

Russian Military Transformation Tracker, Issue 5: 15 December 2021 – 15 June 2022

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Russian Military Transformation Tracker has been reporting structural changes in the Russian military since August 2018. You can see all issues of the Tracker at [this page](#). For a comprehensive geographic view of the Russian military structure see our [Interactive Map of the Russian Military Forces](#). For a wider spectrum of key events concerning the Russian armed forces up to 20 February 2022, and for the events of the Russo-Ukrainian War see [Rondeli Russian Military Digest](#).

The full-scale stage of the Russo-Ukrainian War launched by Moscow in the early hours of 24 February 2022, and still continuing at the time of writing, put the Russian military structure in a state of flux.

The invasion involved almost all of the Russian land armed forces, from all the four military districts as well as the Northern Fleet Command. Consequently, units from the Russian Eastern and Central Military Districts were transferred to the European part of Russia, and deployed within Ukraine as well as in the bordering Russian regions. Forces of the Eastern Military District along with airborne units and others were deployed in Belarus, and invaded the northern Ukraine from there, leaving Belarus only after the Russian defeat in the Battle of Kyiv.

With the future length and character of the war unknown, it was unclear at the time of writing which, if any, of these enormous transfers of Russian units might become permanent. Besides, Russian armed forces had suffered very severe mauling in the war with Ukraine, and had been forced to improvise in the war conditions. At the same time, Russian economy was suffering heavily due to the war and the Western sanctions. It was therefore unclear what would be the ultimate impact of the war on the Russian military structure.

With these and other limitations, the present brief provides the information concerning structural changes in the Russian military that could be discovered in the reported period.

The Central Russia

By June 2022, Russia [reportedly](#) was in the process of [establishing](#) the **3rd Army Corps** in the Western Military District, for use in the war against Ukraine. It was unclear whether the Corps was supposed to have wartime purposes only or to become a permanent part of the Russian military structure. The 3rd Army Corps reportedly was to have its base in Mulino, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast.

It is worth noting that besides military units that are part of the permanent structure of the Russian armed forces, Moscow has also employed in the Russo-Ukrainian War: Rosgvardiya (National Guard), mercenaries of the Wagner Group and other similar organizations, mobilized residents of the regions of

Ukraine occupied by Russia (such mobilization was particularly massive in Donbas), and volunteers from various administrative regions of the Russian Federation.

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As reported in February 2022, on [1 December](#) 2021, the 6th Tank Brigade (Mulino, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast) of the 1st Tank Army (HQ in Bakovka, Moscow Oblast) was [expanded](#) into the new **47th Tank Division**. One of the new division's units is the **26th Tank Regiment**, also based in Mulino.

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In late 2021, a new **air regiment** including a squadron of MiG-31K attack aircraft with Kinzhal hypersonic missiles was [established](#) at the **Savasleika air base** in Nizhny Novgorod Oblast. Prior to the regiment's establishment, Savasleika hosted a squadron of MiG-31BSM and MiG-31BM interceptors. The new regiment belongs to the Long Range Aviation Command.

The Western Frontier

The establishment of the **56th Air Assault Regiment** (Feodosia, Russian-occupied Crimea, Ukraine) within the 7th Air Assault (Mountain) Division (HQ in Novorossiysk, Krasnodar Krai) was [announced](#) on 29 December 2021. The new regiment was created on the basis of the 56th Air Assault Brigade and transferred to Crimea from Kamyshin (Volgograd Oblast).

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According to new [information](#) regarding the structure of the 8th Army's [recently established](#) 20th Mechanized Division (HQ in Volgograd), besides the **255th Mechanized Regiment** (Volgograd) the division also includes the **33rd Mechanized Regiment** (Kamyshin, Volgograd Oblast), as well as a **self-propelled artillery regiment** and a **separate tank battalion**.

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By January 2022, a new **separate missile battalion** armed with **Iskander-M** short-range ballistic missile systems had been [established](#) within the Black Sea Fleet's 22nd Army Corps in occupied Crimea, Ukraine.

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As of January 2022, Russian armed forces had [completed](#) the formation of the Southern Military District's **40th Missile Brigade** (Znamensk, Astrakhan Oblast) establishing within it a second battalion of Iskander-M short-range ballistic missile systems.

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By January 2022, the **47th Missile Brigade** (Korenovsk, Krasnodar Krai) of the 8th Army (HQ in Novocheerkassk, Rostov Oblast), established in 2020 and originally armed with Tochka-U systems, [had been rearmed](#) with **Iskander-M** short-range ballistic missile systems.

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By [mid-June](#) 2022, Russians had begun to [employ](#) the third **armored train, “Yenisey”**, that has been noted to exist within their armed forces.

Previously known two Russian armored trains, serving in the Southern Military District and also named after Siberian water features, are “Amur” with permanent base in Volgograd, and “Baikal” based in Nevinnomyssk, Stavropol Krai.

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A new **anti-aircraft missile brigade** [armed](#) with Buk-M3 anti-aircraft missile systems was established within the 8th Army (HQ in Novocheerkassk, Rostov Oblast) in late 2021.

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By January 2022, the **1721st Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment** (Sochi, Krasnodar Krai) of the 51st Air Defense Division (HQ in Rostov-on-Don), the 4th Air and Air Defense Forces Army (HQ in Rostov-on-Don) had been [armed](#) with **S-350** surface-to-air missile systems.

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A new *Project 22160* class large patrol ship, **Sergey Kotov**, [joined](#) the Black Sea Fleet in early May 2022.

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A number of the Russian Black Sea Fleet vessels had been **sunk** by the Ukrainian armed forces as of June 2022. Among the more notable ones were the Black Sea Fleet’s flagship, *Slava* / *Project 1164 Atlant* class guided missile cruiser **Moskva**, *Tapir* / *Project 1171* class amphibious transport dock **Saratov**, [and](#) *Serna* / *Project 11770* class landing craft [D-144](#). Several other Russian vessels had been damaged.

The Arctic

The name of a regiment established in Chukotka in late 2020 (as reported in the [third issue](#) of our Tracker) was [established](#) – it is the **50th Coastal Defense Regiment**, based in Kamchatka and in Anadyr, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug. The regiment is a part of the coastal defense division that is in the process of being established.

The Far East

The name of a recently established mechanized regiment of the 5th Army's (HQ in Ussuriysk, Primorsky Krai) 127th Mechanized Division (HQ in Sergeyevka, Primorsky Krai) was [clarified](#) – it is the **143rd Mechanized Regiment**, probably based in Kamen-Rybolov and Monastyrishche, Primorsky Krai.

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On 21 December 2021, *Project 955A Borei-A* class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine **Knyaz Oleg** and *Project 885M Yasen-M* class nuclear-powered submarine **Novosibirsk** [joined](#) the Russian navy, and were designated to join the Pacific Fleet.

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A **tank battalion** armed with over 30 T-80BV tanks had been [established](#) within the Pacific Fleet's 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Vladivostok) by January 2022.

Ural, Siberia and Central Asia

Commander of the Russian Central Military District [announced](#) on 21 December 2021 that a new **air defense regiment** armed with **Pantsir-S** air defense systems would be established in the Republic of Khakassia in 2022.

General Information

Numerous sources noted during the Russo-Ukrainian War (for one example, [see here](#)) that **Tochka-U** short-range ballistic missile systems were still employed by the Russian armed forces, and used in the war, despite all Russian missile brigades having formally transferred from Tochka-U to Iskander-M systems.