



Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia Dispatches 11 August 2023

The Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia provides a forum for the study, promotion and debate of defence, security and safety issues.

Dispatches is a weekly collection of news of interest, including posts to social media by the Institute. Links to articles are checked at the time they are put into *Dispatches* but may be unavailable at a later date or in some countries other than Canada.

Everyone is encouraged to submit links and other content to be included in *Dispatches*. Submissions and feedback are welcome anytime. Email to RUSINSDispatches@gmail.com. Comments to articles can be from members or non-members of RUSI(NS). Any comment in *Dispatches* is the sole opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia, the Department of National Defence or other government department, the Canadian Armed Forces, or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or other agency.

If you wish to receive *Dispatches* at a different address (i.e., not your work address), please inform RUSI(NS). Past editions of *Dispatches* may be requested by contacting RUSI(NS).

Events:

To list an event in *Dispatches*, email RUSI(NS) by noon Thursday. RUSI(NS) events are by invitation. If you are interested in attending and have not been invited, email RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com. RUSI(NS) events may be cancelled at short notice. Email RUSI(NS) if there is a question of an event occurring.

There is no RUSI(NS) event planned for August

15 August, Tuesday - "Why You Should Be Megagaming." 1-3 pm ADT. Online. For more info and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/why-you-should-be-megagaming-tickets-632140458127>.

16 August, Wednesday - Brookings Institution speaker Dr Michael O'Hanlon, "Military History for the Modern Strategist." 1830 EST. Livestream: <https://www.armywarcollege.edu/live/>. See poster at end of *Dispatches*.

16 August, Wednesday - Special Seminar with Larry Cameron about OSINT, the dark web and crypto for a defense and law enforcement audience. 3-5 pm. CoWork Halifax, 6156 Quinpool Road (ask at the front desk). Reservations are required as seating is limited. To register, email Jay Heisler jayoscarheisler@gmail.com.

5 September, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Ender's Legacy: Digital Wargames in Professional Military Education." 5-7 pm ADT. Online. For more info and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/enders-legacy-digital-wargames-in-professional-military-education-tickets-632470725967>.

Amended: 20 September, Wednesday - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker BGen Masson, Comd 5 Cdn Div. 1300-1500. Royal Artillery Park Officers' Mess. MTF.

New: 20 September, Wednesday - 2023 U.S. Naval Institute presentation "Competition or Confrontation? The Urgent Realities for the U.S. Navy When Facing China's PLAN." 2 pm EDT. Live stream on US Naval Institute YouTube Channel. More info and to register: <https://www.usni.org/events/competition-or-confrontation>.

3 October, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "Cardboard Meets Bits, Designing a WWII Tactical Leadership RPG." 7-9 pm ADT. Online. "The game strives to give players a tactically credible, emotionally authentic, and historically respectful experience of leading a US infantry company." For more info and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cardboard-meets-bits-designing-a-wwii-tactical-leadership-cprg-tickets-631859688337>.

17 October, Tuesday - "Re-Fighting History The War in the East, Boardgames, and Histories of WWII." 7-9 pm ADT. Online. For more info and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/re-fighting-history-the-war-in-the-east-boardgames-and-histories-of-wwii-tickets-684218986407>.

New: 18 October, Wednesday - RUSI(NS) Distinguished Speaker from the RCN, speaking about the Navy, particularly submarines. 1400-1600. Royal Artillery Park Officers' Mess. MTF.
Recommended reading:
Canada's Future Submarine Capability
<https://cdainstitute.ca/canadas-future-submarine-capability/>

12 December, Tuesday - Georgetown University Wargaming Society presentation "The Tyranny of Binaries: how wargame rules build narratives." 7-9 pm AST. Online. For more info and to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-tyranny-of-binaries-how-wargame-rules-build-narratives-tickets-633057882167>.

Publications:

Publications without links are available on request to RUSINovaScotia@gmail.com.

RUSI(NS) Paper "Kingston-class Ships – Less than meets the eye" by SWD Swan, 1 August 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/kingston-class/>

RUSI(NS) Comments "Naval Doctrine and Strategy," 25 July 2023, https://rusi-ns.ca/naval_doctrine_strategy/

RUSI(NS) Information Note "Brigade and Brigade Group," 15 July 2023, https://rusi-ns.ca/brigade_brigade_group/

RUSI(NS) Comments "Canada's Special Forces #Helicopters are Obsolete for the Role They are Tasked to Carry Out" by RUSI(NS) SAC, 10 Jul 23, https://rusi-ns.ca/sof_griffon/

RUSI(NS) Information Note "Armoured Fighting Vehicles," 2 July 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/armoured-fighting-vehicles/>

RUSI(NS) History & Heritage Paper "Canadian Corvettes in the Second World War – A General History" by Dr Richard Gimblett, 24 June 2023, <https://rusi-ns.ca/canadian-corvettes-in-the-second-world-war/>

RUSI(NS) Comments "Sudan Evacuation Shows Way Forward for Humanitarian Intervention" by Jay Heisler, 4 June 2023, https://rusi-ns.ca/sudan_evacuation/

Canadian Marine Industries and Shipbuilding Association *On Watch*, 2 August 2023
<https://www.cmisa.ca/cpages/on-watch-current>

Edmonton United Services Institute President's *Enews*, August 2023

Military Institute of Windsor *Communiqué*, Volume XLI, Number 7, July-August 2023

New: Nautical Professional Education Society of Canada *Seatimes*, August 2023.

Royal Alberta United Services Institute *Dispatches*, August 2023
<https://rausi.ca/component/acym/archive/208-rausi-dispatches-august-2023>

Royal Canadian Naval Association Admiral Hose Branch *Scuttlebutt*, August 2023

Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies – Australia Journal *United Service* Volume 74, Number 2, June 2023
<https://www.rusi.com.au/Publications.php#Journal>

Royal United Services Institute of Vancouver Island *Newsletter*, Volume 55, 2nd Quarter 2023


New: Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Defence Update*, Volume 20, Issue 1, 7 August 2023

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (Australia) *Quarterly Newsletter*, Volume 22, Issue 2, June 2023

Veterans Affairs Canada *Salute!*, July 2023, <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-vac/news-media/salute>

@RUSI NS on X:

@RUSI_NS posts may also be viewed by clicking on the icon at <https://RUSI-NS.ca>. To have something posted or reposted, email RUSI(NS).

<p>CDN Defence Academy/L'Académie cdn de la défense @CDACanadaACD 4 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: 🇺🇸@NDU_EDU Strategic Inflection Point: The Most Historically Significant and Fundamental Change in the Character of War Is Happening Now—While the Future Is Clouded in Mist and Uncertainty (Strategic Inflection Point: The Most Historically Significant and Fundamental Change in the Character of War Is Happening Now—While the Future Is Clouded in Mist and Uncertainty https://ndupress.ndu.edu/JFQ/Joint-Force-Quarterly-110/Article/Article/3447159/strategic-inflection-point-the-most-historically-significant-and-fundamental-ch/)</p>	
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Airbus Defence @AirbusDefence 10 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: #C295 for Canada CA has reached the next milestone: The #aircraft designated CC-295 'Kingfisher' for @RCAF_ARC operations completed the Polar Navigation test campaign, demonstrating its capability for search and rescue (SAR) missions in the Arctic. Read more about the C295 for Canada here: <https://airbus.com/en/products-services/defence/military-aircraft/c295/c295fwsar>

📷: © ADM(Mat)
(C295FWSAR Benefitting the “Great White North” from coast to coast)



Canadian Coast Guard @CoastGuardCAN 8 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: The steel cutting ceremony for our 1st Arctic Offshore Patrol Ship took place today at @IrvingShipbuild, in #Halifax, #NovaScotia marking another step forward in building our #FleetoftheFuture under the #NationalShipbuildingStrategy.
(Construction officially begins on the first Canadian Coast Guard Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-coast-guard/news/2023/08/construction-officially-begins-on-the-first-canadian-coast-guard-arctic-and-offshore-patrol-ship.html>)



James Patton Rogers @DrJamesRogers 1 Aug tweeted and RUSI(NS) retweeted: 1/ Military drones are spreading around the world at a record pace: this includes in the Arctic. My new article tracks the growing use of ‘Arctic drones’, arguing such systems are a sign of escalating tensions across the world’s more northerly expanse <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/geoj.12533>
(Arctic drones – A new security dilemma)

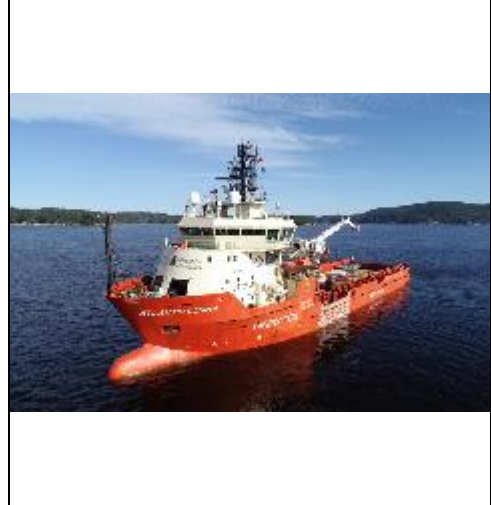


CBC News @CBCNews 13 Jul tweeted: A wildfire season like no other has tested Canada’s airborne firefighting capacity, revealing that one of the most forested countries in the world may be ill-equipped to deal with fires raging simultaneously from coast to coast.
(Is Canada ready for a fiery future? We tallied up all of its water bomber planes to find out
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/science/canada-aging-water-bomber-fleet-1.6873561>)

RUSI(NS) retweeted: CAN🇨🇦 needs more water bombers, possibly total 100. Would be interesting to read analysis that concludes with that number. Probably best to mix ownership between federal, provincial & commercial levels. Share situation knowledge, logistics, training, etc.
WaterBomber#AirPower!



Fisheries and Oceans @FishOceansCAN 24 Jul tweeted: Our fishery officers are beginning an important mission in the high seas as Operation North Pacific Guard casts off from Victoria. This mission's goal is to combat #IUUFishing in the North Pacific, including illegally caught Pacific Salmon. (Canada Leads First High Seas Mission to Fight Illegal Fishing in the North Pacific
<https://www.canada.ca/en/fisheries-oceans/news/2023/07/canada-leads-first-high-seas-mission-to-fight-illegal-fishing-in-the-north-pacific0.html>)
 RUSI(NS) retweeted: Operation North Pacific Guard = annual int'l law enforcement op on high seas of North Pacific to detect and deter illegal, unreported & unregulated fishing. #IUUFishing is security threat, used by adversarial states to bully others. Is CAN ready to counter it in our local seas?



“Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia” on Facebook:

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Defence Committee’s Report on UK Defence Procurement: A Missed Opportunity

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/defence-committees-report-uk-defence-procurement-missed-opportunity>



"Overall, there is need for recognition that first, defence buys a huge variety of goods and services from different market structures and that selection of the best procurement strategy will greatly depend on what is being bought. Second, the most demanding purchases which involve extensive development work and advanced manufacturing techniques are extremely difficult and have multiple risks. There is likely more need for expectation management."

Considerations for Canadian defence procurement.

How do Canadians view the military? Most see it as ‘old and antiquated,’ poll finds

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9874896/canadian-armed-forces-ipsos-poll-august-2023/>



"The poll found there were a number of reasons spurring Canadians’ worries about military readiness."

Yes, but do we the general public really understand what constitutes 'readiness?'

The Canadian Armed Forces defines readiness as: "a measure of the ability of an element of the CA to undertake an approved task. Readiness consists of two components, Operational Capability and Response Time:

- a. Operational Capability is defined as the actual capability of an element of asset of the CAF to perform the mission for which it is organized or designed; and
- b. Response Time is defined as the maximum time permitted for the designated CAG element or asset to assemble in a specified location possessing the approved Operational Capability and ready to undertake the assigned task."

Black Sea Zones

Ukraine has declared the water area of the internal and external roadsteads of six Russian ports on the Black Sea as 'war risk' areas (Coastal Warning 118 https://hydro.gov.ua/?page_id=144). 'War risk' area is not a defined term in the long standing "San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea" (<https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/resources/documents/article/other/57jmsu.htm>) or the new go-to "Newport Manual on the Law of Naval Warfare" (<https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/ils/vol101/iss1/1/>) but the former allows for Zones (para 105) whilst the latter treats Maritime Operational Zones (para 7.2.1).



Whether the declarations are just posturing and whether Ukraine can take effective action against the war risk areas, it is interesting and not unexpected to see the Russia-Ukraine war extend more throughout the Black Sea and to the movement of trade (merchant ships). Classic naval conflict.

Most Powerful Navies in the World in 2023, Ranked

<https://www.businessinsider.com/most-powerful-navies-in-world-in-2023-ranked-ships-submarines-2023-8>

"The ranking (from World Directory of Modern Military Warships <https://www.wdmmw.org/ranking.php>) looked at the number of warships and submarines alongside factors like the age of a fleet, its logistical support, and attack and defense capabilities.



It also looked at the balance of each force: How many asset types they had and whether they were concentrating their assets in one area. It included most ships..."

Canada is number 23. The significant (utility?) of the ranking is debatable. Probably many strategy students would argue against it. What may be more significant are the suitability of a state's navy to the state's needs of that navy, and the relationship of the naval state with allies and adversarial states.

Army aims to make 1 million artillery shells a year, starting in fiscal 2025

<https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2023/08/army-aims-make-1-million-artillery-shells-year-starting-fiscal-2025/389202/>



"...new computer-assisted manufacturing (and other) techniques are helping to reduce complexity and time in manufacturing the new shells."

These are good lessons to learn from the Russia-Ukraine war. Improving logistics so that defence production can support the sort of large-scale/mass conflicts that are ongoing and threatening is the sort of deterrence we need to avoid (and, if unfortunately necessary, win) those conflicts. Is Canada learning and applying those lessons and techniques?

Construction Starts on Canadian Coast Guard's Arctic Patrol Ships

<https://maritime-executive.com/article/construction-starts-on-canadian-coast-guard-s-arctic-patrol-ships>

"The Canadian Coast Guard's new Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ships will operate as a primary platform to support fisheries enforcement missions on Canada's east coast, including Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization patrols. They will also support search and rescue and icebreaking operations on the east coast and will be able to support environmental response and aids to navigation."



Other Sources:

#Arctic

Knowledge is Power: Greenland, Great Powers, and Lessons from the Second World War

<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/knowledge-power-greenland-great-powers-lessons-second-world-war/>

#Canadian Coast Guard

Construction Starts on Canadian Coast Guard's Arctic Patrol Ships

<https://maritime-executive.com/article/construction-starts-on-canadian-coast-guard-s-arctic-patrol-ships>

#defence policy #Indo-Pacific

Japan's Military Is Getting Ready to Take on a Rising China

https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2023/08/08/japans_military_is_getting_ready_to_take_on_a_rising_china_971421.html

For comparison.

#drones

Sea drones: What are they and how much do they cost?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66373052>

Submerged Sentinels: Ushering in a New Maritime Era with Unmanned Underwater Vehicles

<https://www.financialexpress.com/business/defence-submerged-sentinels-ushering-in-a-new-maritime-era-with-unmanned-underwater-vehicles-3204046/>

#force design

(New Zealand) Future Force Design Principles 2023

<https://www.defence.govt.nz/assets/publication/file/23-0195-Future-Force-Design-Principles-WEB.PDF>

For comparison.

#Indo-Pacific

PLA military operation possible as early as mid-August against a small Taiwanese island

<https://sundayguardianlive.com/top-five/pla-military-operation-possible-as-early-as-mid-august-against-a-small-taiwanese-island>

#procurement

The US needs to modernize its approach to munitions

<https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/2023/08/04/the-us-needs-to-modernize-its-approach-to-munitions/>
Canada should be taking note of the need to modernize its defence procurement.

#Russia

The Anatomy of Prigozhin's Mutiny and the Future of Russia's Mercenary Industry

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-anatomy-of-prigozhins-mutiny-and-the-future-of-russias-mercenary-industry-part-one/>

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-anatomy-of-prigozhins-mutiny-and-the-future-of-russias-mercenary-industry-part-two/>

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-anatomy-of-prigozhins-mutiny-and-the-future-of-russias-mercenary-industry-part-three/>

#Russia-Ukraine War

Key concern: A slide into unrestricted naval warfare in the Black Sea

<https://threadreaderapp.com/thread/1687898972260552704.html>

Was There Really a Breakthrough of the "Naval Blockade" in the Black Sea?

<https://latifundist.com/en/cards/74-chi-buv-naspravdi-proriv-morskoyi-blokadi-u-chornomu-mori-abo-yak-zmi-povelisya-na-odne-povidomlennya-z-twitteru>

Stakes are high as Ukraine's offensive starts to secure a military advantage

<https://www.ft.com/content/8e831ab5-c99f-4b59-9b9b-125697f86cf4>

The Russian Invasion of Ukraine Is Boosting the Potential for U.S. Influence Abroad

Some forecasting: <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/russian-invasion-ukraine-boosting-potential-us-influence-abroad>

A Sobering Analysis Of Ukraine's Counteroffensive From The Front

<https://www.thedrive.com/the-war-zone/a-sobering-analysis-of-ukraines-counteroffensive-from-the-front>

Back in the Trenches: Why New Technology Hasn't Revolutionized Warfare in Ukraine

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/back-trenches>

#artillery

Russia's Artillery War in Ukraine: Challenges and Innovations

<https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/russias-artillery-war-ukraine-challenges-and-innovations>

#drones

Ukraine war sees uncrewed surface vessels mature into a serious threat

<https://www.navylookout.com/ukraine-war-sees-uncrewed-surface-vessels-mature-into-a-serious-threat/>

See graphic at end of Dispatches.

#economic warfare

As the Ukraine War Drags On, It's Time to Reassess the Impacts of Sanctions

<https://www.cigionline.org/articles/as-the-ukraine-war-drag-on-its-time-to-reassess-the-impacts-of-sanctions/>

After attacking Ukraine wheat exports, Russia faces own shipping challenge

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/after-attacking-ukraine-wheat-exports-russia-faces-own-shipping-challenge-2023-08-08/>

#warfare

Looking back to look forward: Autonomous systems, military revolutions, and the importance of cost

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402390.2022.2164570>

Other:

The Watch

I am pleased to announce the launch of our new Website, Facebook Page (FB), and *The Watch* Issue V4 – The Arctic and Homeland Defense.

We request your assistance in amplifying *The Watch* Website and Facebook page with your network of subscribers and participants of the Royal United Services Institute of Nova Scotia.

New Website: <https://thewatch-journal.com/>

New Facebook Page

(FB): <https://www.facebook.com/TheWatchJournal>

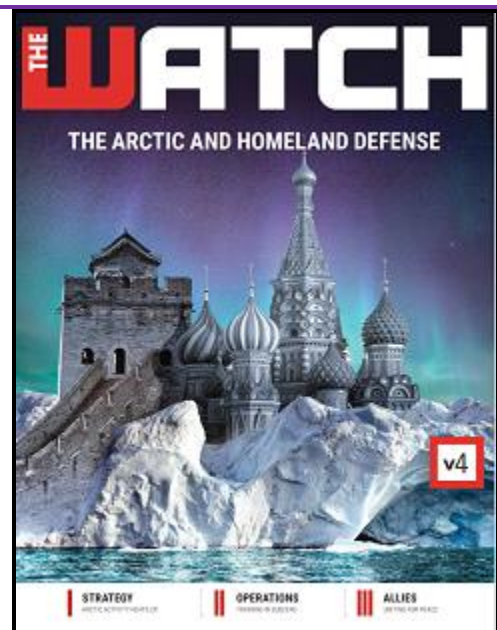
New Issue: The Arctic and Homeland

Defense: https://thewatch-journal.com/TheWatch_V4071223.pdf

The Watch is a professional military journal on Homeland Defense published by U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM).

The journal is published for our foreign partners and allies to include senior military leaders, government officials, and academic professionals.

The goal of *The Watch* is to strengthen U.S. security partnerships and provide an international forum to address global Homeland Defense issues and challenges.



The Watch community is an important platform for us to share information on emerging threats, innovative ideas, cutting-edge technologies, and engage with other influential leaders in the field of Homeland Defense.

We invite RUSI(NS) members to contribute original articles on Homeland Defense topics affecting the defense and security of North America and Canada.

Thank you for being a member of *The Watch* Community!

Very respectfully,
Dr. Ben

Dr. Benjamin P. Gochman, DAFC
Program Manager, USNORTHCOM The Watch Military Journal
Chief, Engagements
Arctic, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean
Directorate of Operations (N&NC/J39)
HQ NORAD - USNORTHCOM/J3

Changes to the Baggage Policy for Members of Military Travelling on Air Canada Flights

https://www.aircanada.com/content/dam/aircanada/portal/documents/PDF/en/military_baggage_policy.pdf

Maple Leaf Navy Warships of the World Updated August 5, 2023

<https://seawavespress.com/world-warships/>



The graphic is a dark blue rectangular box with a yellow horizontal bar at the top. On the left side of the top bar is the Defence Intelligence logo, which consists of a crown above a shield with a cross. To the right of the logo, the text 'Defence Intelligence' is written in white. On the right side of the top bar, the text 'UPDATE ON UKRAINE' is written in white, with '04 August 2023' below it. The yellow bar contains the text 'INTELLIGENCE UPDATE' in black. Below the bar, there are three bullet points in white text.

Defence Intelligence

UPDATE ON UKRAINE
04 August 2023

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- In the last two weeks, Russia has conducted several waves of strikes against Ukrainian ports on the Danube River using Iranian-produced one-way attack uncrewed aerial vehicles (OWA UAVs). It is highly likely attempting to coerce international shipping into stopping trading via the ports.
- OWA UAVs have struck targets as close as 200 metres from the Romanian border, suggesting that Russia has evolved its risk appetite for conducting strikes near NATO territory.
- There is a realistic possibility that Russia is using OWA UAVs to strike this area in the belief they are less likely to risk escalation than cruise missiles: Russia likely considers them as acceptably accurate, and they have much smaller warheads than cruise missiles.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- During the night of 3-4 August 2023, the Russian Navy landing ship Olenegorsky Gornyak almost certainly suffered serious damage after being struck while near the Black Sea Fleet's (BSF) Novorossiysk base.
- Images of the vessel listing at 30-40 degrees suggest that several watertight compartments were breached, or that the crew's damage control efforts were ineffectual.
- Routinely assigned to Russia's Northern Fleet, the vessel has augmented the BSF since Russia's invasion of Ukraine and has often ferried military and civilian traffic between Russia and occupied Crimea when the Kerch Bridge has been disrupted due to attacks.
- The 3600 tonne, 113 metre long Olenegorsky Gornyak represents the largest Russian naval vessel seriously damaged or destroyed since the sinking of the cruiser Moskva on 13 April 2022. This is a significant blow to the BSF, which previously relocated most of its units to Novorossiysk due to the high threat to Sevastopol.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- The annual celebrations of Russia's Airborne Forces (VDV) Day on 2 August 2023 have been overshadowed by an apparently unsanctioned disclosure of the scope of the casualties the elite force has suffered in Ukraine.
- In a recorded address for VDV Day, the VDV's Commander-in-Chief General Colonel Mikhail Teplinsky said that 8500 paratroopers had been wounded and later returned to duty or had refused to leave the front line at all. The video was quickly deleted from the Russian MoD's official channels.
- He did not comment on how many troops had been killed or were too seriously wounded to return to duty. However, extrapolating Teplinsky's figures endorses the assessment that at least 50 per cent of the 30,000 paratroopers who deployed to Ukraine in 2022 have been killed or wounded.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- The Russian Air Force continues to consistently deploy considerable resources in support of land operations in Ukraine, but without decisive operational effect.
- Over the summer, Russian tactical combat aircraft have typically carried out over 100 sorties a day, but these are almost always restricted to operating over Russian-controlled territory due to the threat from Ukrainian air defences. Russia has attempted to overcome this issue by increasingly using basic free-fall bombs with range-extending glide attachments. Aircraft can release these many kilometres from their targets, but they have yet to demonstrate consistent accuracy.
- At the start of Ukraine's southern counter-offensive from June 2023, Russian attack helicopters proved effective. However, in recent weeks Russia appears to have been less able to generate effective tactical airpower in the south.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- On 4 August 2023, President Putin signed into law a measure which will allow Rosgvardia, the Russian National Guard, to be equipped with heavy weaponry.
- A sprawling organisation of up to 200,000 frontline personnel, Rosgvardia was created in its modern form in 2016 and is led by Putin's former bodyguard Viktor Zolotov. The decision to strengthen the force follows the abortive Wagner mutiny of June 2023.
- Despite Zolotov's claim that his force performed 'excellently' during the mutiny, there is no evidence that Rosgvardia carried out any effective action against Wagner: exactly the sort of internal security threat it was designed to repress. With Zolotov previously suggesting that heavy equipment should include artillery and attack helicopters, the move suggests that the Kremlin is doubling down on resourcing Rosgvardia as one of the key organisations to ensure regime security.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- On 4 August 2023, the Russian merchant tanker (MT) Sig was attacked and disabled near the Kerch Strait, apparently by an Uncrewed Surface Vessel (USV). This came a day after a similar attack on the Olenegorsky Gornyak landing ship, and two days after an apparently foiled attack on Russian patrol boats while they were likely escorting the Russian merchant vessel (MV) Sparta IV.
- Although civilian-flagged, MT Sig and MV Sparta IV have long been contracted to ship fuel and military supplies between Russia and Syria. Since 28 February 2022, Russian military ships have not been able to pass through the Bosphorus, leaving Russian military forces in Syria and the Mediterranean heavily dependent upon Sig, Sparta IV, and a handful of other civilian vessels.
- The attacks show that USV operations are increasingly a major component of modern naval warfare and can be turned against the weakest links of Russia's sea supply lanes.

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- Over the last week, the Russian authorities have likely increased their ongoing efforts to disrupt Russian citizens' access to Virtual Private Networks (VPNs). Reports suggest many of the most popular VPNs have become unusable in some regions of Russia.
- VPNs allow users to obfuscate their access to the internet, to maintain privacy and to bypass state-imposed censorship. VPNs are hugely popular in Russia, despite being illegal since 2017. They allow users to access objective international news sources, including about the war in Ukraine.
- VPNs likely represent the greatest single vulnerability within the Russian state's attempts at pervasive domestic information control. As well as increased technical disruption, the Russian state has also launched a public information campaign, attempting to scare citizens into avoiding VPNs by claiming they put their personal data at risk.

Evolution of Ukrainian Navy Maritime Drones, 2022-23

Illustrations provisional. Approximate scale

Prototypes & early missions

- Summer 2022

1st generation maritime drone

- Sevastopol Sep 21, 2022
- Sevastopol Oct 29, 2022
- Novorossiysk Nov 18, 2022

Evolved designs

- Revealed Mar 22, 2023

Toloka TK-150 underwater drone

- Revealed Apr 26, 2023

Magura V5 maritime drone

- Sevastopol Mar 22, 2023
- Ivan Khurs, May 24, 2023
- Pricazovye, Jun 11, 2023
- Sevastopol, July 16, 2023

Weaponized Jet Ski

- Sevastopol, July 16, 2023

Evolved design, possibly prior to Magura V5

- Reported July 29 2023

H I Sutton, Covert Shores www.hisutton.com

From: <http://www.hisutton.com/Ukraine-Maritime-Drones-Evolution.html>