

US-NATO War Games on Russia's Doorstep, Russia's Military Drills and Deployments

The "Russian Military Map" series

By [South Front](#)

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

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[War Agenda](#)

The "Russian Military Map" series describes the ongoing military developments in Russia, shows the approximate locations of Russian military groups and drills.

This year NATO has increased the number of military exercises near Russian borders from 90-95 to 150 and the number of reconnaissance aviation flights has increased by 9 times since last year. Iran's "nuclear problem" has been settled, but the United States is continuing the development of a missile defense system in Europe aimed almost exclusively at Russia. The Russian Federation must take military and technical measures in response to the U.S. missile "defense" system in Europe, NATO military activity and other security threats in Russia's backyard.



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Developments:

1. July 27, Russia has no plans to deploy Tu-22M3 bombers in Crimea. Russian Air Force Commander Colonel General Viktor Bondarev stated Russia had enough warplanes in Crimea "to ensure clear blue sky over us." According to earlier reports, ten Tu-22M3 bombers were temporarily deployed in Crimea during a surprise combat readiness check this spring.

2. July 29, Russia's new-generation anti-aircraft missile systems S-400 (NATO reporting name: SA-21 Growler) have been deployed on the Kamchatka Peninsula in the Russian Far East. The combat hardware has assumed combat positions near the port cities of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, which serves as the Pacific Fleet's primary naval base, Yelizovo, which hosts the Fleet's air base, and Vilyuchinsk, which accommodates the Fleet's submarine base.

The S-400 surface-to-air missile system is designated to destroy any air targets at a distance of up to 400 km (248.5 miles) and at an altitude of up to 30 km (18.6 miles) and create defense in depth. The missiles have become operational in the Russian Armed Forces this year.

3. July 30, Russia's airborne forces are building up the strength of airborne assault divisions

to complement them with a third regiment. A rapid reaction force will be created on the basis of airborne troops. According to a source in the General Staff, the paratroops' strength will grow noticeably from 45,000 men to 60,000. The source also mentioned plans for restoring the 104th airborne assault division and creating a new airborne assault brigade.

4. July 29, The Russian Defense Ministry reportedly plans to create 2 new battle tank armies, 1st Guards Tank Army and 20th Guards Combined Army, in the Western Military District by December 1 and another combined army will in fact be formed anew. The new battle tank armies will be the first to receive the newest Armata tanks and Kurganets infantry fighting vehicles.

Armata is a heavy unified platform serving as a base for a tank and an infantry combat vehicle. The new battle tanks have received unmanned turrets, all digital control and isolated armored crew capsules. The new electronics will make the tanks a part of a network which also includes drones, electronic countermeasure systems and targeting devices. The creators say it will take less than a minute after a target is detected for its exact coordinates to be transferred to weapons crews. The key armament of Armata is a 125-mm gun, but the use of a 152-mm gun is not ruled out for the future. Serial production of these tanks is expected to begin in 2017-2018.

5. July 31, Aircraft fitness in the Russian Air Force will reach 80% for the first time ever by the end of this year, a spokesman for Russia's Defense Ministry reported on Friday. The task was set first for long-range aviation and then for all aviation forces. Meanwhile, a series of incidents including technical failures have occurred with Russian military aircraft. Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu has said the breakdown incidence in military aviation continued to be a major problem.

6. A regiment of air defense missile systems S-400 Triumf will be formed for the newly-created Arctic Command and deployed on the Novaya Zemlya archipelago this year. Last year an air defense unit based in the Kola Peninsula was armed with S-400 systems and Pantsir-S1 systems were deployed on the Novosibirsk islands.

The new strategic Arctic Joint Strategic Command went operational on the basis of the Northern Fleet in December 1. The Arctic Strategic Command area of responsibility includes Russian territories in the Arctic, including the Novaya Zemlya Archipelago. The new military command is formed on the basis of the Russian Northern Fleet and it is planned to take control of various units, vessels and formations, previously part of the Western, Central and Southern military districts.

7. Orlan-10 drones were delivered to the permanent service base - the Anadyr-Ugolny aerodrome of the Eastern Military District in Chukotka. It is planned to organize a trial combat duty of the drone unit in Chukotka for objective terrain monitoring, drilling combat training tasks in the near maritime zone and performing flights in the area of stationing of the military district's Arctic units on the Wrangel Island and Cape Otto Schmidt. The drones will ensure sea navigation security and conduct coastal air reconnaissance over Russian territorial waters. The first trial flights of the drones in the low temperature conditions were conducted in early 2015.

ORLAN 10 is an unmanned aerial vehicle produced for the Russian government

at the Special Technological Centre of Saint Petersburg.



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8. The Project 1356 lead frigate Admiral Grigorovich is scheduled to join the Russian Black Sea Fleet and reach Sevastopol on the Crimean peninsula by the end of this year. The Russian Black Sea Fleet has already completed forming crews for the Project 11356 frigates Admiral Grigorovich, Admiral Essen and Admiral Makarov. The crews of the small missile-carrying ships Serpukhov and Zeleny Dol built for the Black Sea Fleet in the Volga Republic of Tatarstan have also been formed and started training.

Drills:

9. July 22, Russia's Strategic Missile Troops command is holding a snap check of operational status of the Irkutsk missile unit. Two regiments equipped with Topol mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles are involved in snap checks. Topol missiles are capable of hitting strategic targets at long distances. Most of the attention is focused on practicing deployment of regiments and launch of missiles.

10. July 24-29, A missile brigade of the Central Military District was alerted in a combat readiness check in the morning of July 24 and delivered to the Totsky shooting range. The brigade held firing exercises using Iskander-M tactical missile systems. More than 500 servicemen and 50 units of military equipment took part in the drills.

11. July 27, A heavy motor rifle formation held military drills at the Totsky shooting range. About a thousand servicemen destroyed a large base of simulated militants with the support of army aviation and artillery.

12. July 29, Military exercises involving Mikoyan MiG-31 (NATO reporting name: Foxhound) interceptors and Kamov Ka-27 (Helix) helicopters have started at the Yelizovo airbase in the Far Eastern Kamchatka Territory. During the training flights, the pilots have been practicing various assignments as part of fighters' pairs and wings using helicopter radar equipment and airborne armaments. The crews will also drill parachute and landing operations.

13. July 29, The Guards Missile Brigade of the Baltic Fleet's coastal troops based in Russia's westernmost Kaliningrad Region held drills with simulated multiple and single missile launches. The brigade's units practiced destroying a simulated enemy force's subversive groups and reconnaissance teams, acting amid an air raid, crossing contaminated terrain, various obstacles and natural barriers and moving in the conditions of fires. The missile units were supported by Mil Mi-24 (NATO reporting name: Hind) attack helicopters and Sukhoi Su-24 (Fencer) bombers from the Baltic Fleet's naval aviation.

Mil Mi-24 is a large helicopter gunship and attack helicopter and low-capacity troop transport with room for eight passengers.

Sukhoi Su-24 is a supersonic, all-weather attack aircraft/interdictor developed in the Soviet Union. This variable-sweep wing, twin-engined side-by-side two-seater carried the USSR's first integrated digital navigation/attack system. Contemporary Su-24M models have gone through a life-extension and updating program, with GLONASS, upgraded cockpit with multi-function

displays (MFDs), HUD, digital moving-map generator, Shchel helmet-mounted sights, and provision for the latest guided weapons, including R-73 (AA-11 'Archer') air-to-air missiles.

14. July 29, The Russian destroyer Admiral Ushakov has practised gun fire in the Barents Sea against coastal targets.

15. July 31, Motor rifle and artillery units of Russia's Central Military District have ended their military drills at the Totsky shooting range near Orenburg in the south Urals, the district's press office reported on Friday. The drills involved over 3,000 personnel and more than 400 pieces of the armor, the press office said.

16. August 20-28, In accordance with a relative China-Russia agreement, the two countries will conduct a joint naval exercise in the Peter the Great Gulf and the Sea of Japan. The exercise tasks will include: organization of joint defense and joint military operations against the surface forces of a simulated enemy. Also, the sides will conduct a joint landing operation. A key purpose of the drills is to further enhance the sides' capabilities of jointly coping with maritime security threats.

17. September, Air defense systems S-300 Favorit and S-400 Triumph, as well as combined mediumrange surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft artillery weapon system Pantsir will be used in the CIS exercise Combat Commonwealth-2015. The exercise will be held at the Ashuluk test site, near Astrakhan, in September.

Production:

18. 7 Russian corporations have entered [top 100 biggest military](#) companies of 2015 based on the income records: №11 – Almaz-Antey, №14 – United Aircraft Corp, №23 – Russian Helicopters, №26 – United Engine-Building, №31 – Tactical Missiles, №52 – Uralvagonzavod, №69 – RTI.

19. Russia's Systemprom Concern (subsidiary of the United Instrument Manufacturing Corporation) is developing a universal robotic platform that can transform into a combat robot, a vehicle machine or an electronic warfare system. The vehicle's testing will begin at the end of the year. By installing a combat module on the platform it will be possible to create a strikereconnaissance vehicle, and installing electronic warfare systems on it will make it a combat EW vehicle. A communications relay or a mine clearance system can be mounted on the chassis. The robotic platform can also use military modules with small arms, electronic warfare modules, and reconnaissance models with flying components.

Depending on the type of design and armor, its weight can reach 7 tonnes, and the vehicle is capable of carrying of up to 2 tonnes of payload. "The vehicle's length is about 3.5 meters, with a width of less than 2 meters. It has been designed to be transported by an army truck or air dropped.

20. September, Russia's newest tank on the Armata platform will be put on display on the second day of the Russia Arms Expo – 2015 (RAE-2015) exhibition, which will be held in Nizhny Tagil in Russia's Urals region.

21. Vladimir Kozhin, Russian President Vladimir Putin's aide on military-technical cooperation, stated that Russia is assembling a more advanced version of its S-300 surface-

to-air missile defense system to begin its shipment to Iran by 2016. Also, Moscow is modernizing some parts of the system and changing contract terms such as the pricing. In April, Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan said that Iran will receive the Russian air defense systems S-300 in 2015. The sides will approximately sign the contract for the delivery of S-300 air defense systems during an upcoming Iran officials' visit to Moscow this year.

The Russian Federation is raising the fitness of its Armed Forces, border security and strengthening the groups in key points and directions of its interests as the Black Sea and the Arctic regions. The ongoing success of Russian military reform has already caused concerns in the US/NATO headquarters actively militarizing Europe and exercising aggressively drills at the Russian borders. The development of the Russia-China military cooperation in [the Indo-Pacific region](#) will raise these concerns further despite the fact that US/NATO roughly expansion in the Russian's and China's spheres of influence became a main trigger of contemporary situation. Russia's aim is to show the capability to successfully solve the problems in its operational zone by military forces in case of NATO's choice to go further in military escalation. Thus, it gains the ground for diplomatic solutions of the crises by showing the NATO hawks that military pressure cannot be a winning strategy against Russia.

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