

MH17 Witnesses Tell BBC They Saw Ukrainian Jet. BBC Deletes Video.

Shortly after the tragedy, a BBC Russian correspondent interviewed numerous eyewitnesses who described seeing a second aircraft in the sky moments before MH17's fatal crash. The BBC pulled the report. Why?

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Global Research, November 30, 2014

[Russia Insider](#) 12 November 2014

On July 23, two days after the Russian Ministry of Defense presented a radar track of a Ukrainian SU-25 fighter climbing to within three kilometers of MH17, the BBC's Russian service [aired a report by correspondent Olga Ivshina](#).

The report originated when Ivshina and her cameraman went in search of the field outside the town of [Torez](#), where the US government claims an SA-11 BUK surface to air missile was launched at the Boeing 777 on July 17.

Instead of finding witnesses who saw or filmed with camera phones [a SAM launch plume that would look like this test firing of an SA-11 in Russia](#), what Ivshina found instead were people who heard two loud explosions in the sky and described Ukrainian fighter jets near the MH17 crash scene. As Ivshina described in the opening of her report, these Donbas locals were certain the Boeing airliner was shot down by the Ukrainian Air Force.

As RT reported in late July, the same night the video was posted on the BBC's Russian service website the British-taxpayer funded network immediately took the video down. The '404 not found' ghost URL of the video can still be found [here](#), but the content is gone. Russia Today reported on the removal [here](#), including the Russian blogosphere's suspicions that this was a blatant act of censorship by the British government in order to protect Kiev.

[Jan Leder, Managing Editor of the BBC Russian Service, denied that the BBC had engaged in politically motivated censorship of eyewitness testimony on July 24](#). Mr. Leder wrote in Russian that Ivshina's report failed to meet BBC editorial standards because it lacked context, specifically the opinions of experts. While Mr. Leder's statement doesn't specify what sort of 'experts' Ivshina should have consulted for her report to meet BBC standards, we note that nearly all experts cited by Western mainstream media determined to prop up Washington and Kiev's Narrative of a SAM shoot down have insisted that Ukraine's Su-25 ground attack jets are incapable of shooting down a Boeing 777.

Journalists and self-described experts such as Aviation Week's Bill Sweetman, [RFE/RL's Glenn Kates](#), and New York University Prof. [Mark Galeotti](#) all insist Russian and Donbas eyewitness claims about a Su-25 shooting down MH17 are just Kremlin propaganda. Both Sweetman and Kates ignored pushback in comments left below their articles at Aviation Week and RFE/RL that [Ukraine possesses a modernized M1 variant of the Su-25](#) capable of

reaching the altitude [the Russian Ministry of Defense described in its July 21 press conference](#).

[Sweetman's article of July 24 is a particularly egregious example of obfuscation](#), as he bizarrely insists no Ukrainian SU-25 pilot would be capable of putting on an oxygen mask above 23,000 feet. Sweetman also sarcastically refers to Wikipedia edits of the Su-25's service ceiling after MH17 was shot down, ignoring [abundant evidence that Su-25M1s were operational](#) and capable of flying at altitudes up to 10,000 meters months before the Ukrainian Civil War.

This columnist also notes that the pro-Kiev government Twitter feed Ukraine Reporter (@StateofUkraine) [reported several hours before the MH17 shoot down on July 17](#) that the Ukrainian Air Force lost a Su-25M1 to Novorossiia rebel MANPADs. [As Russia Insider contributor the Saker noted in early August](#), Ukraine's Su-25s are more than capable of firing [R-60](#) and possibly [other air to air missiles](#) at an easy target like an airliner. Contrary to the misleading narratives of Sweetman, Kates and Galeotti, a Ukrainian pilot would not have needed to maintain the same altitude or air speed as the Boeing 777 in order to shoot the plane down.

To date, neither Sweetman, Kates, nor Galeotti, or any other Western mainstream media journalist that we're aware of have bothered to address the BBC Russian report. Like inconvenient facts in George Orwell's [Ministry of Truth](#) modeled after the BBC where the novelist worked during World War II, the eyewitness accounts pointing to a Ukrainian shoot down of MH17 have been flushed down the memory hole. Fortunately, we have the Internet to keep examples of inconvenient reports alive online and highlight when Western media organizations try to bury stories on behalf of their governments.

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