

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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May 5, 2025, 4:45 pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 10:45am ET on May 5. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the May 5 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian sources claimed on May 5 that Ukrainian forces conducted a series of limited attacks across the Russia-Ukraine international border near Tetkino, Kursk Oblast. Russian sources claimed on May 5 that Ukrainian forces attacked across the Russia-Ukraine international border near Tetkino and Popova-Lezhachi (far west of Sudzha and southwest of Glushkovo) and Novyi Put (east of Tetkino) on the evening of May 4 and morning of May 5.[1] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces used mine clearing equipment to create a path through Russian minefields along the border, but that Ukrainian forces have not made significant advances in the area thus far.[2] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian and Russian forces engaged in a small arms clash near the Tetkino Railway Station in southern Tetkino and that Ukrainian forces later withdrew back into Sumy Oblast.[3] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces have not seized Tetkino or broken through Russia's defenses near Novyi Put.[4] Russian sources claimed that elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division, likely referring to the 5th Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment, other Russian military personnel, and Russian border guards are defending against the Ukrainian attacks.[5]

Ukrainian forces are attempting to isolate Russian units near Tetkino and throughout Glushkovsky Raion. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on May 4 that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian reconnaissance and strike drone command post near Tetkino and killed up to 20 Russian servicemembers.[6] Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko stated that Russian forces have been training drone operators at a school in Tetkino since 2022.[7] Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces intensified drone strikes and artillery fire against Tetkino in the night of May 4 before attacking toward the settlement.[8] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces destroyed a bridge over the Seim River between Zvannoye (northwest of Glushkovo) and Tetkino.[9] Other Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are also using drones to interdict Russian logistics in the area.[10]

The Russian military command reportedly recently redeployed elements of the 68th Army Corps and 58th Combined Arms Army to the Toretsk direction from the Kurakhove

and western Zaporizhia directions. Geolocated footage published on May 5 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in eastern and southern Myrne (southwest of Toretsk) during a platoon-sized mechanized assault.[11] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th Army Corps [AC], Eastern Military District [EMD]) participated in the advance and were attacking in the direction of Malynivka (just west of Myrne).[12] ISW first observed reports that elements of the 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade redeployed to the Toretsk direction in late March 2025 after operating in the Vuhledar and Kurakhove directions.[13] Elements of the brigade may be currently deployed across several sectors of the front. A Russian milblogger claimed on May 4 that elements of the Russian 42nd Motorized Rifle Division (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are attacking in Stara Mykolaivka and Oleksandropil and conducting clearing operations near Kalynove (all southwest of Toretsk). Elements of the 42nd Motorized Rifle Division have been operating in the Zaporizhia direction since at least Summer 2023 during the Ukrainian counteroffensive in the area.[14] ISW observed reports that elements of the division were operating in the Zaporizhia direction as of May 4, and the division is likely currently split between the Zaporizhia and Toretsk directions.[15] The Russian military command previously reinforced offensive operations southwest of Toretsk with elements of the 150th and 20th motorized rifle divisions (both part of the 8th CAA, SMD) in early 2025, and the repeated reinforcing of this effort from three different sectors of the frontline indicates that the Russian military command views this as a priority frontline sector.[16]

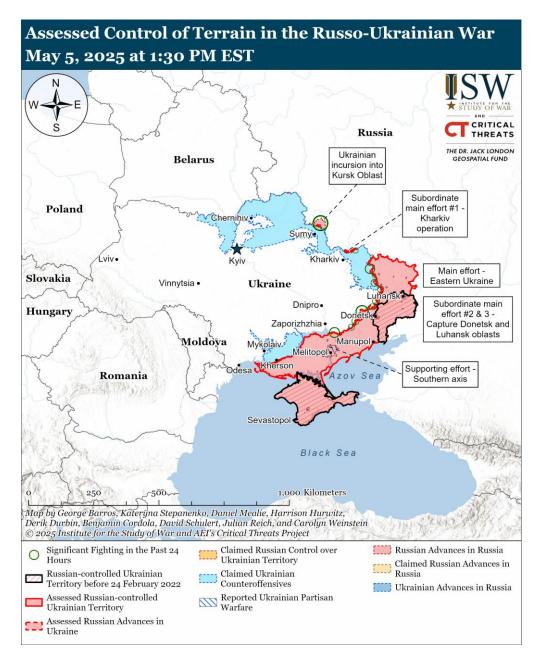
A Russian milblogger speculated on May 4 that Russian attacks near Nova Poltavka (northwest of Myrne and northeast of Kalynove) are part of long-term Russian efforts to advance toward Myrnohrad (just east of Pokrovsk) and envelop Myrnohrad and Pokrovsk from the east and west.[17] Russian forces re-intensified offensive operations in mid-March 2025 aimed at enveloping Pokrovsk and seizing Pokrovsk and Myrnohrad but have not made significant advances in the area since late Fall 2024 due to localized Ukrainian counterattacks and drone operations.[18] Russian forces appeared to shift their focus toward the Novopavlivka direction in an attempt to reach the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border in recent months.[19] Russian forces have not been able to advance the remaining three kilometers to the border in the past month, however, and may be pursuing opportunistic advances in other areas, such as near Nova Poltavka.[20] Russian forces may attempt to leverage recent redeployments to Toretsk and eastern Pokrovsk directions as part of a mutually reinforcing effort aimed at eliminating the Ukrainian pocket southwest of Toretsk to facilitate advances toward Kostyantynivka from the south and enveloping **Pokrovsk** Myrnohrad.[21] and

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Czech President Petr Pavel announced on May 4 that Czechia will work with Ukraine to establish a school to train Ukrainian pilots on F-16 fighter jets outside of Ukraine.[22] Pavel added that Czechia and members of the Frenchand British-led Coalition of the Willing will train Ukrainian pilots. The US Department of State announced on May 4 that it approved \$310.5 million for F-16 training, equipment, and support services for Ukraine.[23] Zelensky stated that the Czech Ammunition Initiative could deliver 1.8 million artillery shells to Ukraine in 2025 and that Ukraine is expecting its allies to deliver three million artillery shells in total this year.[24] Czech Defense Minister Jana Černochová stated in April 2025 that the Czech

initiative had secured funding for artillery deliveries to Ukraine through Fall 2025.[25]

Key Takeaways:

- Russian sources claimed on May 5 that Ukrainian forces conducted a series of limited attacks across the Russia-Ukraine international border near Tetkino, Kursk Oblast.
- The Russian military command reportedly recently redeployed elements of the 68th Army Corps and 58th Combined Arms Army to the Toretsk direction from the Kurakhove and western Zaporizhia directions.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Czech President Petr Pavel announced on May 4 that Czechia will work with Ukraine to establish a school to train Ukrainian pilots on F-16 fighter jets outside of Ukraine.
- Russian forces recently advanced near Vovchansk, Siversk, Toretsk, Kurakhove, and Velyka Novosilka.



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.

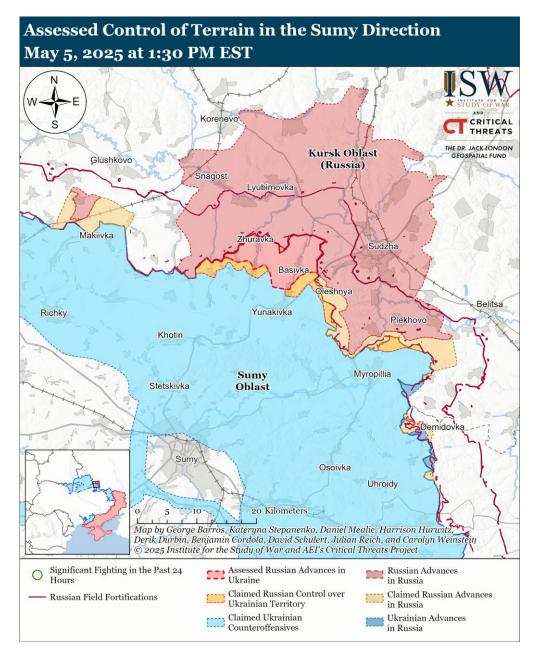
<u>Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation</u>

See topline for updates in Kursk Oblast.

A Russian milblogger claimed on May 5 that Ukrainian forces maintain a limited presence in northwestern Belgorod Oblast near Popovka and Demidovka (both northwest of Belgorod City).[26]

<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis</u> (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 5 but did not make confirmed advances.



Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced within Loknya and Bilovody (both northeast of Sumy City) and that elements of the Russian 83rd Separate Airborne (VDV) Brigade and 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) have seized most of Bilovody. [27]

Fighting continued northeast of Sumy City near Volodahy, Bilovody, and Loknya on May 4.[28] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Bilovody.[29]

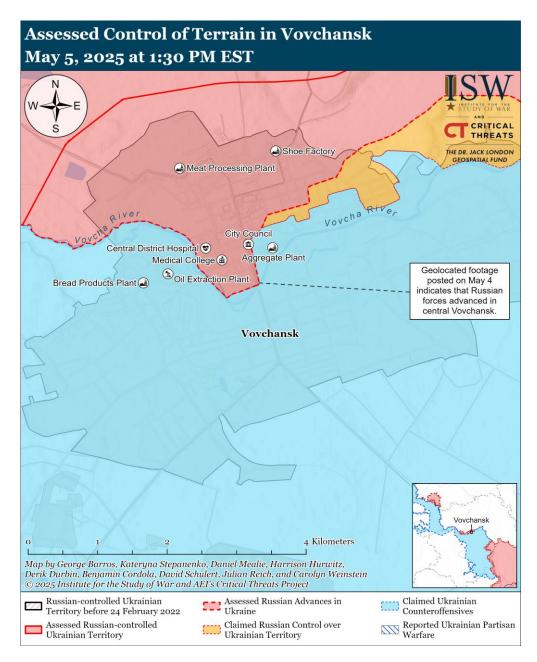
A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 83rd Separate VDV Brigade are using fiber-optic drones to interdict Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) in northern Sumy Oblast.[30]

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast</u> (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 recently advanced in the Kharkiv direction.

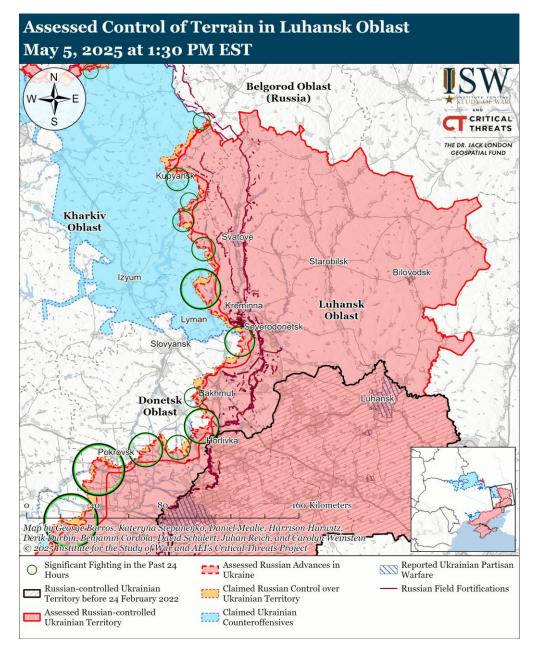
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 4 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in central Vovchansk (northeast of Kharkiv City).[31]



Russian forces attacked near Vovchansk and Tykhe (both northeast of Kharkiv City) on May 4 and 5.[32]

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast</u> (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 5 but did not advance.



Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near the international border toward Stroivka; north of Kupyansk near Holubivka; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; and southeast of Kupyansk near Pishchane and Hlushkivka and toward Novoosynove on May 4 and 5.[33]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 27th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating in the Kupyansk direction.[34]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on May 5 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahryzove; east of Borova near Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Hrekivka and Tverdokhlibove and toward Olhivka on May 4 and 5.[35]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on May 5 but did not make confirmed advances.

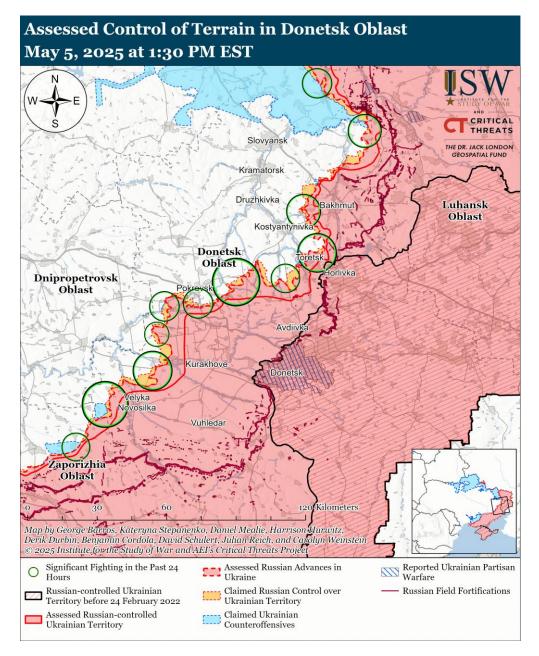
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced 1.7 kilometers south and southeast of Nove (northeast of Lyman).[36]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Lyman near Novomykhailivka, Nove, Kolodyazi, Myrne, and Lypove and toward Zelena Dolyna and Ridkodub on May 4 and 5.[37]

The commander of a Ukrainian drone company operating in the Lyman direction stated that Russian forces are conducting reconnaissance-in-force missions and that Ukrainian drone and artillery strikes are preventing Russian forces from preparing high-quality assaults. [38] The commander stated that Ukrainian forces are conducting drone strikes increasingly deeper into Russian forces' near rear. The Ukrainian State Border Guard Service reported that Russian forces are rarely using armored equipment in the Serebryanske forest area due to the terrain and are mostly conducting infantry assaults in the area. [39]

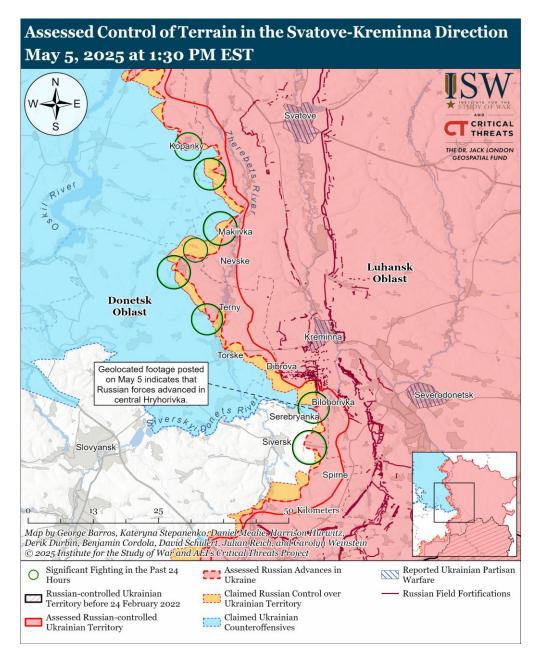
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on May 5 but did not make any confirmed advances.



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 5 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced into central Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk).[40]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske on May 4 and 5.[41]



A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Siversk direction published footage on May 5 showing Russian forces conducting a motorized assault on one motorcycle and several civilian vehicles in the area. [42] Ukrainian forces repelled the assault and destroyed one motorcycle and 12 civilian vehicles.

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on May 5 but did not advance.

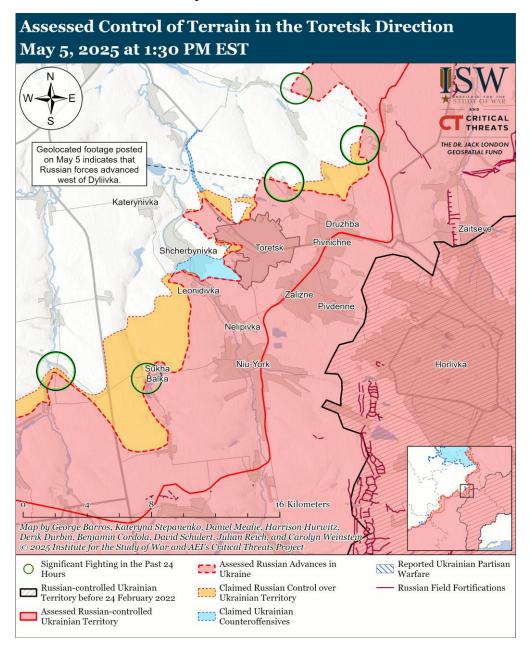
Russian forces continued assaults near Chasiv Yar itself, north of Chasiv Yar in the direction of Mayske, south of Chasiv Yar near Bila Hora and Stupochky, and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka on May

4 and

5.[43]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division, including its 217th and 331st VDV regiments, are operating near Chasiv Yar. [44] Elements of the Russian 6th Motorized Rifle Division (3rd Army Corps [AC]) are reportedly operating in the Kramatorsk (Chasiv Yar) direction. [45]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 5 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to the fields southwest of Dyliivka (north of Toretsk). [46] Geolocated footage published on May 4 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to southern Nova Poltavka (southwest of Toretsk). [47] Additional geolocated footage published on May 5 indicates that Russian

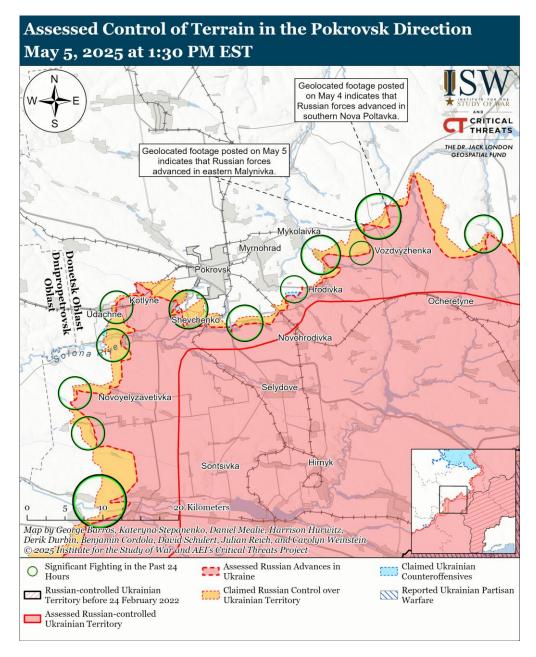
forces recently advanced in eastern and southern Myrne (southwest of Toretsk) during a platoon-sized mechanized assault. [48] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, Eastern Military District [EMD]) participated in the advance and were attacking toward Malynivka (just west of Myrne). [49]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on May 4 and 5 that Russian forces operating southwest of Toretsk advanced northwest of Tarasivka, west of Kalynove, and west of Toretsk near Novoolenivka and Oleksandropil.[50] A Russian milblogger claimed on May 4 that elements of the Russian 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) advanced near Romanivka (west of Toretsk).[51]

Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk toward Dyliivka and Dachne; northeast of Toretsk near Ozaryanivka; southwest of Toretsk near Sukha Balka, Stara Mykolaivka, Vodyane Druhe, Yelyzavetivka, Romanivka, Malynivka, and Hnativka and toward Nova Poltavka; and west of Toretsk near Druzhba and Novoolenivka on May 4 and 5.[52] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking southwest of Toretsk near Hnativka.[53]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 56th Spetsnaz Battalion (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic AC, SMD) are reportedly striking Katerynivka (northwest of Toretsk).[54] Elements of the 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly striking Toretsk itself and near Zorya (southwest of Toretsk).[55] See topline text for reports of recently redeployed Russian units southwest of Toretsk.

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on May 5 but did not make confirmed advances.



Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on May 4 that Russian forces advanced in the southeastern outskirts of Udachne and northeast of Kotlyne (both southwest of Pokrovsk).[56]

Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Pokrovsk near Novotoretske; east of Pokrovsk toward Myrolyubivka and Promin; southeast of Pokrovsk toward Novoserhiivka and near Zvirove and Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Dachenske and Shevhchenko; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Udachne, Uspenivka, and Kotlyne on May 4 and 5.[57]

Ukrainian sources reported on May 4 that Russian forces are defending Russian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) along the E-50 Donetsk City-Pokrovsk highway with anti-drone netting in the Pokrovsk direction. [58] One of the sources stated that Russian forces are using the netting tunnels to deliver supplies from occupied Karlivka to Selydove and Novohrodivka (all southeast of Pokrovsk). The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported that Russian forces are currently conducting intense infantry assaults in small groups and mechanized assaults with infantry fighting vehicles, armored fighting vehicles, and tanks in this direction. [59] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are striking Ukrainian GLOCs and accumulating reinforcements in the Pokrovsk direction.

Ukrainian sources reported on May 4 that Ukrainian forces destroyed a Russian battalion command post in occupied Novohrodivka with a Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) guided munition.[60]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 56th Spetsnaz Battalion (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic AC, SMD) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Pokrovsk.[61]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on May 5 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Kotlyarivka (east of Novopavlivka) and northwest of Troitske (southeast of Novopavlivka).[62]

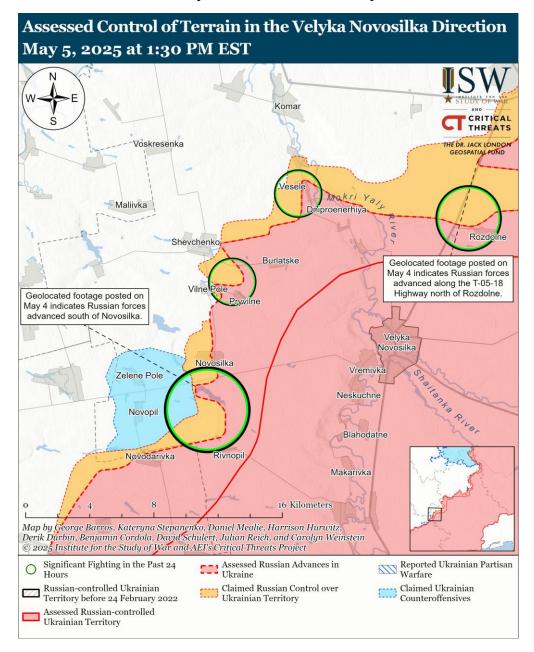
Russian forces attacked northeast of Novopavlivka near Novoserhiivka, Kotlyarivka and Novooleksandrivka; east of Novopavlivka near Kotlyarivka; and southeast of Novopavlivka near Bohdanivka and Troitske on May 4 and 5.[63]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Kurakhove direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 4 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to the T-0518 Velyka Novosilka-Bahatyr highway northwest of Rozdolne (southwest of Kurakhove).[64]

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Bahatyr, Oleksiivka, and Andriivka and southwest of Kurakhove near Odradne on May 4 and 5.[65] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukranian forces counterattacked near Bahatyr.[66]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Velyka Novosilka direction.



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on May 4 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced south of Novosilka (west of Velyka Novosilka).[67]

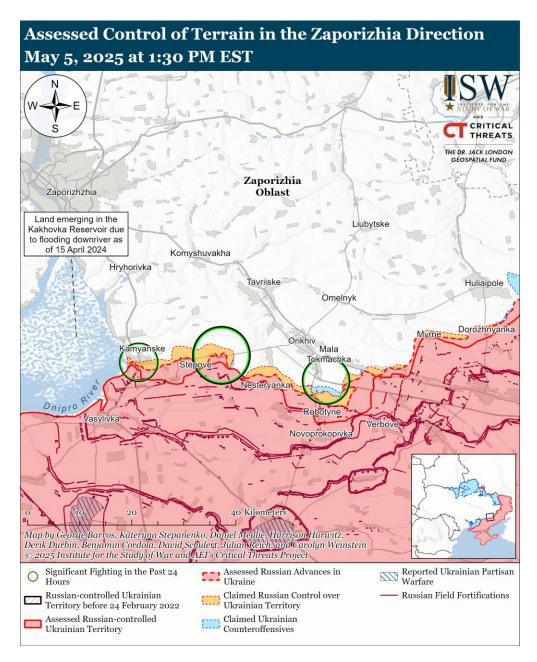
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Fedorivka (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[68]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Shevchenko and toward Komar; west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka; and southwest of Velyka Novosilka toward Novopil and Zelene Pole on May 4 and 5.[69] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in the Shakhtarske (Velyka Novosilka) direction.[70]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th CAA, EMD) are reportedly operating near Novosilka.[71]

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Hulyaipole direction on May 5 but did not advance.



Russian forces conducted ground attacks east of Hulyaipole near Vysoke (formerly Chervone) on May 5.[72]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 38th Motorized Rifle Brigade (35th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating in Chervone. [73]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on May 5 but did not make confirmed advances.

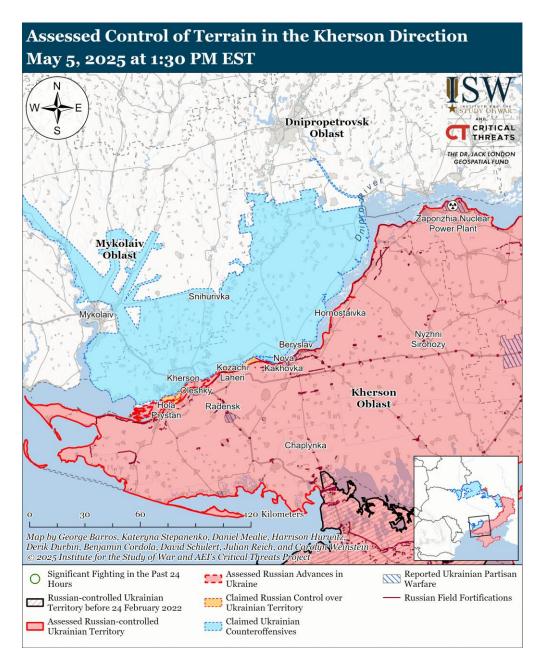
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Mala Tokmachka (southeast of Orikhiv).[74]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks south of Orikhiv near Novodanylivka; southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove and Pyatykhatky; and west of Orikhiv near Novoandriivka, Shcherbaky, Mali Shcherbaky, and Kamyanske on May 4 and 5.[75] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked south of Pavlivka (northwest of Orikhiv) and that Ukrainian forces conducted sabotage and reconnaissance missions near Mala Tokmachka.[76]

The spokesperson for a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Orikhiv direction reported on May 5 that Russian forces only have enough personnel for assaults once every two days and that larger Russian mechanized and motorcycle assaults are unsuccessful in this direction.[77]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 108th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Mali Shcherbaky; drone operators of the 49th Separate Air Assault Brigade (58th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Kamyanske; drone operators of the Chechen "Vostok-Akhmat" Battalion are reportedly operating near Robotyne; and elements of the 247th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) reportedly continue to operate in Zaporizhia Oblast.[78]

Neither Ukrainian nor Russian sources reported ground activity in the Kherson direction on May 5.



Russian milbloggers claimed that drone operators of the Russian 88th "Hispaniola" Volunteer Brigade (Russian Volunteer Corps) and the "Omerzitelnaya Vosmerka" drone group repelled the Ukrainian naval drone strike near the coast of occupied Crimea on the night of May 2 to 3.[79]

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

Russian forces conducted a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of May 4 to 5. The Ukrainian Air Force reported on May 5 that Russian forces launched two Iskander-M/Kn-23 ballistic missiles from Kursk Oblast and 116 Shahed and other decoy drones from Kursk and Oryol

cities; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and occupied Prymorsk, Zaporizhia Oblast. [80] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 42 drones over Ukraine and that 21 drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian sources reported that the strikes affected Konotop, Sumy Oblast and unspecified areas of Donetsk Oblast. [81]

<u>Significant activity in Belarus</u> (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.



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