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May 3, 2025, 4:00 pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 10:45 am ET on May 3. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the May 4 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky denied that Ukraine would concede to the vague terms of Russian President Vladimir Putin's unilateral May 8-11 Victory Day ceasefire proposal. Zelensky referred to Putin's May 8-11 Victory Day ceasefire demand as a "theatrical production" that does not appear to be serious and is designed to create a sense of comfort and safety for participants of Russia's Victory Day celebration.[1] Zelensky once again articulated Ukraine's willingness to extend a short-term ceasefire to 30 days and stated that an effective ceasefire requires high-quality monitoring mechanisms. Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko stated that any joint ceasefire should be comprehensive and last for at least 30 days with the possibility for renewal.[2] Kovalenko noted that shorter ceasefires with vague terms and a lack of monitoring mechanisms afford Russian forces the opportunity to seize on tactical pauses to better prepare ahead of a future summer offensive in Ukraine. Victory Day is Russia's principal patriotic holiday that commemorates the Soviet Union's contributions to victory over Nazi Germany in the Second World War (known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War), and Russia celebrates Victory Day on May 9. Putin first announced on April 28 Russia's intention to implement a Victory Day ceasefire between midnight on the night of May 7 to 8 and midnight on the night of May 10 to 11.[3] Putin's decision to unilaterally impose a fleeting ceasefire during Russia's Victory Day celebration is a deliberate attempt to project a sense of power and control in Russia to both domestic and international audiences. Putin likely also seeks to avoid the embarrassment of Ukrainian strikes during these celebrations by imposing such an agreement.

Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov claimed that the purpose of Russia's unilateral Easter and Victory Day ceasefires is to "test" Ukraine's readiness to pursue paths towards a sustainable peace.[4] Peskov claimed that Russia will wait for "final," unambiguous statements from Ukraine and will look for Ukrainian actions aimed at de-escalating the war during the holiday. Ukraine and the United States have previously proposed a 30-day general ceasefire to Russia, but Russian officials continue to ignore or outright reject these general ceasefire proposals.[5] Ukraine has also repeatedly called for longer ceasefires so as to pave the way for negotiations toward a durable peace settlement — which is in line with US President Donald Trump's efforts to leverage a ceasefire as the foundation for a lasting peace agreement in Ukraine.[6] Russia is very likely to continue its pattern of leveraging short-term ceasefires to flood the information space with unsubstantiated claims of Ukrainian ceasefire violations in an effort to discredit Ukraine and to create tactical or operational pauses to conduct troop rotations, resupply

units, and prepare for future offensive operations, as evidenced by the Easter and long-range energy infrastructure strikes ceasefires.[7] Russia's continued rejection of Ukrainian and US ceasefire proposals of any reasonable length with necessary monitoring mechanisms showcases Russia's disinterest in peace in Ukraine in the near term.

The Trump administration appears to have finalized its first military equipment sale to Ukraine. The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announced on May 2 that the US State Department approved and notified the US Congress of a possible Foreign Military Sale (FMS) of equipment and maintenance services for Ukraine's F-16s worth an estimated \$310.5 million.[8] The DSCA reported that the sale will include aircraft modifications and upgrades; personnel training related to operation, maintenance, and sustainment support; spare parts, consumables, and accessories; repair and return support; ground handling equipment; classified and unclassified software delivery and support; classified and unclassified publications and technical documents; studies and surveys; and US Government and contractor engineering, technical, and logistics support services.

Ukrainian forces shot down a Russian fixed-wing aircraft with a surface-to-air missile (SAM) attached to a naval drone for the first time on May 3. Ukrainian forces launched an aerial drone, a naval drone, and missile strike against Novorossiysk, Krasnodar Krai, and surrounding areas on May 3.[9] The Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) confirmed that Ukrainian forces used a SAM fired from a Magura naval drone to down a Russian Su-30 fighter jet over the Black Sea near Novorossiysk.[10] Ukrainian forces used missiles attached to a Magura naval drone to shoot down a Russian Mi-8 helicopter in December 2024, but this is the first time that Ukrainian forces have downed a fixed-wing aircraft using this tactic.[11]

Russian milbloggers responded to the May 3 strike, claiming that Russia is lagging behind Ukraine on naval drone development and complaining that Russia has previously lost aircraft over the Black Sea due to Ukrainian drone dominance.[12] The milbloggers claimed that Russian forces have the means to combat Ukrainian naval drones and protect Russian aircraft from missile strikes, but that Russian leadership is unwilling to prioritize Russian drone development and innovation. The milbloggers called for Russian coastal defense units and drone operators in the Black Sea to integrate lessons learned from Russian infantry fighting in Ukraine in order to integrate first-person view (FPV) drones with aerial reconnaissance.

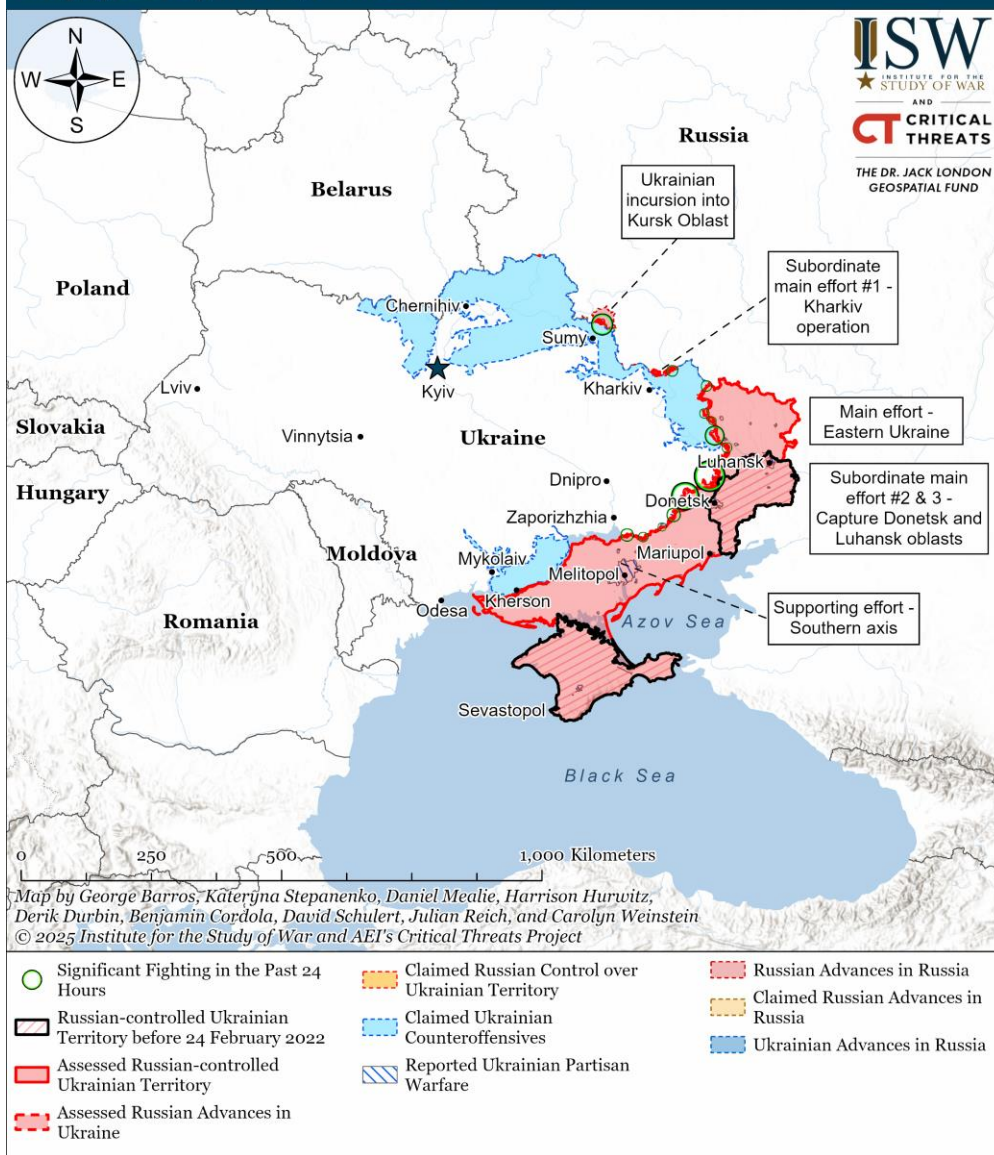
Senior Kremlin officials continue to set informational conditions that could support military operations against Lithuania (and other NATO states) by advancing narratives that deny the sovereignty of Lithuania and other former Soviet states. Independent Russian media outlets *Meduza* and *Agentstvo* reported on May 2 that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov authored the foreword of a new book titled "History of Lithuania," which the "Foreign Relations" publishing arm of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) published in March 2025.[13] Lavrov's foreword claimed that the national policies of Baltic countries, including modern Lithuania, leverage "falsified" historical narratives to "stimulate" Russophobic and anti-Russian sentiments in their domestic audiences.[14] Lavrov claimed that the book seeks to analyze the development of the "lands that were associated with Lithuania at different times." Lithuanian Foreign Minister Kęstutis Budrys stated that the book is a Russian propaganda tool designed to provide the Kremlin with scholarly literature to support its denial of neighboring countries' statehoods and

histories separate from that of Russia.[15] Kremlin officials, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, have recently intensified their threats against Europe — particularly the Baltic States — due to Europe's alleged "Russophobia." [16] Kremlin officials have also indicated that Russia views independent states that were once part of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union as part of modern-day Russia.[17]

Key Takeaways:

- **Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky denied that Ukraine would concede to the vague terms of Russian President Vladimir Putin's unilateral May 8-11 Victory Day ceasefire proposal.**
- **The Trump administration appears to have finalized its first military equipment sale to Ukraine.**
- **Ukrainian forces shot down a Russian fixed-wing aircraft with a surface-to-air missile (SAM) attached to a naval drone for the first time on May 3.**
- **Senior Kremlin officials continue to set informational conditions that could support military operations against Lithuania (and other NATO states) by advancing narratives that deny the sovereignty of Lithuania and other former Soviet states.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced near Lyman, Siversk, Novopavlivka, Kurakhove, and Velyka Novosilka.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

- Alleged Ceasefire Violation
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis

- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Alleged Ceasefire Violations

There are no active ceasefires in Ukraine.

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Limited fighting continued in Kursk Oblast on May 2 and 3 as Russian forces continue efforts to push Ukrainian forces from the area.[18]

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on May 2 that Ukrainian forces maintain unspecified limited positions in Kursk Oblast.[19]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating at the Kursk-Sumy Oblast border.[20]

Neither Ukrainian nor Russian sources reported ground attacks in the northwesternmost Belgorod Oblast on May 3.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on May 2 that Ukrainian forces continue to operate in Belgorod Oblast.[21]

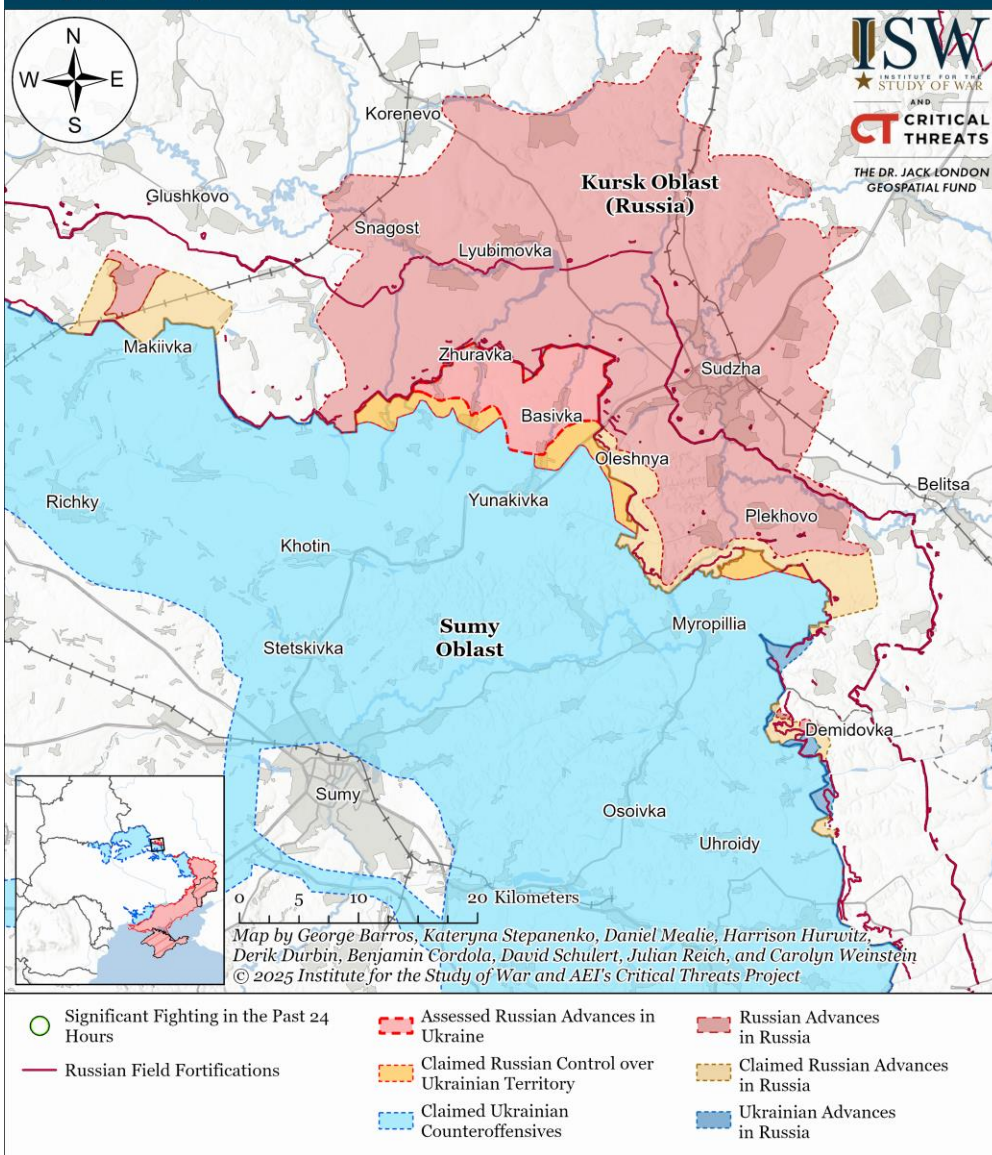
Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in northern Sumy Oblast on May 3 but did not advance.

Fighting continued north of Sumy City near Bilovody and Vodolahy and northeast of Sumy City near Loknya.[22]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 177th Naval Infantry Regiment (Caspian Flotilla) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Myropillia (northeast of Sumy City).[23]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Sumy Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

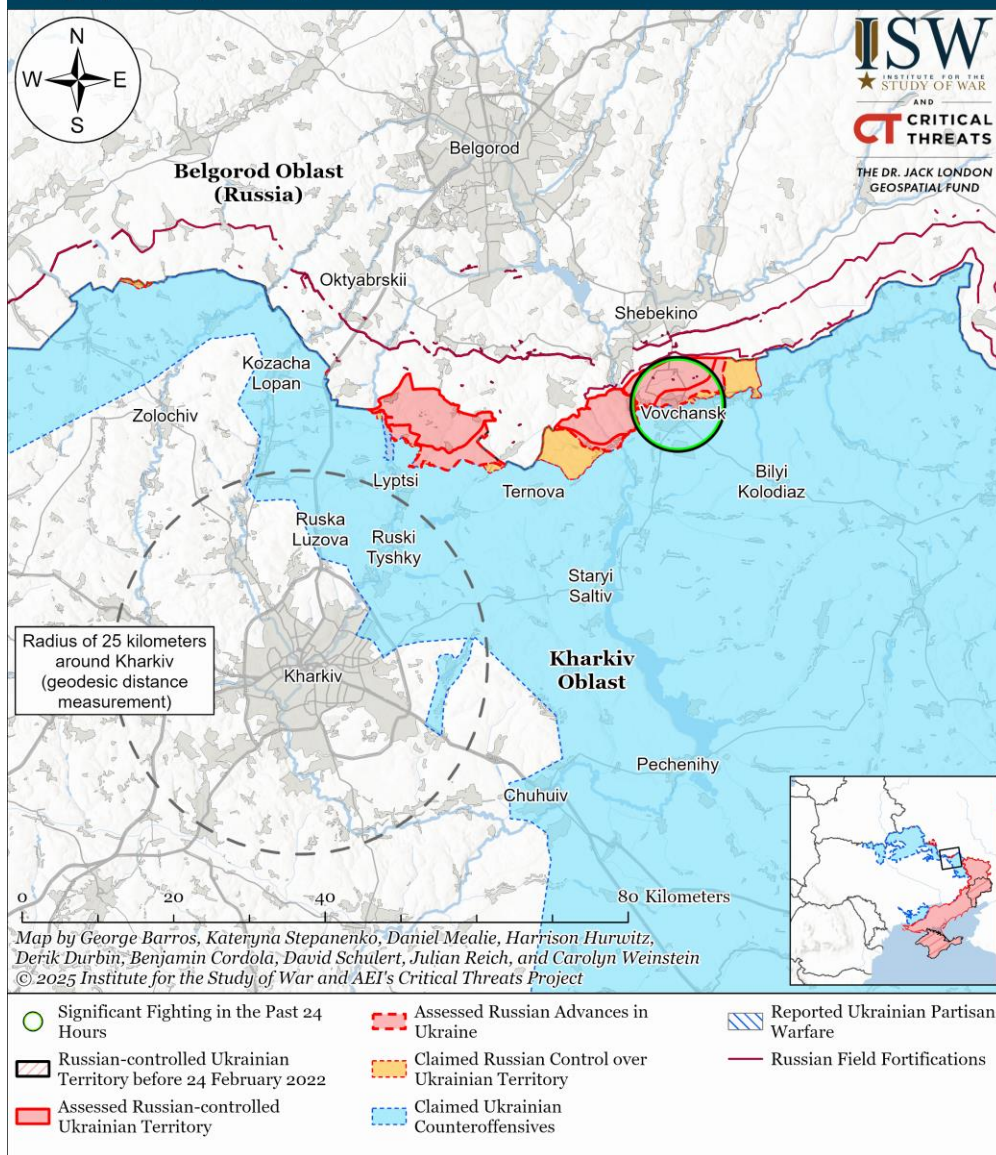
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kharkiv direction on May 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on May 2 and 3.[24]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Antagonist" drone detachment are reportedly operating in the Kharkiv direction.[25]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on May 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near the international border near Kamyanka on May 3.[26]

The Kharkiv Oblast Prosecutor's Office reported that Russian forces conducted a guided glide bomb strike against Kupyansk on May 2.[27]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Borova direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced west of Makiivka (southwest of Borova).[28]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahyrzove, Kolisnykivka, and Nova Kruhlyakivka; east of Borova near Serhiivka and Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Hrekivka on May 2 and 3.[29]

A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces retook Pershotravneve (east of Borova).[30]

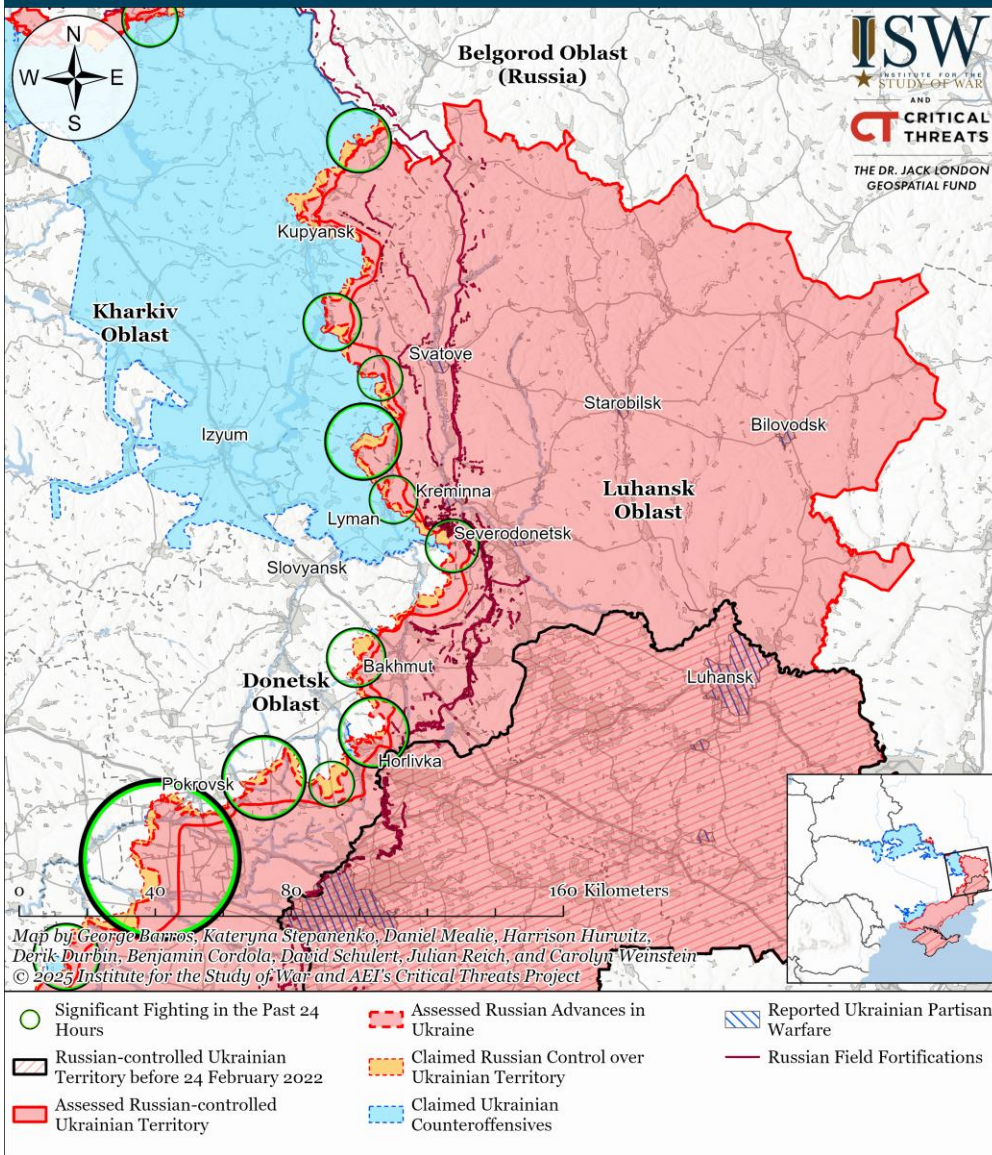
Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced north of Torske (east of Lyman).[31]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced to eastern Myrne (northeast of Lyman).[32]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Lyman near Ridkodub, Yampolivka, Kolodyazi, Nove, Zelena Dolyna, and Myrne, and east of Lyman near Torske on May 2 and 3.[33]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



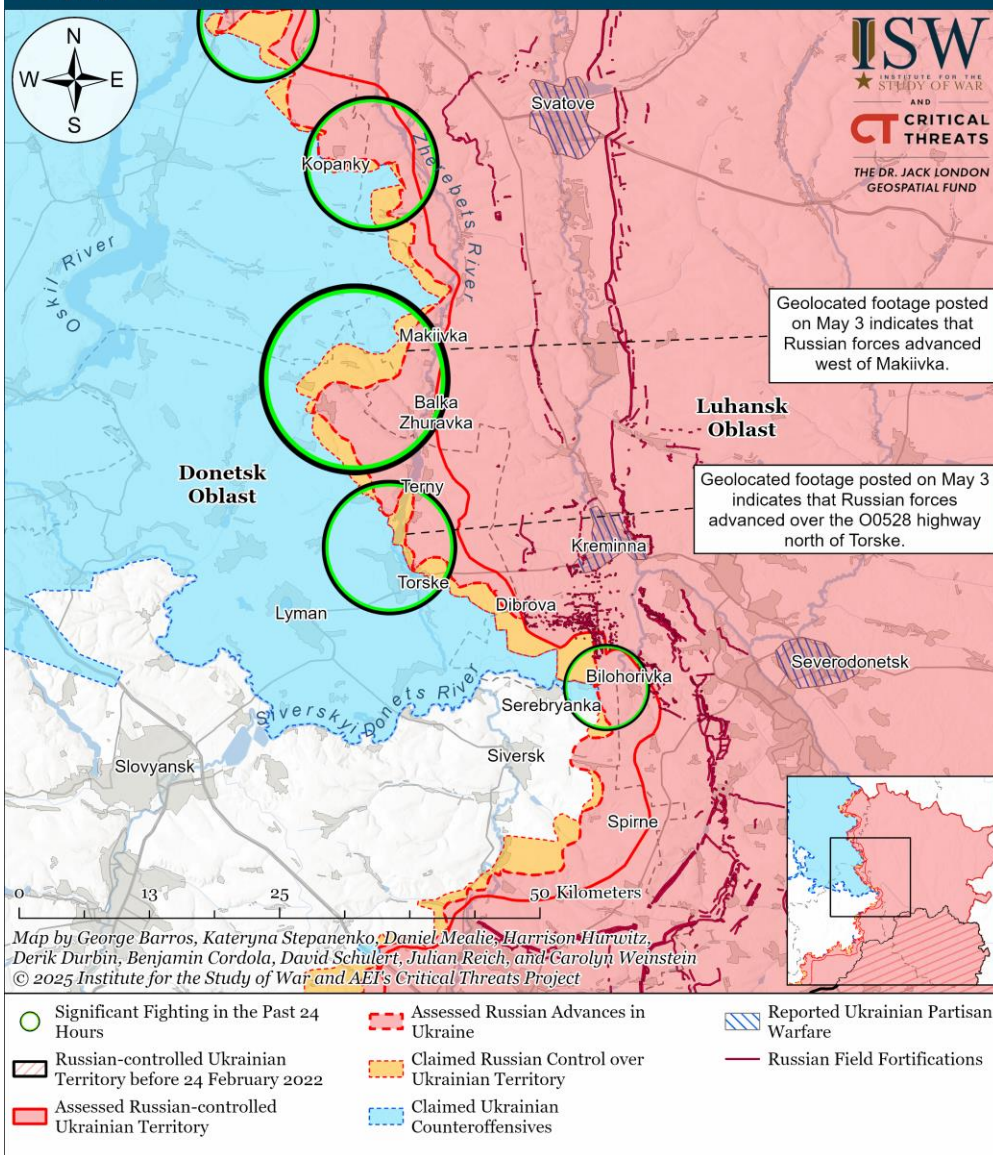
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Russian forces recently advanced in the Siversk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 2 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in northeast Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk).[34]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka and Bilohorivka on May 2 and 3.[35]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Svatove-Kreminna Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar on May 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself; north of Chasiv Yar toward Novomarkove and toward Mayske; and south of Chasiv Yar toward Bila Hora on May 2 and 3.[36] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Stupochky (south of Chasiv Yar).[37]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 217th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (98th VDV Division) reportedly continue to operate in Chasiv Yar.[38]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) advanced into central Oleksandropil (southwest of Toretsk).[39] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced further in northern Novoolenivka (northwest of Oleksandropil), south of Romanivka (east of Oleksandropil), in southern Stara Mykolaivka (southeast of Oleksandropil), and east of Zelene Pole (south of Oleksandropil).[40] Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces seized an intersection of the T-0504 Pokrovsk-Kostyantynivka highway east of Malynivka (southwest of Toretsk) and advanced near Nova Poltavka (northeast of Malynivka) on May 2, but do not currently maintain positions in the settlement.[41] One Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized positions on the southeastern outskirts of Novo Poltavka, however.[42] Another milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced from Krymske (northeast of Toretsk) toward the Novotoretska Mine near the T-0516 Toretsk-Kostyantynivka highway northwest of Toretsk.[43]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Toretsk itself; northeast of Toretsk near Krymske and Druzhba; and southwest of Toretsk near Sukha Balka, Stara Mykolaivka, Zelene Pole, Vodyane Druhe, and Yelyzavetivka and in the direction of Nova Poltavka on May 2 and 3.[44] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 242nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division) are attacking Stara Mykolaivka (southwest of Toretsk).[45]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 33rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division) reportedly continue to operate in the Kostyantynivka (Toretsk) direction.[46] Elements of the Russian "Orcs" drone detachment are reportedly operating in the Toretsk direction.[47]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on May 3 but did not advance.

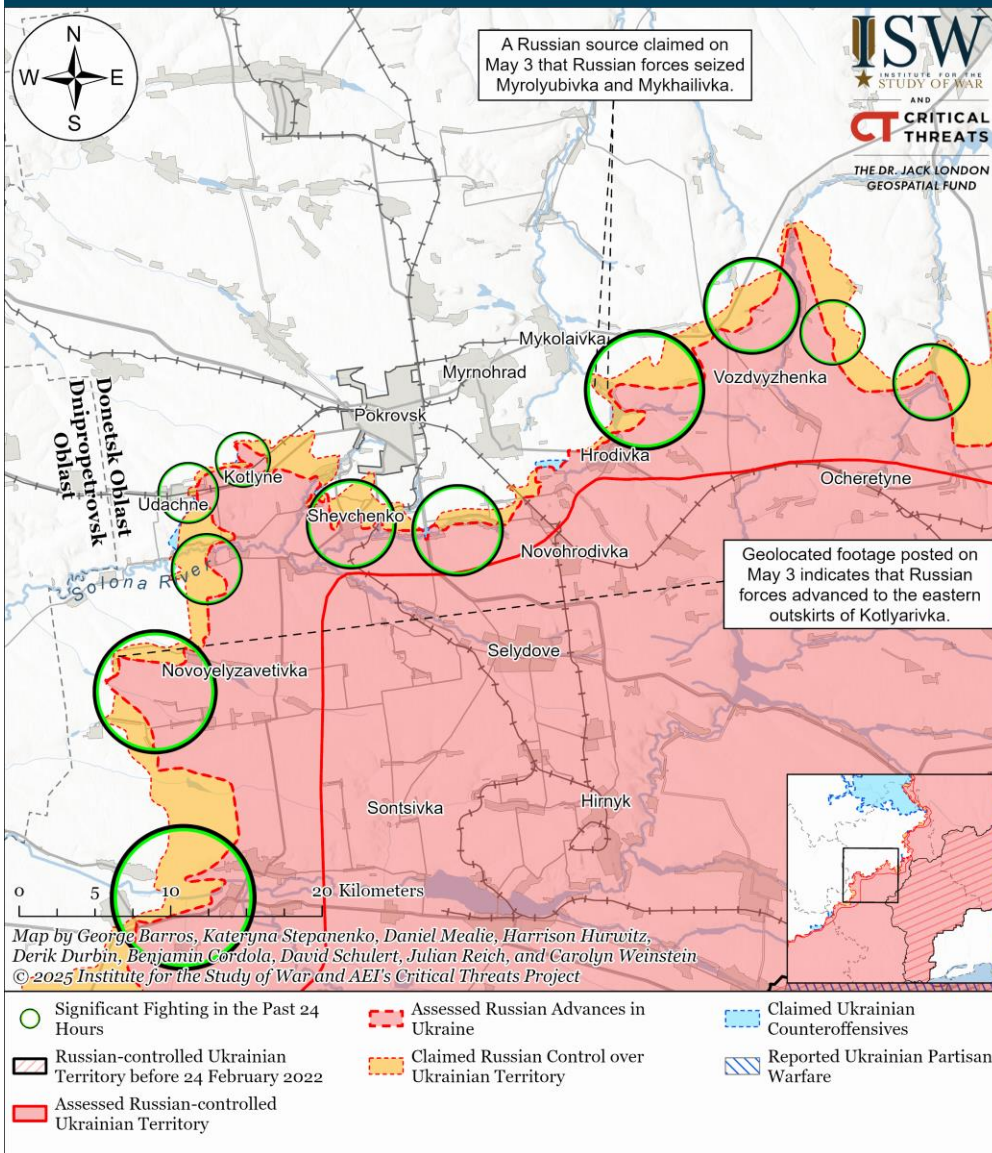
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in northeastern Zvirove (south of Pokrovsk) and are advancing west of Lysivka (southeast of Pokrovsk), northeast of Shevchenko (south of Pokrovsk), and near Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[48] A milblogger claimed that Russian forces have seized Mykhailivka and Lysivka (both southeast of Pokrovsk), and most of Myrolyubivka (northeast of Pokrovsk), except for the settlement's industrial zone in the eastern part of the settlement.

Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Pokrovsk near Myrolyubivka and Novotoretske; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Novoukrainka, Chunyshyne, Shevchenko, Dachenske; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne and Udachne on May 2 and 3.[49]

The senior communications officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated on May 3 that Russian forces are taking an average of 150 casualties per day in this direction and that Russian forces are attempting to advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast by May 9.[50] The officer stated that Russia recently reinforced its units in the Pokrovsk direction either with redeployments from the Kursk direction or newly recruited troops. A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction posted footage on May 3 purportedly showing the brigade striking a Russian ammunition depot in an unspecified area of this direction.[51]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 255th Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division) are reportedly operating in the Myrnohrad direction (east of Pokrovsk).[52]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently advanced in the Novopavlivka direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced east of Kotlyarivka (northeast of Novopavlivka).[53]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that elements of the Russian 27th Motorized Rifle Division (2nd CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) seized Novooleksandrivka (northeast of Novopavlivka).[54] A Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced between Novooleksandrivka and Nadiivka (south of Novooleksandrivka), west of Nadiivka, to eastern Novoserhiivka (northeast of Novopavlivka), and to the outskirts of Kotlyarivka (east of Novopavlivka).[55]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Novopavlivka near Novoserhiivka and Novooleksandrivka; east of Novopavlivka near Nadiivka, Kotlyarivka, Troitske, and Preobrazhenka; and southeast of Novopavlivka near Bohdanivka on May 2 and 3.[56]

A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in Bohdanivka.[57]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 80th Tank Regiment (90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, CMD) are reportedly operating near Troitske; elements of the 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA) are reportedly operating near Kotlyarikva; and elements of the 6th Tank Regiment (90th Tank Division, 41st CAA) are reportedly operating near Nadiivka.[58]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Kurakhove direction.

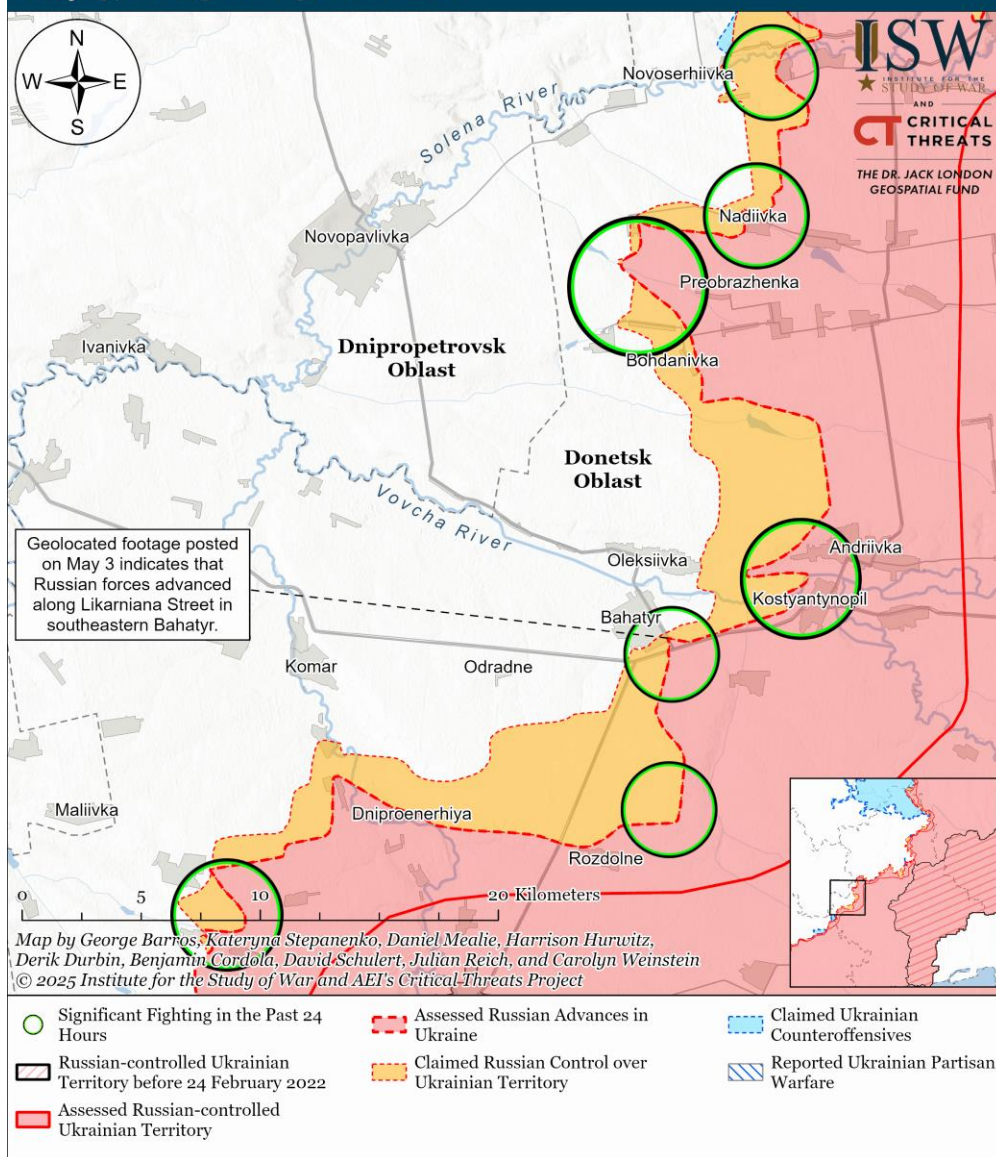
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southeastern Bahatyr (west of Kurakhove).[59]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces entered Oleksiivka (west of Kurakhove) and advanced southwest of Odradne (southwest of Kurakove).[60]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Odradne, Oleksiivka, Andriivka, and Bahatyr and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv on May 2 and 3.[61] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking in Bahatyr.[62]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 430th Motorized Rifle Regiment, 200th Artillery Brigade (both of the 29th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]), and 11th Air Defense and Air Force Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and EMD) are reportedly operating near Bahatyr.[63] Elements of the 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Odradne.[64]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Novopavlivka Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



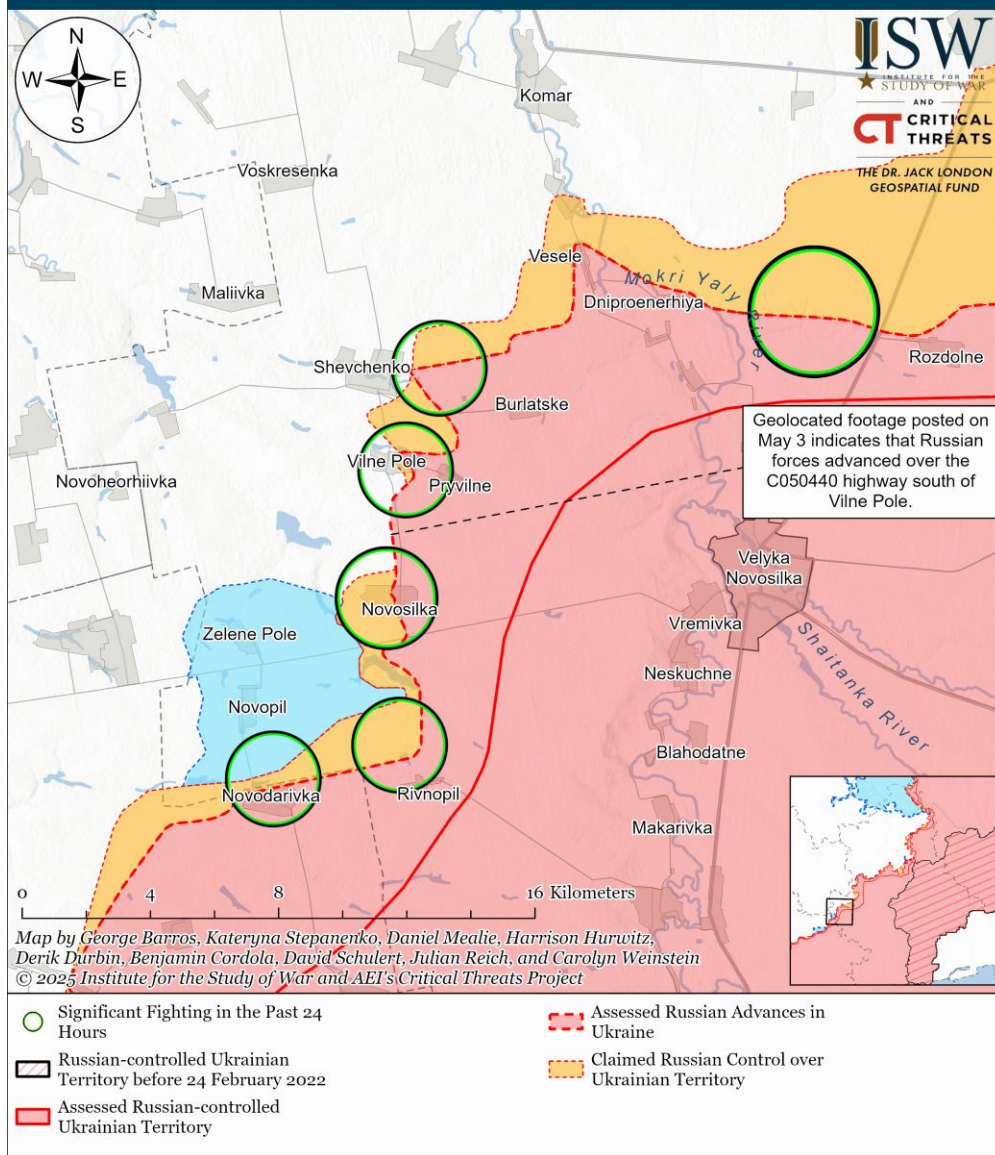
Russian forces recently advanced in the Velyka Novosilka direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced south of Vilne Pole (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[65]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced near Fedorivka (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[66]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne, Burlatske, and Shevchenko; west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka and toward Zelene Pole; and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Rivnopil and toward Novopil on May 2 and 3.[67] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Vilne Pole and Shevchenko.[68]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Velyka Novosilka Direction May 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

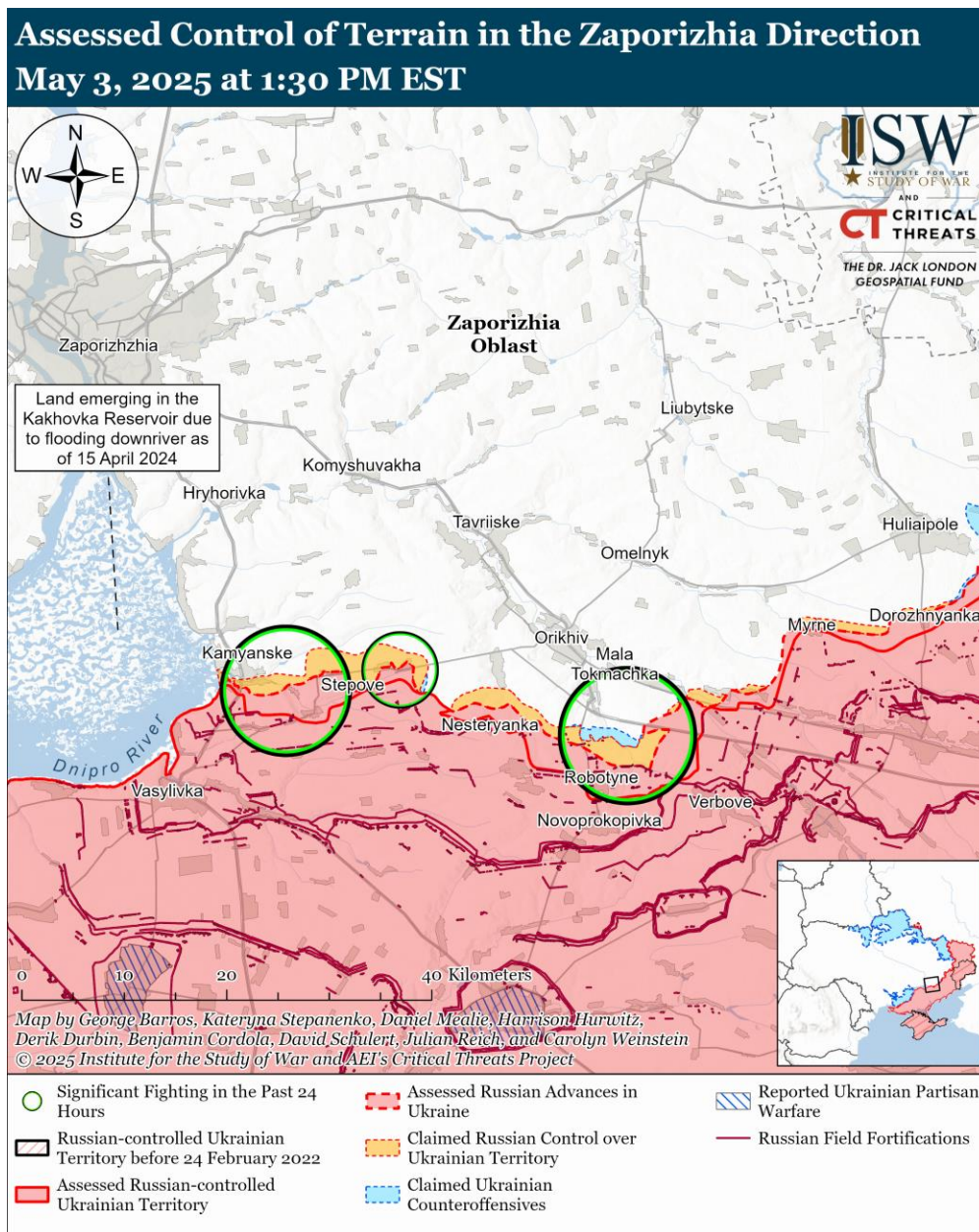
Russian forces conducted limited offensive operations east of Hulyaipole near Vysoke (formerly Chervone) on May 2 and 3 but did not advance.[69]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on May 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted ground attacks southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka; south of Orikhiv near Novodanylivka; southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove; and west of Orikhiv near Shcherbaky and Kamyanske on May 2 and 3.[70]

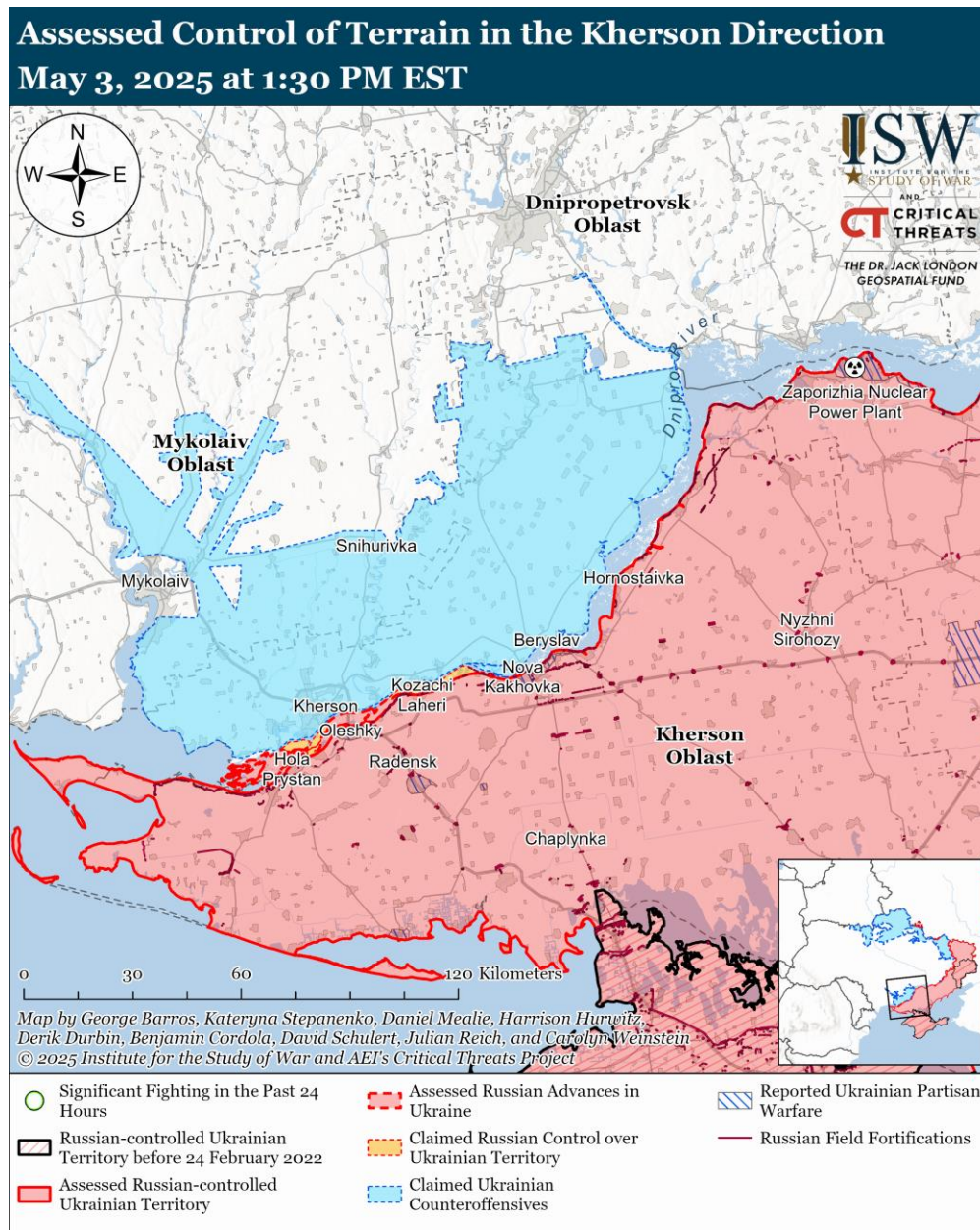
Ukraine's Southern Operational Command reported on May 3 that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian Buk-M3 air defense system in an unspecified location in southern Ukraine.[71]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Shaman" detachment of the 1455th Motorized Rifle Regiment (reportedly of the 42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Novodanylivka and elements of the Russian 247th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[72]



Neither Ukrainian nor Russian sources reported ground activity in the Kherson direction on May 3.

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 61st Naval Infantry Brigade (Northern Fleet) are reportedly operating in the Kherson direction.[73]



Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces launched a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of May 2 to 3. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched two Iskander-M ballistic missiles from Rostov Oblast and occupied Crimea, and 183 strike and decoy drones from Bryansk, Kursk, Oryol cities and Millerovo, Rostov Oblast.[74] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 77 Shahed and other drones over eastern, northern, southern, and central Ukraine and that 73 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian

officials reported that Russian drones struck civilian infrastructure and commercial infrastructure in Kharkiv, Sumy, Donetsk, and Mykolaiv oblasts.[75]

Significant activity in Belarus (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks)

Nothing significant to report.

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.



[1] https://suspilne dot media/1009061-rosiani-masovano-atakuvali-harkiv-bezpilotnikami-ukraina-priskorit-stvorennia-vlasnoi-balistiki-1165-den-vijni/?anchor=live_1746262169&utm_source=copylink&utm_medium=ps

[2] <https://t.me/akovalenko1989/9187>

[3] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar042825>

[4] <https://ria dot ru/20250503/peremirie-2014781779.html>

[5] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar042825>; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar042325>;
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; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041925> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar031725>

[6] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar042825>; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041925> ;
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[7] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041325> ;

[8] <https://www.dsca.mil/Congressional-Notification-Archive/Article/4173182/ukraine-f-16-training-and-sustainment>; <https://x.com/statedeptpm/status/1918400116135755966?s=52>;
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[9] <https://t.me/kondratyevvi/8772> ; <https://suspilne dot media/1009189-u-rf-zaavili-pro-ataku-droniv-na-novorosijsk/> ; https://t.me/tass_agency/313141 ; https://t.me/tass_agency/313142;
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