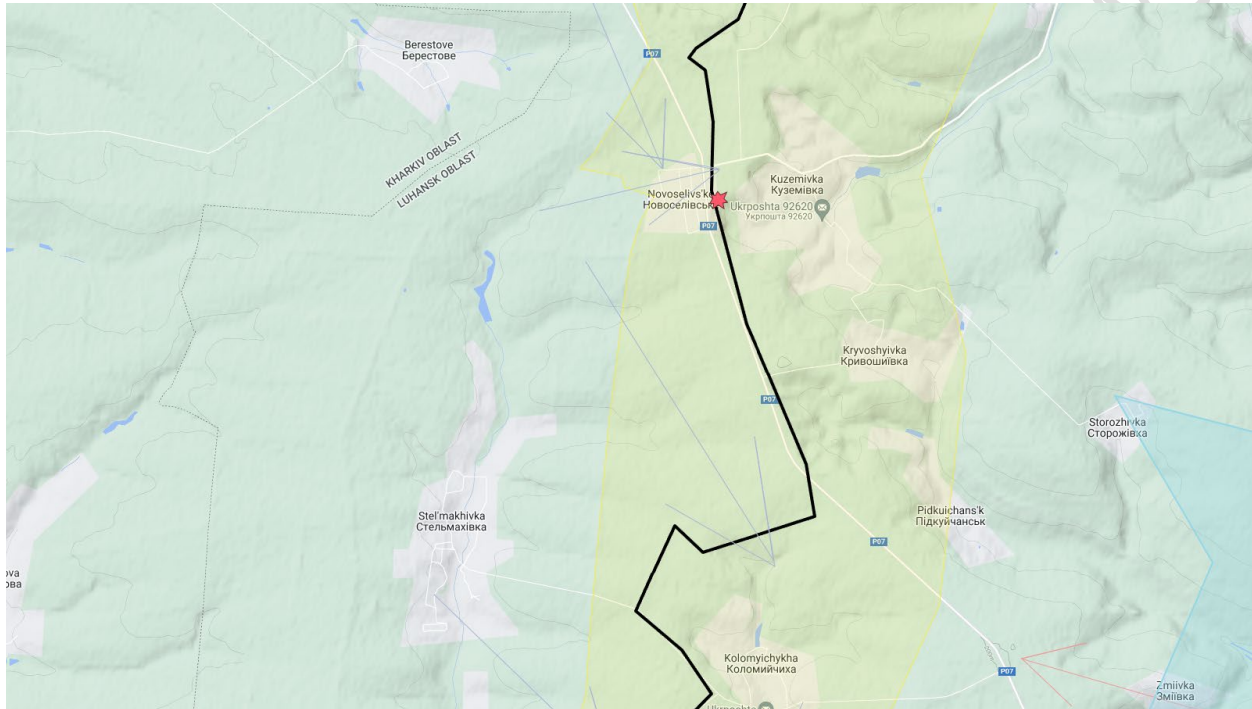
DONBAS REGION

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

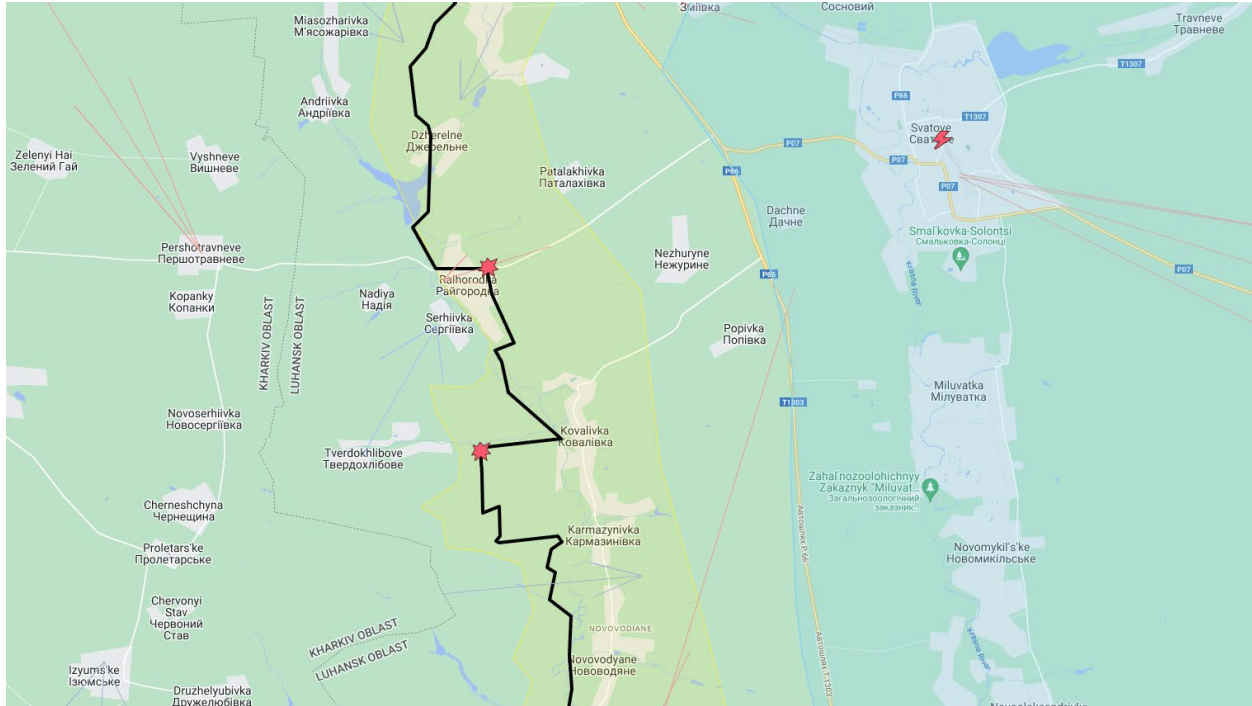
Ukrainian Objective: Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents



Svatove Operational Area

Russian forces were probing for weaknesses in Ukrainian defenses north and south of [Novoselivka](#).²

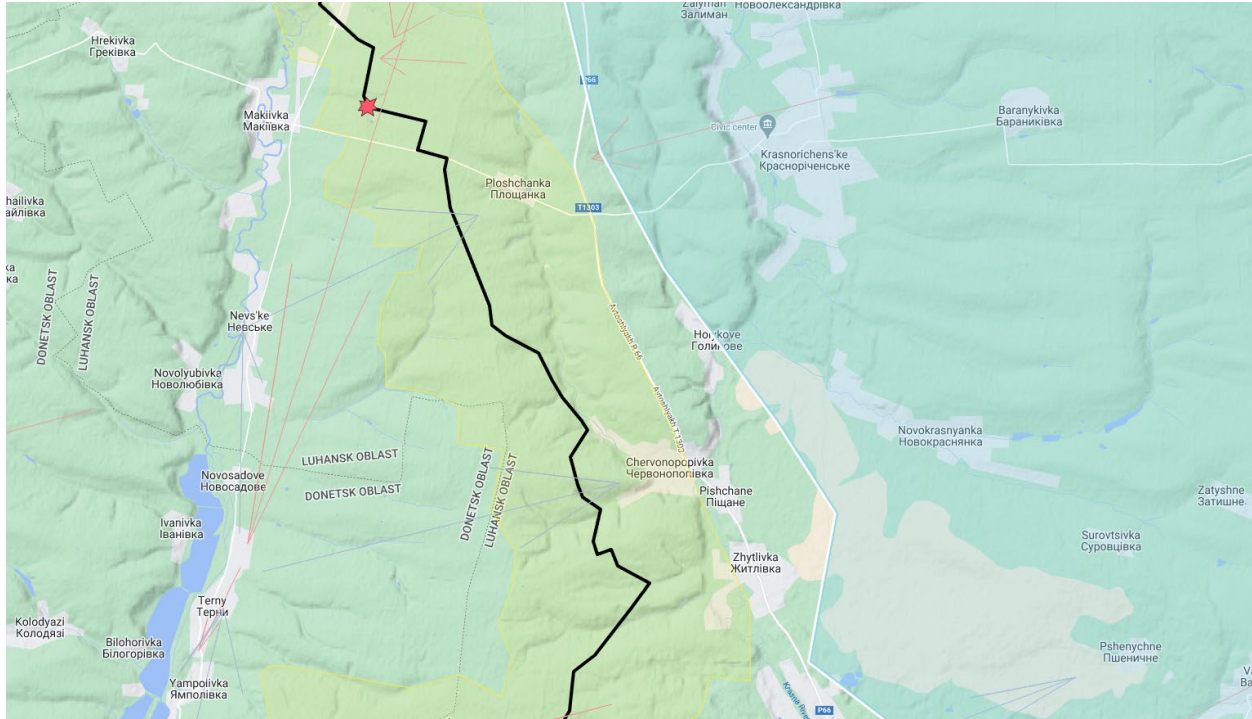
² <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17200>



A series of factors stopped the Russian advance from the Karmazynivka bridgehead in the direction of [Novojehorivka](#), including the Russian advance stalling out before reaching more advantageous positions and a Ukrainian brigade arriving to reinforce the second echelon.^{3 4}

³ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/12274>

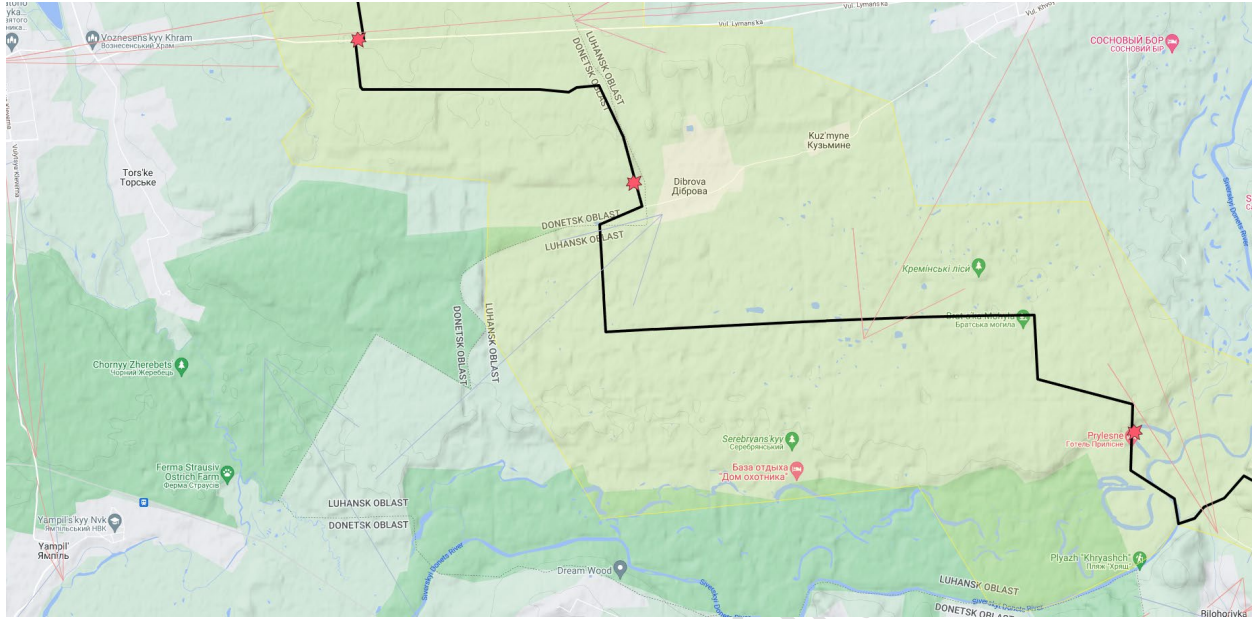
⁴ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17200>



Kreminna Operational Area

The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive west of [Ploshchanka](#).⁵

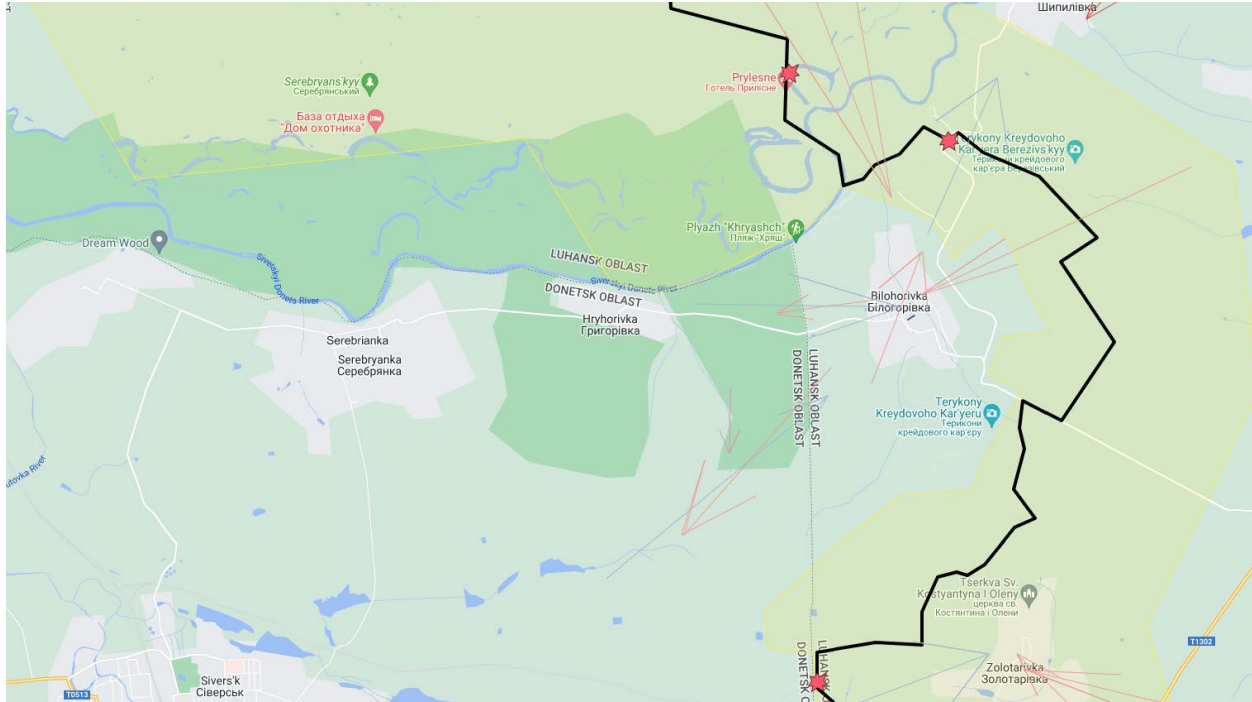
⁵ https://t.me/mod_russia/28579 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



Russian sources reported there was mutual fighting in the [Serebryansky Woods](#), with Russian mercenary milblogger WarGonzo claiming Russian forces had marginal success in the Siverskyi Donets River floodplain, west of Shpylyivka.^{6 7} No map change has been made, as control of the same defense points has repeatedly changed since February 2023.

⁶ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13957>

⁷ https://t.me/mod_russia/28579 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



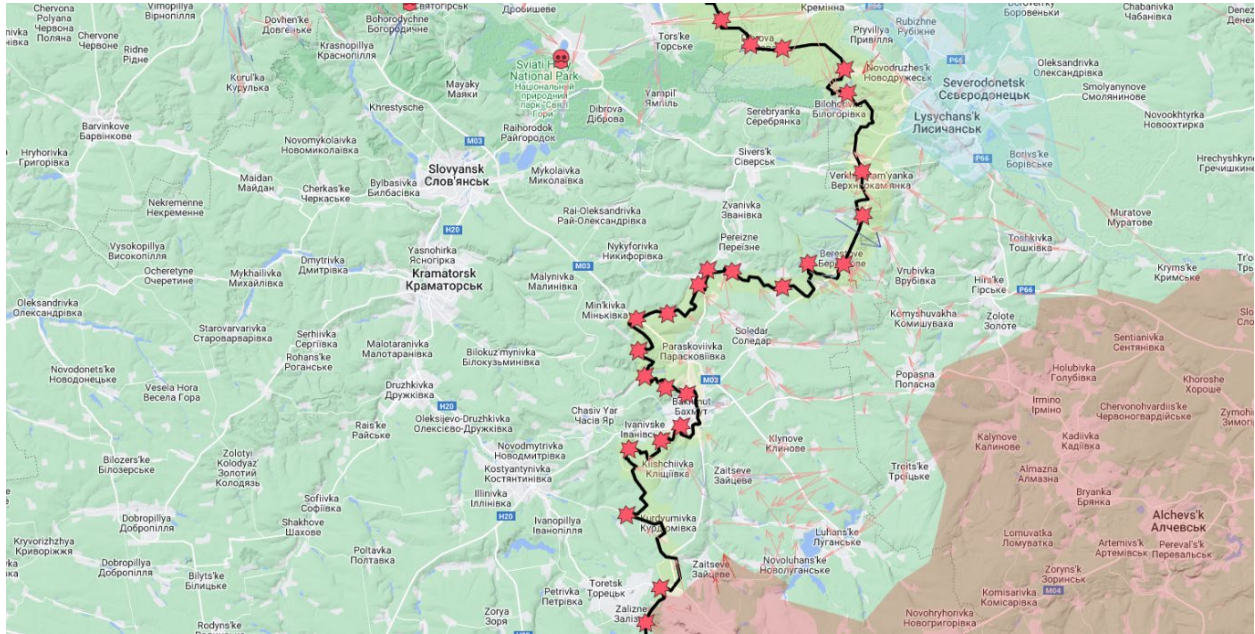
Lysychansk Operational Area

Russian sources also reported mutual fighting in the areas of [Bilohorivka](#) [Luhansk].^{8 9}

⁸ https://t.me/mod_russia/28579 [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

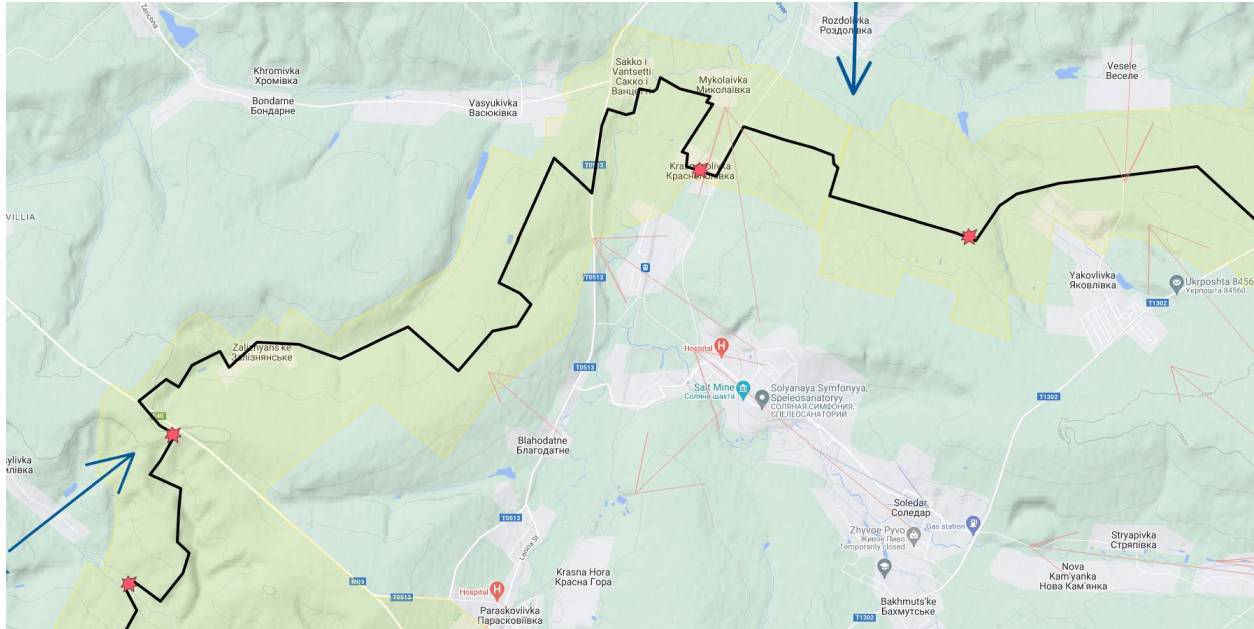
⁹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13957>

NORTHEAST DONETSK



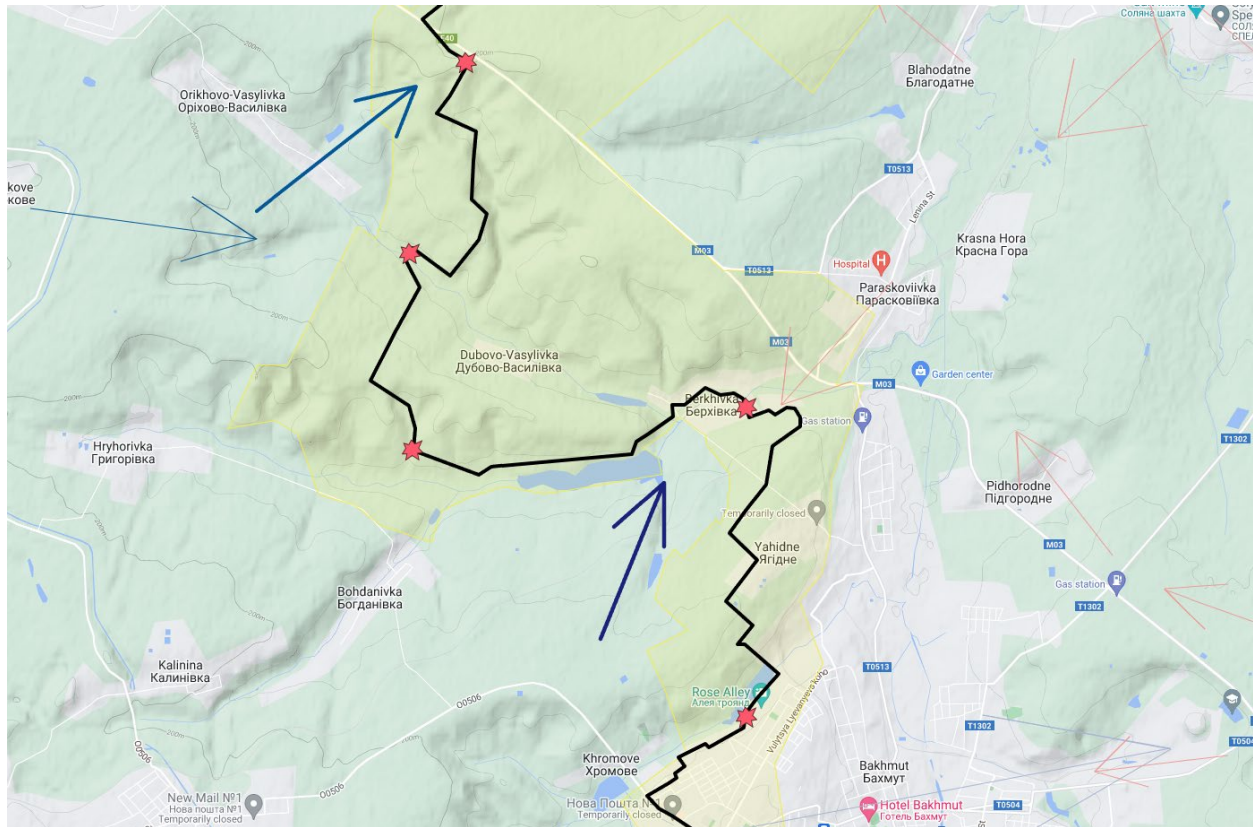
Russian Objective: Complete the capture of Bakhmut, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and capture the entire region, set conditions for September 2023 elections

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



Soledar Operational Area

For the second time in a week, Russian sources claim that Ukrainian troops were fighting in or had captured [Zaliznyanske](#). There weren't any Ukrainian sources, pictures, or videos to support the claim. Russian sources claimed the advance was made by Ukrainian armor, moving from the northwest. In our assessment, the settlement remains under Russian control, but given the repeated Russian reports, the garrison defending the village is likely under significant pressure and suffering from logistical challenges.

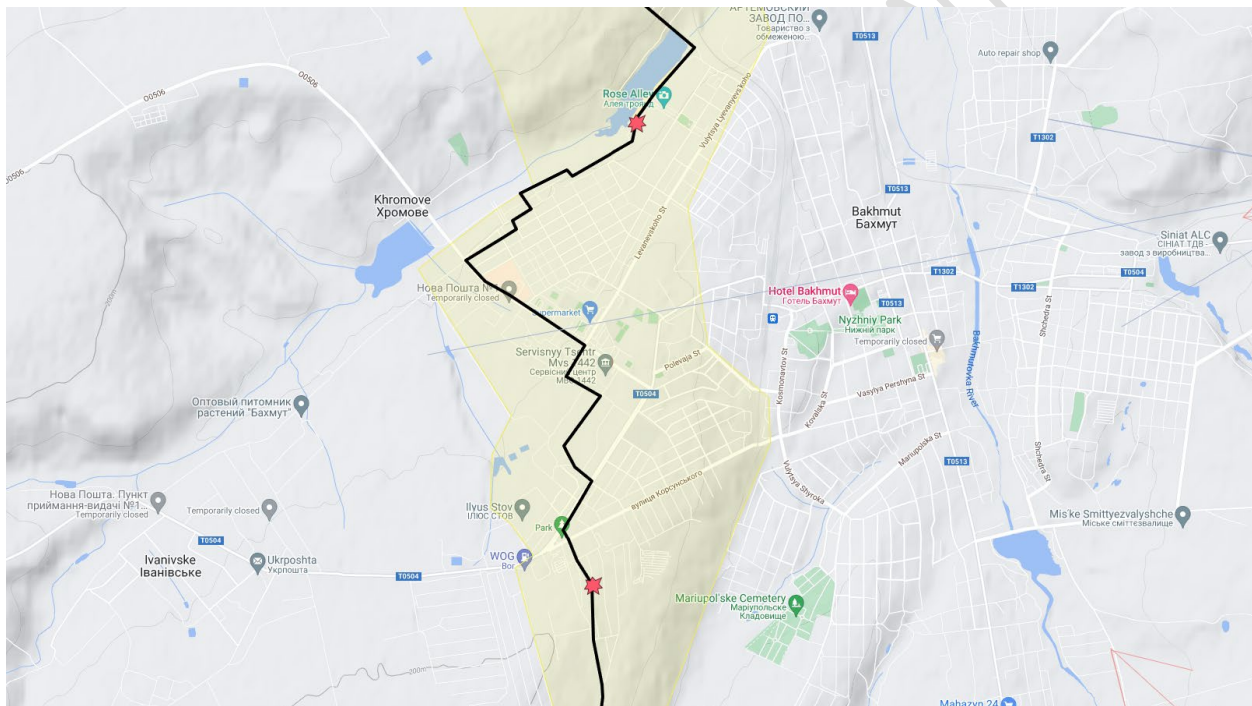



Bakhmut Operational Area

Russian forces continued their attempts to stop the advance of Ukrainian forces [on the M-03/E-40 Highway](#) in the direction of Dubovo-Vasylivka. We have additional intelligence but are withholding an update to support Ukrainian operational security (OPSEC).¹⁰ Russian forces were pushed out of the northern part of Berkhivka, which is now unoccupied. Ukrainian artillery and drone-delivered IEDs are holding Russian forces back, while the larger group of Russian troops motivated by the threat of blocking

¹⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10633>

forces make a Ukrainian advance impossible. He had previously assessed that Russian forces would do everything possible to maintain their salient at Dubovo-Vasylivka. Ukraine liberating the village would put parts of the Soledar AO at risk while enabling Ukrainian forces to establish stronger fire control within Bakhmut.



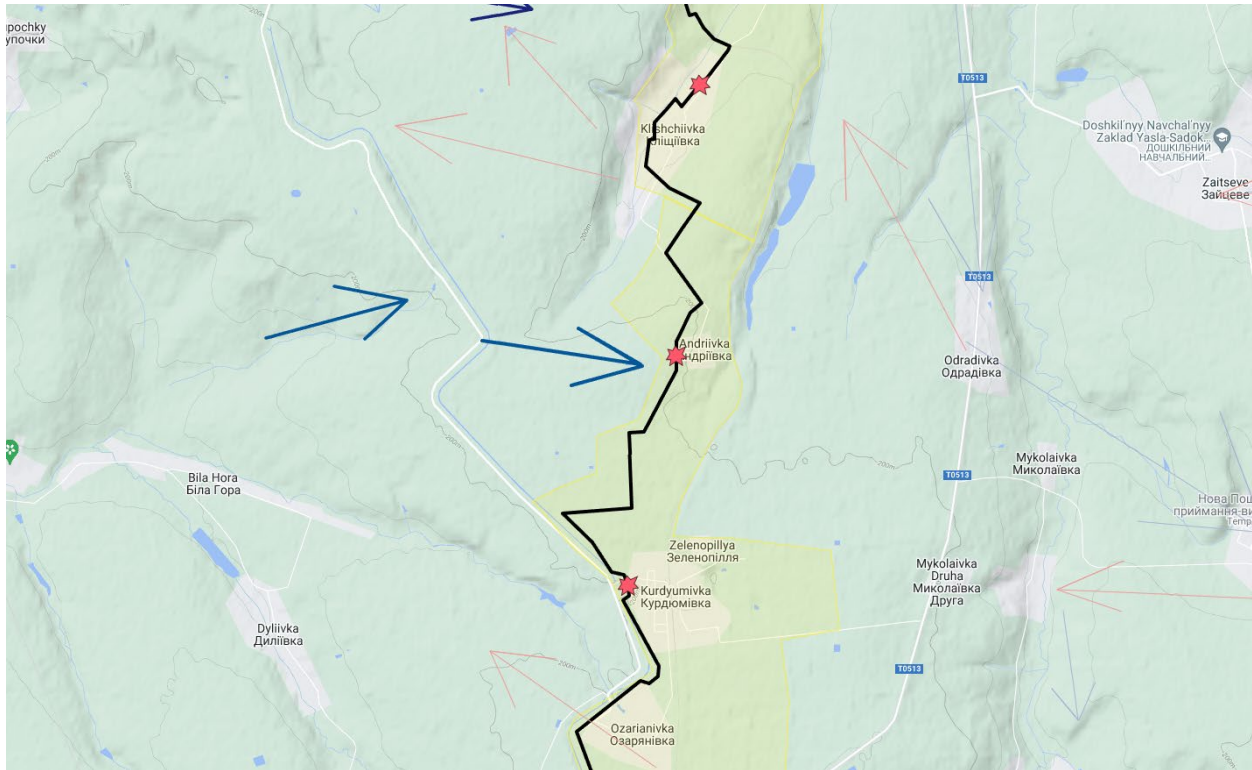
WarGonzo reported that a Russian attempt to push Ukrainian forces from the [administrative boundary of the Rose District](#) in Bakhmut failed.¹¹ A geolocated drone video of Bakhmut  [strongly suggests ongoing fighting in the Rose District](#). Starting at [Yuvileyna Avenue](#), the drone flies

¹¹ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13957>

northwest to the [communal garages and boiler house](#) in the southwest corner of Bakhmut and then pans north, showing fires burning and smoke on the edge of the Rose District. The video did not show any Russian troops, military vehicles, or equipment in the area, reinforcing that the region is a gray area with no significant Russian presence. We have additional intelligence but are withholding an update to support Ukrainian OPSEC.



Russian forces attempted to regain lost positions south of Bakhmut in the direction of [Ivanivske](#) and were unsuccessful.¹² In our assessment, Ukraine loosely controls 3% of Bakhmut in two areas, one south of Litak and the other west of Yuvileyna Avenue to the western edge of the Rose District, connected through Khromove.

¹² <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10633>



Klishchiivka Operational Area

A very graphic video confirmed that Ukrainian forces had entered the southwestern part of [Klishchiivka](#), showing a Russian platoon under direct fire from small arms, the destruction of a UAZ 452 Loaf, and a Russian infantry fighting vehicle evacuating the area leaving the remaining light infantry exposed and unprotected. A Russian platoon was combat destroyed, with at least a dozen Russian soldiers killed as they were caught in the open on the entrance road to the settlement. The video is NSFW, not for children; some may find it disturbing. You can watch the




video by   [clicking here](#).¹³ Based on Russian and Ukrainian reports, we moved the line of conflict into southwestern Klishchiivka, and from the heights to the west into the settlement. Ukrainian forces have taken full control of the heights southwest, west, and northwest of Klishchiivka, and its continued defense is untenable. Russian forces appear to operate under a no-retreat directive, so they will likely cling to the settlement until Russian airborne VDV, the 72nd Brigade of the 3rd Army Corps, Chechen Akhmat, and Storm Z penal unit combat potential is exhausted. Ukrainian forces hold complete fire control of the settlement, creating a technical encirclement.

Ukrainian forces also took the 197-meter high ground west of [Andriivka](#) and rapidly advanced to less than a kilometer from the village, taking it under fire control. At the time of publication, War Gonzo claimed that Ukrainian forces had broken through into Andriivka, but we could not verify the report.¹⁴ We will issue a Flash Report if we learn something more shortly after publication.

¹³ <https://twitter.com/region776/status/1683509696387506177>

¹⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13975>

We adjusted the map to move the hamlet into the gray area. Ukrainian forces also advanced south toward [Kurdyumivka](#), taking military control of additional areas east of the Siverskyi Donets-Donbas Canal.¹⁵

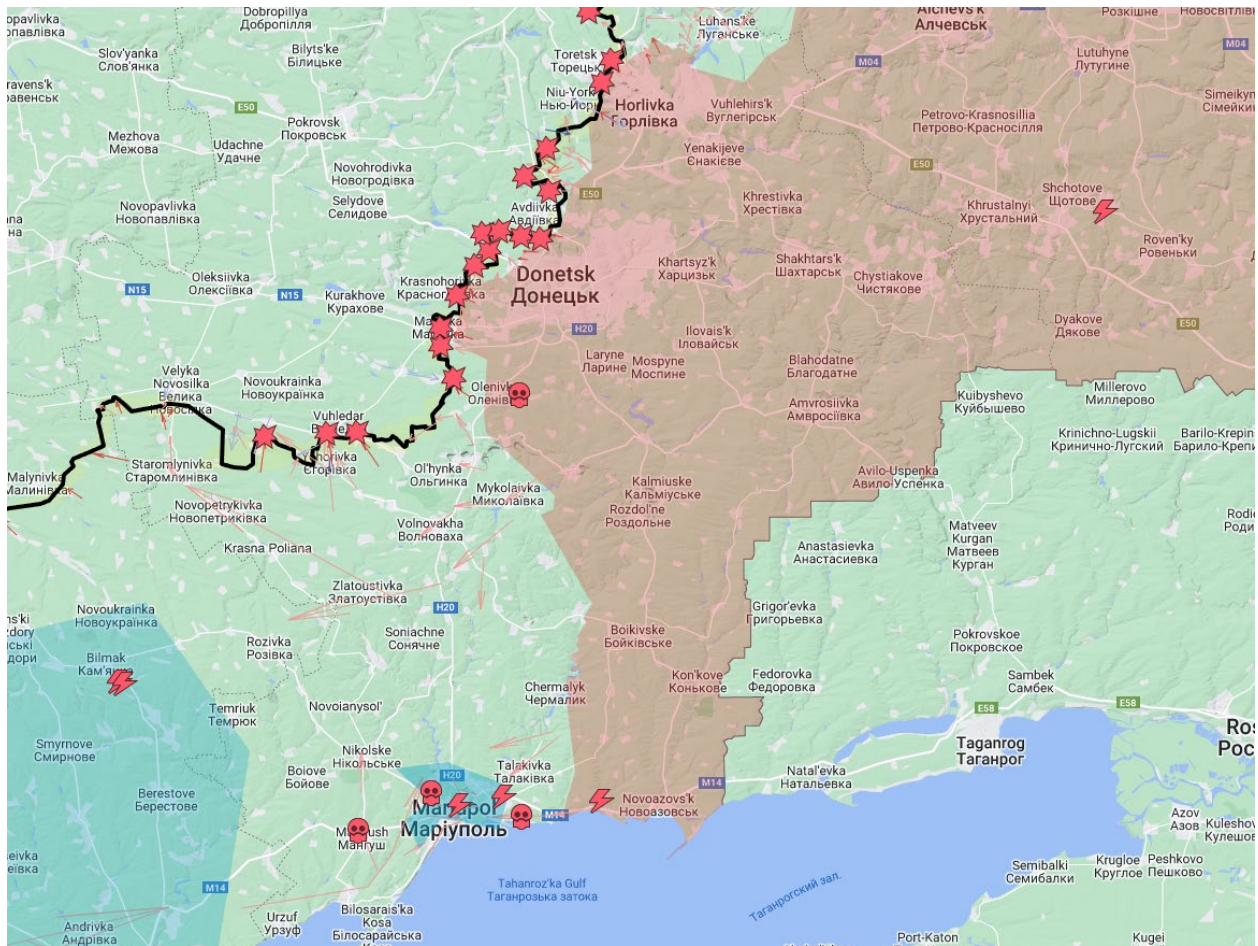
It's been a long time since we've been able to share a video from the Chechen TikTok Brigade, but we've got one. Colonel General Ramzan Kadyrov  [shared a video](#) as proof that all is calm in Klishchiivka and that the fighters of Akhmat are engaged against Ukraine.¹⁶ Two locations were geolocated. At 6 seconds, the video was recorded on [a dirt road in Mykolaivka](#), 7.5 kilometers from the fighting in Klishchiivka and east of the T-513 Highway. At 36 seconds, the video was likely recorded just [east of the railroad tracks](#) northeast of Andriivka and 2 kilometers east of Klishchiivka. The squad of Chechen forces comes under Ukrainian mortar fire shortly after shooting at nothing. Interestingly, Kadyrov didn't share this graphic video of wounded Kadyvorites evacuating from the Klishchiivka AO. Some people may find the video disturbing. You can watch it by   [clicking here](#).¹⁷

¹⁵ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17200>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1683672170361409537>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/region776/status/1683740393865904129>

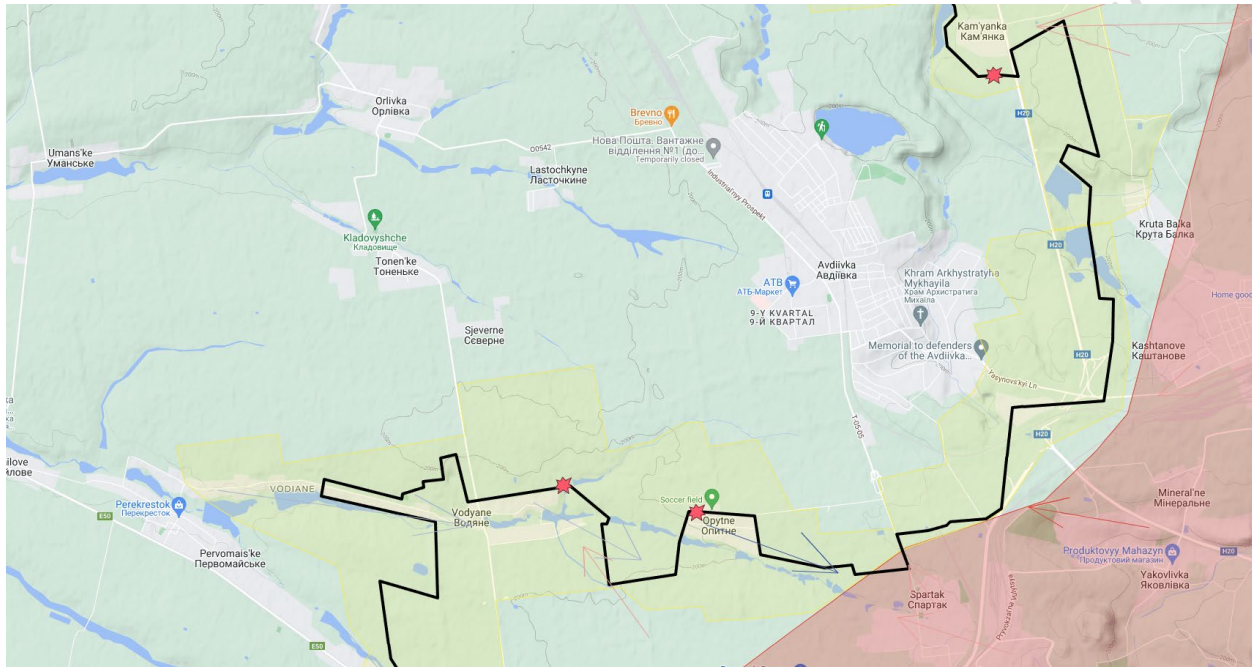
SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



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

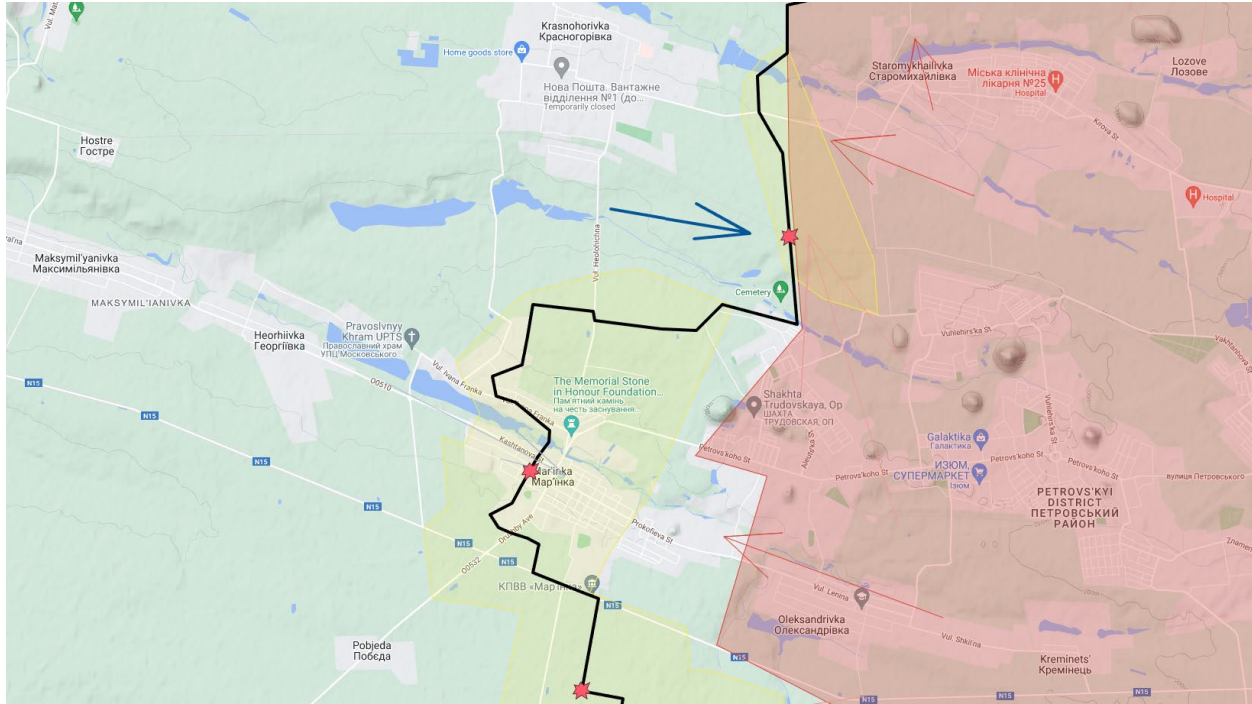


Avdiivka Operational Area

Fighting was limited west of Donetsk, with Russian attacks south of [Pervomaiske](#) and east of the Ukrainian firebase at [Nevelske](#) going nowhere.^{18 19}

¹⁸ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10633>

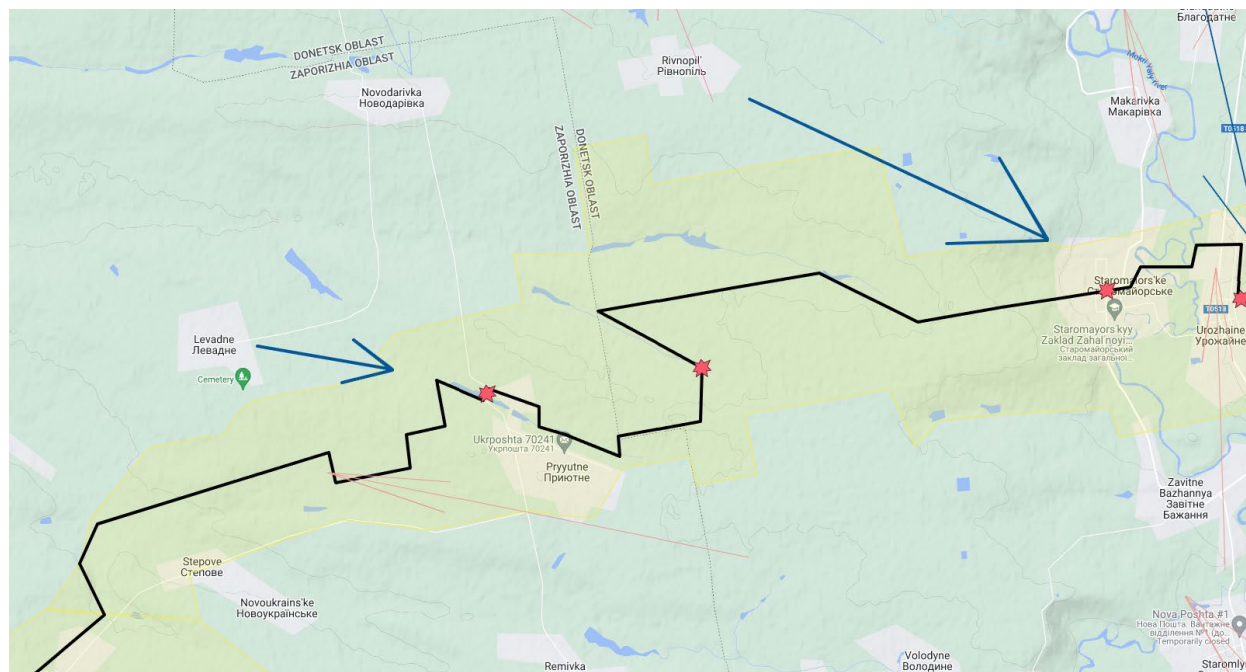
¹⁹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17200>



Marinka Operational Area

Russian attacks to the south of [Krasnohorivka](#) and in [Marinka](#) continued, with no change in the situation.²⁰

²⁰ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10633>



Lyubymivka-Staromlynivka Operational Direction

There weren't any significant changes south of Velkya Novosilka, with Russian troops complaining about ammunition shortages for artillery. Positional fighting continued in northern [Staromaiorske](#).^{21 22} Russian forces attempted to advance in the direction of [Rivnopil](#) and tried to counterattack north of [Pryyutne](#) without success.^{23 24}


²¹ <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17200>

²² <https://t.me/wargonzo/13957>

²³ <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/10633>

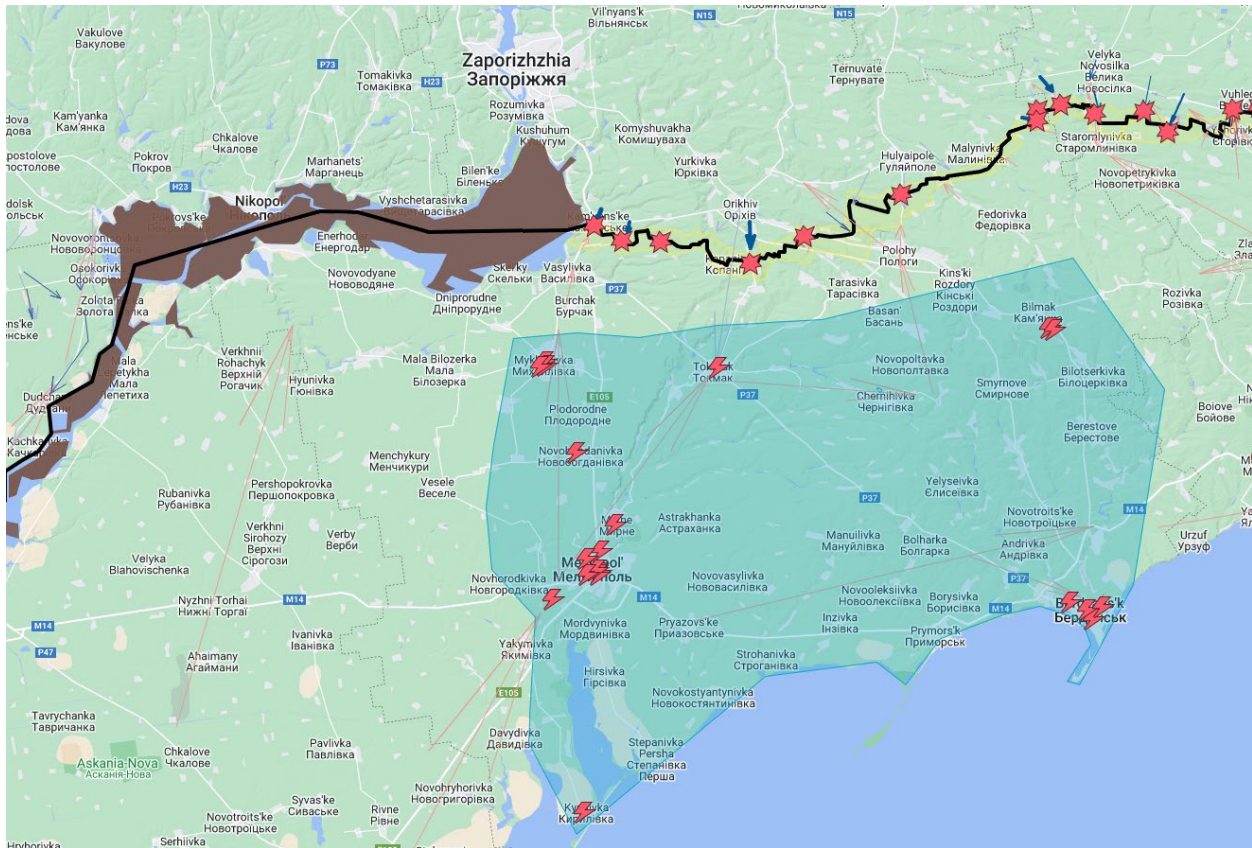
²⁴ <https://t.me/wargonzo/13957>

Occupied Donetsk

In Mariupol, Russian forces have  [started to mine the city bridges and are building defensive structures.](#)²⁵ Travel has been restricted at critical points, and fences are being erected.

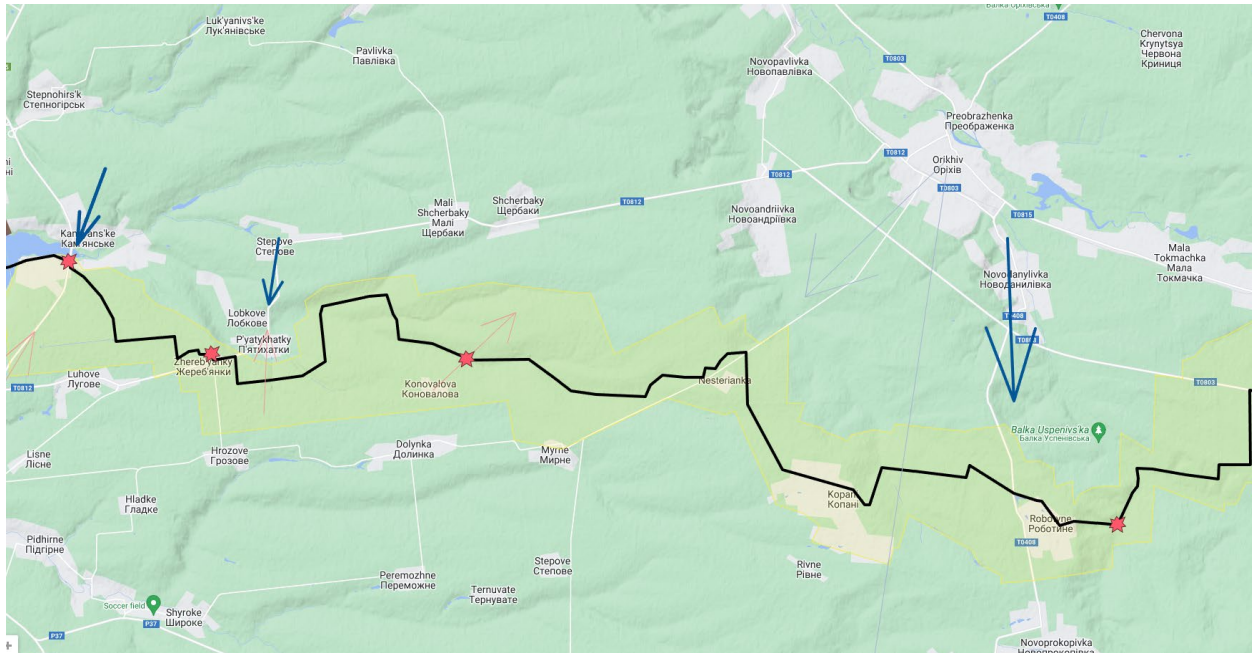
²⁵ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/11918>

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



Orikhiv Operational Area

The Ukrainian Military Media Center reports of a 1,700-meter advance east of [Robotyne](#) were confirmed, with Ukrainian troops starting to flank the Russian stronghold and building a wedge between Novopokrovka in the direction of [Verbove](#).²⁶ The map was updated, and the gray area north of Robotyne was reduced. Ukrainian forces are now 22 kilometers from Tokmak and, with further advances, will bring the Russian logistics and supply hub into the range of barrel artillery.

²⁶ <https://t.me/annamaliar/954>

Ukrainian forces also are bypassing [Zherbyansky](#), advancing over 1,000 meters in the direction of [Luhove](#). Ukrainian forces also made marginal gains in southeast [Kamyanske](#).

Occupied Zaporizhzhia

Insurgents in Tokmak reported there four rockets fired by HIMARS struck Russian positions.²⁷ There was no other information.

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released an update on the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) status.

During an escorted inspection on July 23, IAEA monitors observed directional mines in a buffer zone between the site's internal and external perimeter barriers. The mines were located in a restricted area that plant personnel didn't access and were facing away from the site. IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said, "As I have reported earlier, the IAEA has been aware of the previous placement of mines outside the site perimeter and also at particular places

²⁷ https://t.me/ivan_fedorov_melitopol/2652

inside. Our team has raised this specific finding with the plant, and they have been told that it is a military decision and in an area controlled by military. But having such explosives on the site is inconsistent with the IAEA safety standards and nuclear security guidance and creates additional psychological pressure on plant staff."

IAEA inspectors are still barred from inspecting the Reactors' roofs and turbine decks, despite repeated requests to access these areas. The IAEA is particularly interested in inspecting the turbine halls of Reactors 3 and 4.

The IAEA team reported they heard several distant explosions on July 22, which were likely related to the shelling of the Nikopol raion or Ukrainian air defense activity. Director General Grossi reported that over the weekend, the 750 kilovolt (kV) power connection to the plant failed for 12 hours due to a technical issue away from the plant. Power was provided by a 330 kV backup line from the Zaporizhzhia Thermal Power Plant (ZTPP), which was restored on July 1.

Despite protests from Ukrainian officials, Reactor 4 is being brought to a hot shutdown state, with the process expected

to be completed on July 25. Once it produces steam for plant operations, Reactor 5 will be brought to a cold shutdown state for required maintenance, which has been deferred for months. As reported previously, the Ukraine national regulator (SNRIU) issued regulatory orders to limit the operation of all six units to a cold shutdown state. The IAEA has recommended bringing temporary boilers to the plant, but Rosatom officials are resisting.

ASSESSMENT: While we remain convinced that a provocation and economic sabotage of ZNPP is all but inevitable, we trust the IAEA report that moving Reactor 4 to hot shutdown is necessary for plant maintenance and this change is not a prelude to an intentional accident or incident. On the contrary, this is necessary work to prevent a plant accident. We are increasingly concerned that IAEA inspectors are barred from the reactors' roofs and turbine halls.²⁸


²⁸ [International Atomic Energy Agency](#)

BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Black Sea

Operational Command South (OKS) reported eight vessels of the Black Sea Fleet were on patrol with no missile carriers.²⁹

Occupied Crimea

In addition to the three Storm Shadow missiles that struck  [Vesoloye Airfield](#), a fourth missile hit the Russian military equipment repair center at Novostepove just south of the largest Russian supply and logistics site in occupied Ukraine at Dzhankoi.³⁰ The Kerch (Crimean) Bridge was closed four times in the last 24 hours due to air raid alerts.

Crimean insurgents reported that the strike on Vesolvskye destroyed the inventory of Russian P-800 Oniks (Onix) surface-to-surface antiship ballistic cruise missiles.³¹

²⁹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106923>

³⁰ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106969>

³¹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106960>

Odesa

As a result of the Russian drone strikes on the Ukrainian grain terminal at Reni (Kiliia) and Izmail, seven people were wounded, with five in hospital, one critical.³² Six Romanian vessels were in the Ukrainian port of Reni at the time of the attack. The vessels evacuated the port and moved 500 meters to the Romanian side of the Danube River.³³ Twenty-nine vessels, including chemical tankers, are anchored near Izmail in the Danube or at the mouth of the river after the strike.³⁴ Insurance carriers are no longer protecting vessels landing at Ukrainian ports since the Black Sea Grain Initiative, and several carriers are considering not insuring vessels bound for Romanian ports after the July 23 – 24 attacks.

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

³² <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106949>

³³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7412725/>

³⁴ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7412722/>

Zakarpattia

A bridge over the [Teresva River near Bedevlya](#) collapsed after a dump truck carrying 45 tons of sand attempted to cross the structure built in 1957.³⁵ Five people were wounded. The bridge was slated to be repaired in 2021. The loss of the bridge will negatively impact Ukrainian logistics.

Cherkasy

Ukrainian officials reported that three Shahed-136 kamikaze drones struck the region, with two landing in fields and a third causing minor damage.

Zhytomyr

Ukrainian officials also reported that a Shahed-136 kamikaze drone struck "infrastructure" in the region, with no other information.

³⁵ <https://t.me/suspilnenews/22769>

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.

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 Region

Four Russian soldiers were wounded in Zhuravlyovka on July 23 when a Ukrainian kamikaze drone struck them.³⁶

THEATERWIDE

In an interview with the German newspaper BILD, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Ukraine had been carrying out “offensive actions quite carefully” but was preparing to increase operational tempo.³⁷ A spokesperson for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Colonel Sergey Baranov, said that 90% of Russian casualties had been caused by artillery since the offensive started, and these actions are in preparation for larger military action.

ASSESSMENT: Just 48 hours ago, we almost published, “In our assessment, the attacks of the last two to four weeks represent the main Ukrainian offensive operation, which has bogged down to excessively conservative tactics and delays in receiving promised training, equipment, and munitions.” To say we’re glad we avoided sharing an assessment that would have aged poorly is an

³⁶ <https://t.me/vchkogpu/40187>

³⁷ <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/37536>

understatement. We maintain that Ukraine has continued shaping operations and subordinate attacks, and we can identify two operational areas where larger offensives could potentially begin. The Ukrainian government has hinted that new equipment and fresh brigades are ready for imminent deployment.

President Zelenskyy held another Stavka, but before you get excited, it wasn't a closed-door meeting, and there was a public readout. The staff of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief discussed the current battlefield situation and the planning of offensive and defense actions, the destruction of Ukrainian cultural sites, and unblocking the Black Sea to continue grain shipments.

The State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) of Ukraine arrested Yevhen Borysov, the former Odesa military commissar, after he went on the run last week. Borysov is accused of embezzling over \$6 million and dereliction of his military duty.³⁸ The disgraced commissar snaggged in Ukraine's crackdown on corruption as part of its European Union membership requirements, used burner phones, swapped cars and locations to avoid arrest, but was located in Kyiv.

³⁸ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5548

Prosecutors will ask that he is held without bail due to his flight risk.

United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Luminita Odobescu, by phone after Russian drone strikes on the Danube River.³⁹ The Romanian Foreign Minister said they discussed strengthening the strategic partnership of both countries, the security of the Black Sea region, and continuing grain exports from Ukraine.

Romanian President Klaus Iohannis tweeted (or is Xeeted now?), "I strongly condemn the recent Russian attacks against the Ukrainian civilian infrastructure on Danube, very close to Romania. This recent escalation pose [*sic*] serious risks to the security in the Black Sea. It also affects further Ukrainian grain transit and thus the global food security."⁴⁰

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

³⁹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7412741/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7166360/>

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 24, 2023. 11,373 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,018 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main Battle Tanks	2024	244	8.30:1	↓
Medium Duty Tanks	140	344	0.41:1	—
Armored fighting Vehicles	928	301	3.08:1	↓
Infantry Fighting Vehicles	2569	654	3.93:1	↓
Armored Personnel Carriers	335	312	1.07:1	↓
MRAPs	46	128	0.36:1	—
Infantry Mobility Vehicles	199	342	0.58:1	—
Command and Communications Vehicles	244	16	15.25:1	—
Engineering Vehicles	326	73	4.47:1	↓
Towed Artillery	261	140	1.86:1	↓
Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars	463	186	2.49:1	↓
MLRS	246	50	4.92:1	↓
SAMs	133	117	1.14:1	↑
Mobile Radars	39	69	0.57:1	↑
EW/ECW	44	4	11.00:1	—
Winged Aircraft	84	69	1.22:1	↓
Helicopters	106	31	3.42:1	—
Naval Vessels	12	26	0.46:1	—

RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR

Russian Colonel Yevhen Vashunin, commander of the Russian unit known as the "Leningrad Regiment" because it was formed mainly from the mobilized people of St. Petersburg, was killed in combat in Ukraine, according to the spokesperson of the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg, Oleksandr Belskyi.⁴¹

ASSESSMENT: Vashunin is the sixth regiment, brigade, or army commander killed in the last six weeks. Because of Russia's top-down command structure, senior commanders will go to the front if there is confusion among subordinates, orders aren't being followed, or too many field officers have been killed. The accelerating pace of senior officers killed and competent commanders sidelined after the failed Prigozhin Insurrection is damaging the Russian military's command and control structures.

Several hundred students of Alabuga Polytechnic College in Tatarstan have been forced to assemble Iranian Shahed-136 kamikaze drones. Students as young as 15 are involved in the production and are forbidden to discuss the work. Underage female students from African countries, who are

⁴¹ https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/5553

called derogatory names by the staff, are used for menial labor, such as washing the floor and cleaning up the garbage in the workshops.⁴²

According to customs records obtained and reviewed by the website Politico EU, Russian buyers have declared orders for hundreds of thousands of bulletproof vests and helmets made by Shanghai H Win. Russia has imported \$225 million worth of body armor and \$100 million in drones from China, compared to \$5 million worth of drones purchased by Ukraine.⁴³


EXCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT: After reviewing the Shanghai H Win product catalog, all Class IV hard plate body armor from the company is PE/ceramic.⁴⁴ The armor is lightweight, and the design helps minimize spalling. Class IV body armor is supposed to stop 5.56x45 and 7.62x39 rounds traveling under 3,150 feet per second and take a single hit by 30.06. However, PE/ceramic plates are not recommended against 5.56x45mm NATO M855 steel core, 7.62x39 Russian Federation/Soviet M43 steel core, or other green tip, black tip, or modern tungsten core rounds. The kind of rounds that are being shot at Russian troops.

⁴² [Novaya Gazeta](#)

⁴³ <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7166369/>

⁴⁴ <https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1683658387450642433>


The second issue with PE/ceramic is that the capabilities become more limited as you move closer to the edges. Finally, even in storage, the service life is five years, and PE/ceramic hard plates are sensitive to drops and temperature extremes.



Shanghai H Win linked to two videos showing the capabilities of their PE/ceramic plates,  [which failed the United States NIJ Class IV test](#), causing 47 mm of deformity after being hit by a single 30.06 round, and a single black tip 5.56x45 round almost achieving a full penetration.⁴⁵

While any body armor is better than no body armor, the materials purchased by Russia are inadequate for military applications. We maintain China is providing material support to Russia by selling body armor. However, if Russia is going to buy non-military-capable materials, it can waste its shrinking military funds on inferior products. The larger concern is using shell companies and parallel imports to hide the purchase of consumer drones. It is worth noting that DJI has said it doesn't want any combatant using their drones for warfare, and Ukraine is also using parallel

⁴⁵ https://youtu.be/vLx_cxXnPOY

imports and out-of-country purchases to bypass restrictions on direct sales. The truth does matter.


Et tu Grubnik? During an interview, one of former FSB Colonel Igor Strelkov Girkin's allies, retired Russian Colonel and former State Duma Deputy Vladimir Grubnik, said that the  [creation of the Angry Patriots Club \(PKK\) was all Girkin's idea](#).⁴⁶ He added there was no formal decision-making structure, and he was not involved with the organization. It was a shocking stab in the back. Grubnik was facing charges for discrediting the Russian Federation Armed Forces earlier this year, and Girkin rallied widespread support to end the investigation.

A blurred video recorded a Russian commander arguing with rioters from the Storm-Z unit, Russian 34th Brigade,   [threatening to shoot them](#) and later threatening to tie them up and take them to the front line unarmed. During the rant, a single gunshot was heard.⁴⁷

We knew this day would come. Russian war correspondent Mariana Batkovna, who previously provided brutally honest coverage and intimate stories of Russian soldiers

⁴⁶ <https://twitter.com/wartranslated/status/1683525043626680324>

⁴⁷ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1683434448061181952>

and life under occupation, has transitioned to Russian propagandist Mariana Batkovna. Appearing on Russian state media, the PMC Wagner-trained propagandist talked about  [how "safe" and convenient the land route from Russia to Crimea is](#) and how tourists shouldn't be afraid beyond the occasional appearances of main battle tanks crossing the highway.⁴⁸

Private Military Company Wagner Group aligned Telegram channel Gray Zone reported that the Russian Ministry of Defense has ordered all Wagnerites out of occupied Ukraine by August 1, 2023. Some mercenaries have remained in camps in Luhansk.⁴⁹



WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Russian attacked Kostyantynivka with Smerch rockets fired by multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS), wounding six children and killing an 11-year-old as they played near the edge of a reservoir.⁵⁰ There are graphic photos of the

⁴⁸ <https://twitter.com/wartranslated/status/1683535113710100481>

⁴⁹ https://t.me/grey_zone/19666

⁵⁰ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/07/24/7412730/>

aftermath that some may find disturbing. You can view them by   [clicking here](#).⁵¹

Dylan Collins, a 35-year-old American video journalist working for the French news agency AFP, was wounded in a drone attack while reporting the work of a Ukrainian artillery unit near Bakhmut. Collins suffered numerous shrapnel wounds, which aren't life-threatening, and is conscious. AFP Europe director Christine Buhagiar said the agency was investigating the circumstances of the incident. We will withhold our assessment until more information about the circumstances that led to the injuries is shared.

GEOPOLITICS

The government of South Africa announced that they will execute the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin if he ever sets foot in the country.⁵² South African President Cyril Ramaphosa resisted issuing the arrest warrant after Moscow threatened to declare war on South Africa if they

⁵¹ <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/106997>

⁵² [News 24 – South Africa](#)

supported the ICC warrant. Seventy nations were invited, including the leaders of 54 African nations.

ECONOMICS

Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece, and Nikolai Denkov, Prime Minister of Bulgaria, have discussed the issue of transit of Ukrainian grain during a meeting in Athens. This issue has become especially acute against the backdrop of Russia leaving the grain deal and attacking Ukrainian ports.


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.