

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 10:30 am ET on April 1. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 2 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian forces are reportedly continuing to shell Ukrainian energy infrastructure amid ongoing negotiations over details of the ceasefire agreement on energy infrastructure strikes, indicating that Russia may be exploiting the ceasefire's vague or unfinalized terms to strike Ukrainian energy infrastructure with shorter-range artillery, but not longer-range cruise missiles or one-way strike drones. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha and Kherson Oblast Military Administration Head Oleksandr Prokudin stated on April 1 that Russian forces shelled energy infrastructure in Kherson City on the morning of April 1, leaving at least 45,000 Kherson residents without electricity.[1] Sybiha stated on April 1 that Russian forces have recently violated the energy infrastructure ceasefire several times.[2] The ceasefire on energy infrastructure strikes is reportedly a moratorium on long-range strikes, but it remains unclear whether the moratorium's terms prohibit striking energy infrastructure with shorter-range tube or rocket artillery.[3] Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on March 11 that Ukraine proposed a "temporary ceasefire in the sky" that would include "missile, bomb, and long-range drone" strikes.[4] US, Ukrainian, and Russian officials reached some agreements for a temporary ceasefire on strikes against energy infrastructure on March 25 but not provide details on whether the ceasefire is exclusively limited to longer-range weapons.[5] Russian forces will likely continue to leverage their positions along the east (left) bank of the Dnipro River and other frontline areas to shell and destroy Ukrainian energy infrastructure in near rear areas unless the energy infrastructure ceasefire includes provisions against such shelling. Russian shelling against Ukrainian energy infrastructure violates the spirit of the ceasefire and US President Donald Trump's intention to utilize the energy infrastructure ceasefire as a confidence-building measure to work towards a general ceasefire in the future. Ukrainian, Russian, and US officials have yet to formalize the ceasefire or present its exact terms.

Senior Russian officials continue to reiterate the Russian demand for the elimination of the "root causes" of the war in Ukraine as a precondition for a peace agreement — a reference to Russia's initial war demands that directly contradict US President Donald Trump's goal to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov claimed on April 1 that the Trump administration is attempting "some kind of scheme" to first achieve a ceasefire and then move to "other models and schemes" to end the war.[6] Ryabkov further claimed that the Trump administration's plan to resolve the war in Ukraine does not address the "root causes" of the war and that Russia, therefore, cannot accept the US proposal. Senior Russian officials have repeatedly defined these root causes as NATO's alleged violation of obligations not to expand

eastward and Ukraine's alleged violations of the rights of Russian-speaking minorities in Ukraine.[7] The Kremlin's demands to address these so-called "root causes" amount to a demand for the full capitulation of Ukraine with the installation of a pro-Russian government in Ukraine and long-term commitments of Ukrainian neutrality — the same demands Putin has made since before the full-scale invasion in February 2022.[8] Russian President Vladimir Putin recently intensified efforts to portray the current Ukrainian government as illegitimate and unable to engage in negotiations to end the war in Ukraine in an effort to undermine Ukraine's role as a legitimate participant in discussions about the resolution of the war.[9] Putin and Russian diplomats made thinly veiled demands in late March 2025 for regime change in Ukraine by having external parties establish a "temporary international administration" in Ukraine under the auspices of the United Nations (UN).[10] US Department of State Spokesperson Tammy Bruce stated on March 31 that Trump did not appreciate Russia's suggestion to establish a "temporary administration" in Ukraine.[11] Bruce also noted that Trump understands that negotiations will "require both Russia and Ukraine to make tough decisions and compromises." Russia has so far refused to make any concessions and rejected the US-Ukrainian 30-day general ceasefire when Trump called Putin on March 18.

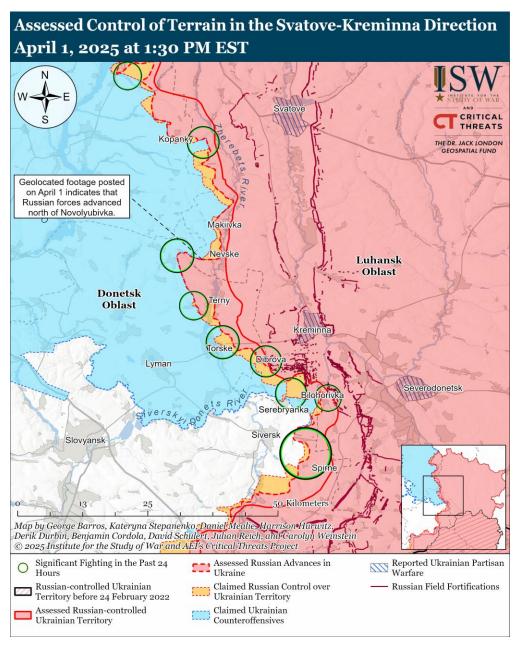
Russian forces are expanding their bridgehead northeast of Lyman as part of a mutually reinforcing effort to create conditions for the seizure of Borova and Lyman in the coming months. Footage published on March 28 and geolocated on April 1 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced northwest of Novolyubivka (northeast of Lyman) and likely seized Novolyubivka itself.[12] Russian forces recently made confirmed advances southeast of Nove (west of Novolyubivka), and Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated on March 31 that Russian forces advanced to the southern outskirts of Katerynivka (northwest of Novolyubivka).[13] Russian forces advanced across the Zherebets River onto the west (right) bank in early January 2025 and have slowly expanded their bridgehead on the right bank over the last three months.[14] Russian forces began efforts to push Ukrainian forces from their positions on the east (left) bank of the Zherebets River in late 2023 and have only recently established a relatively stable bridgehead from which Russian forces can launch further offensive operations.[15] Russian milbloggers and Mashovets have consistently credited elements of the Russian 144th and 3rd motorized rifle divisions (20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) with making the initial advances onto the west bank and then expanding this bridgehead.[16]

Russian forces appear to be leveraging a significant manpower advantage to make advances in the area. The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated on March 31 that Russian forces have almost exclusively conducted infantry assaults in the area since January 2025 and rarely use armored vehicles in the area.[17] ISW has also not observed footage of any notable Russian mechanized assaults in the area in 2025. Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces stated on March 31 that Russian forces intensified infantry attacks in the Lyman direction and have significantly more infantry in the area, mostly including well-trained contract servicemembers (*kontraktniki*).[18] Another Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated on March 24 that Russian forces have a 10-to-one manpower advantages over Ukrainian forces in some areas of this direction.[19] The Russian military command appears to be reinforcing and replacing manpower losses among frontline units of the 3rd and 144th motorized rifle divisions, as these formations have been in the area since at least 2023 and do not appear to have withdrawn for rest and reconstitution at any point.[20]

Russian forces can leverage their expanded bridgehead northeast of Lyman to support the seizure of Borova or Lyman in the coming months. Russian forces initially focused on advancing from Ivanivka towards Kolodyazi (southwest of Ivanivka) in the general direction of Lyman but recently appear to have refocused their efforts on advancing northwest of Ivanivka towards Nove and Katerynivka in the general direction of Borova.[21] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 1 that Russian forces are attempting to connect their bridgehead near Novolyubivka with a smaller bridgehead on the west bank near Makiivka (approximately eight kilometers away).[22] Russian forces may be attempting to unite these bridgeheads to create a stable salient to support attacks southeast of Borova. Russian forces have recently struggled to advance east and southeast of Borova after advancing northeast of the settlement in January 2025, and the Russian forces may be creating the salient northeast of Lyman to support future offensive operations against the southern tip of the Novoserhiivka-Druzhelyubivka-Novyi Myr line (east to southeast of Borova).[23] The Russian military command may attempt to outflank Ukrainian defenses in these settlements in order to force Ukrainian troops to withdraw and enable Russian advances east of and into Borova in the coming months.

Russian forces may also attempt to leverage the expansion of the bridgehead on the west bank of the Zherebets River near Ivanivka to support future Russian operations to seize Lyman. Russian forces may attempt to advance toward Karlivka from Nove and toward Drobysheve from Kolodyazi in an effort to establish defensible positions along the Karlivka-Shandryholove-Drobysheve line (on the east bank of the Nitrius River). Russian forces could attempt to leverage such advances along the Nitrius River to challenge Ukrainian positions in Lyman from the northeast. Russian forces may also simultaneously attempt to intensify offensive operations near Torske (east of Lyman) to push on Lyman from the east. Further Russian advances towards Borova and Lyman are part of an enduring Russian effort to push Ukrainian forces from positions on the east bank of the Oskil River and attack further into western Kharkiv Oblast and set conditions to attack the Ukrainian fortress belt in Donetsk Oblast from the north.[24]

Russian forces may also leverage their bridgehead northeast of Lyman to seize the remaining one percent of Luhansk Oblast under Ukrainian control and complete Russia's long-standing goal of seizing the entirety of Luhansk Oblast. Russian forces have been trying to seize the last one percent of Luhansk Oblast (about 266 square kilometers) since late November 2024. Russian forces first seized the entirety of Luhansk Oblast on July 3, 2022, but Ukrainian forces later pushed Russian forces back from the Luhansk Oblast administrative border during Ukraine's Fall 2022 counteroffensive.[25] Russian officials have long cited the seizure of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts as a goal of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and have repeatedly demanded international recognition of Russia's annexation of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts as a condition of peace, although Russian forces do not fully control any of these oblasts.[26] The Kremlin would likely exploit the second seizure and retention of Luhansk Oblast to gain leverage during ongoing ceasefire negotiations and future peace negotiations, which ISW continues to assess as a key motivating factor for Russian forces recently intensified ground activity in Ukraine.[27] The Kremlin could also leverage the seizure of Luhansk Oblast as a significant victory to its domestic audience and to justify years of brutal personnel losses in Ukraine. ISW continues to assess that Russian officials are intentionally stalling the ceasefire and peace negotiations in hopes of gaining more territory to leverage during future peace negotiations.[28]

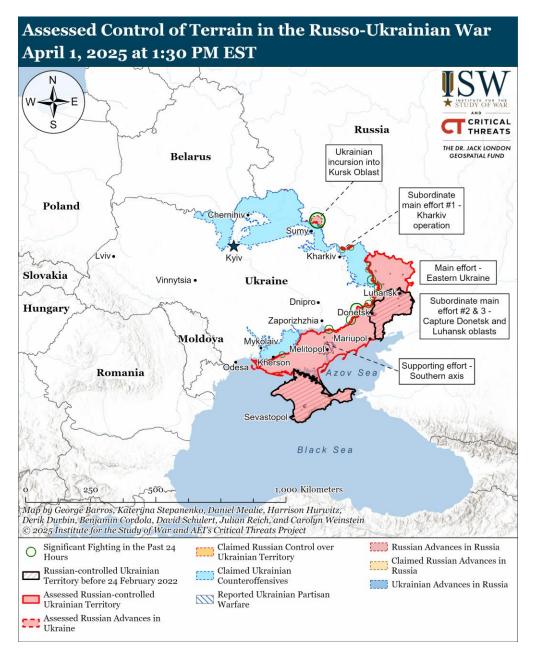


Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on April 1 to raise salaries for Russian governors starting January 2026, aligning the pay with that of Russia's deputy prime ministers. [29] The delayed salary increase in 2026 likely seeks to further secure loyalty from regional leaders amid Russia's continued uncertainty about Russia's future, in particular, Russia's sustained war efforts and the Russian economy's macroeconomic health. The decision to implement this change in 2026 as opposed to immediately could provide the Kremlin time to rebalance its budget and gather resources to sustain the spending increase, as the Russian government already approved Russia's 2025 budget in late 2024. Putin signed a decree in December 2024 approving the 2025 federal budget and the 2026–2027 draft federal budget, which would prioritize spending on Russia's national security and defense. [30] Putin did not sign such a decree sooner likely due to Russia's ongoing economic strain from the war in Ukraine and Western sanctions against Russia. Russia continues to face staggering

costs required to maintain its war effort against Ukraine, with mounting economic strain, labor shortages, and systemic corruption threatening the sustainability of the Russian defense industrial base (DIB).[31]

Key Takeaways:

- Russian forces are reportedly continuing to shell Ukrainian energy infrastructure amid ongoing negotiations over details of the ceasefire agreement on energy infrastructure strikes, indicating that Russia may be exploiting the ceasefire's vague or unfinalized terms to strike Ukrainian energy infrastructure with shorterrange artillery but not longer-range cruise missiles or one-way strike drones.
- Senior Russian officials continue to reiterate the Russian demand for the elimination of the "root causes" of the war in Ukraine as a precondition for a peace agreement a reference to Russia's initial war demands that directly contradict US President Donald Trump's goal to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine.
- Russian forces are expanding their bridgehead northeast of Lyman as part of a mutually reinforcing effort to create conditions for the seizure of Borova and Lyman in the coming months.
- Russian forces can leverage their expanded bridgehead northeast of Lyman to support the seizure of Borova or Lyman in the coming months.
- Russian forces may also leverage their bridgehead northeast of Lyman to seize the remaining one percent of Luhansk Oblast under Ukrainian control and complete Russia's long-standing goal of seizing the entirety of Luhansk Oblast.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on April 1 to raise salaries for Russian governors starting January 2026, aligning the pay with that of Russia's deputy prime ministers.
- Russian forces recently advanced in Kursk and Belgorod oblasts and in the Lyman, Pokrovsk, and Kurakhove directions.



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.

- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- 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
- Russian Supporting Effort Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Alleged Ceasefire Violations

Ukraine and Russia have not yet concluded a maritime ceasefire agreement due to ongoing Russian demands for Western sanctions relief. Negotiations regarding the conditions of the ceasefire on strikes against energy infrastructure are ongoing, and the resolution of these negotiations remains unclear.

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed without evidence on April 1 that Ukrainian forces struck electrical substations in Novohorivka, occupied Zaporizhia Oblast and Smorodino, Belgorod Oblast on March 31.[32]

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

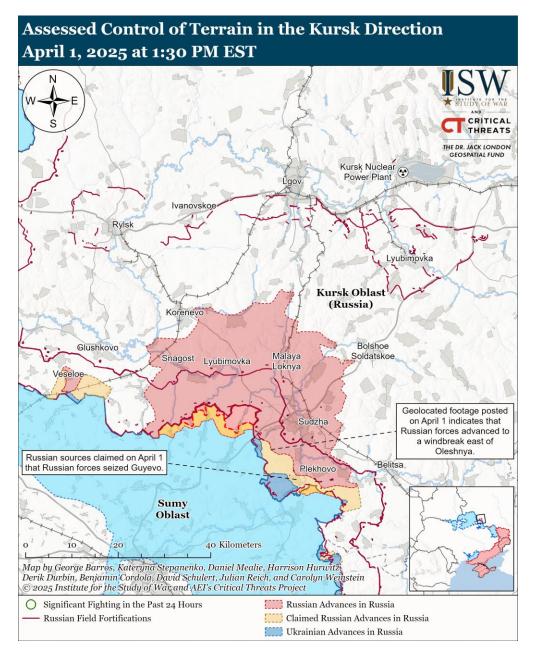
Russian forces recently advanced along the Sumy-Kursk Oblast border amid continued Russian efforts to push Ukrainian forces from Kursk Oblast.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 1 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced east of Oleshnya (southwest of Sudzha).[33]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on April 1 that Russian forces seized Guyevo (south of Sudzha), Kursk Oblast, and Veselivka and Volodymyrivka, Sumy Oblast (both north of Sumy City). [34]

Russian sources claimed that fighting continued northeast of Sumy City near Basivka and Zhuravka and south of Sudzha near Guyevo on April 1.[35]

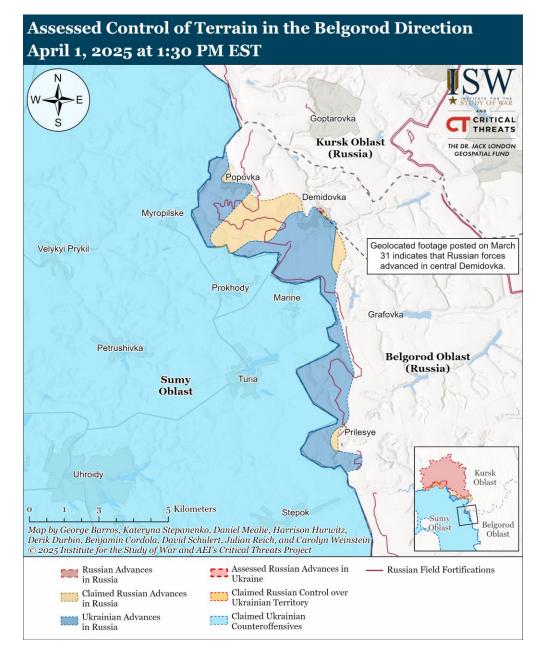
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly operating near Guyevo.[36]



Russian forces recently advanced in northwestern Belgorod Oblast.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 31 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in central Demidovka (northwest of Belgorod City).[37]

Russian milbloggers claimed on April 1 that fighting continued near Demidovka and Popovka (west of Demidovka).[38]



Russian Main Effort - Eastern Ukraine

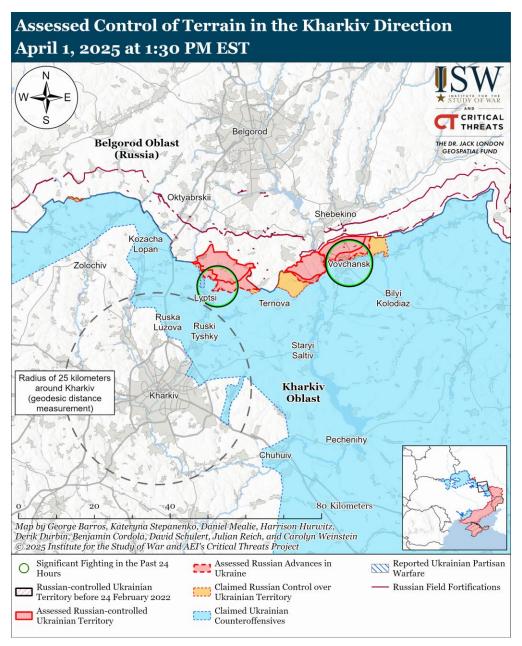
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations north of Kharkiv City toward Lyptsi and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 1 but did not advance.[39]

An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kharkiv direction reported on April 1 that Russian forces have become more active near Vovchansk in the past three weeks (since roughly March 11), likely because Russian forces recently transferred new reinforcements to the area.[40] The officer stated that Russian forces have been conducting mechanized assaults using armored fighting vehicles (AFVs),

infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), and tanks. The officer also noted that Russian forces recently intensified guided glide bomb strikes on Vovchansk.

A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kharkiv direction reported on March 31 that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian Buk air defense system in Kharkiv Oblast on an unspecified date between March 23 and March 29.[41]



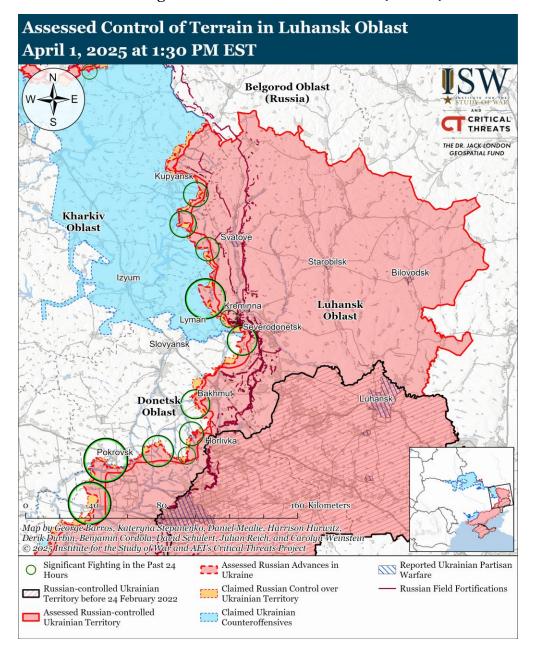
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on April 1 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian sources claimed that Russian forces advanced into Kindrashivka (north of Kupyansk) and Kotlyarivka (southeast of Kupyansk).[42]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near the international border near Fyholivka and Kamyanka; east of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka and Petropavlivka; and southeast of Kupyansk near Pishchane on March 31 and April 1.[43]

A Ukrainian deputy regimental commander stated on April 1 that Russian forces are attempting to build pontoon crossings and transfer equipment to the west bank of the Oskil River near Dvorichna (northeast of Kupyansk).[44] The deputy commander stated that Russian forces have increased guided glide bomb strikes on Kupyansk in an attempt to strike Ukrainian personnel and equipment concentrations and ground lines of communication (GLOCs) in the area.



Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Nova Kruhlaykivka and east of Borova near Nadiya on March 31 and April 1 but did not advance.[45]

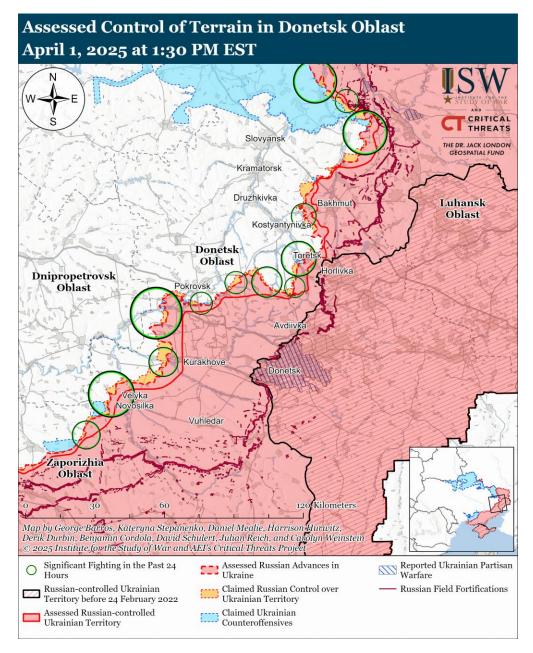
See topline text for reports of Russian activity in the Lyman direction.

<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)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 1 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on April 1 that Russian forces advanced 300 meters near Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk).[46]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks north of Siversk near Serebryanka; northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka; east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske; and southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka on March 31 and April 1.[47] Ukraine's Luhansk Group of Forces reported on March 29 that Russian forces recently conducted a series of assaults using civilian vehicles and a dozen motorcycles with armored vehicle support in fields east of Ivano-Darivka and west of Zolotarivka (east of Siversk).[48]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on April 1 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself, southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka, and south of Chasiv Yar near Predtechyne on March 31 and April 1.[49]

Unconfirmed claim: A Russian milblogger claimed on April 1 that Russian forces advanced northwest and southwest of Novomarkove (north of Chasiv Yar).[50]

A commander of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction reported on March 31 that Russian forces are attempting to move around the area via pipelines.[51] The commander also noted that Russian forces only conduct assaults with armored vehicle support during foggy or rainy conditions, when Ukrainian forces' ability to use drones to detect moving armored vehicles is inhibited.

A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction reported on April 1 that Ukrainian forces recently repelled a platoon-sized Russian mechanized assault comprised of at least three armored vehicles, 18 motorcycles, and two other vehicles.[52]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 331st Airborne (VDV) Regiment (98th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Chasiv Yar direction.[53]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction on April 1 but did not make any confirmed advances.

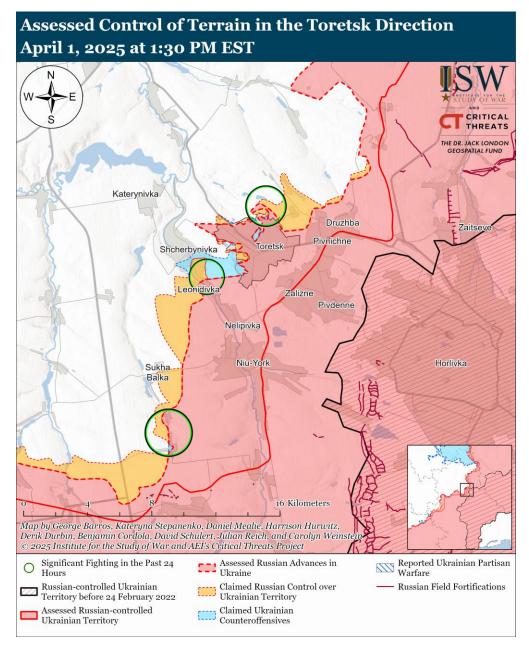
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on March 31 and April 1 that Russian forces advanced north of Toretsk near Druzhba, near the Tsentralna Mine in southwestern Toretsk, and to the outskirts of Valentynivka (southwest of Toretsk).[54]

Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk in the direction of Dyliivka; west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka; and southwest of Toretsk near Panteleymonivka, Oleksandropil, and Valentynivka on March 31 and April 1.[55]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets stated on March 31 that Russian forces are intensifying assaults on the northern flank of Toretsk.[56]

An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Toretsk direction reported on April 1 that small Russian infantry groups are attempting to advance as far as possible within Toretsk and consolidate their positions.[57]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 9th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Toretsk.[58]



Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 1 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced on the eastern outskirts of Bohdanivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[59]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that southern and northwestern Uspenivka are contested "grey zones," that Russian forces advanced southeast of Bohdanivka, and that elements of the Russian 80th Tank Regiment (90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) advanced near Kotlyarivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[60]

Russian forces attacked near Pokrovsk itself; northeast of Pokrovsk near Tarasivka and Oleksandropil; east of Pokrovsk near Yelyzavetivka, Vodyane Druhe, Promin, Kalynove, and toward Malynivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Zelene and Novoukrainka; southwest of

Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Serhiivka, Shevchenko, Novoserhiivka, Novooleksandrivka, Preobrazhenka, Uspenivka, Udachne, Sribne, Kotlyarivka, Troitske, Horikhove, and Bohdanivka on March 31 and April 1.[61] Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Shevchenko.[62]

Geolocated footage published on April 1 indicates that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault west of Preobrazhenka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[63]

Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Viktor Trehubov reported on April 1 that Russian forces are focusing their attacks east of Pokrovsk and shifting away from efforts to envelop the town from the west.[64] Trehubov noted that Russian forces are attempting to interdict Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) near Pokrovsk and are using motorcycles, buggies, and electric scooters to make up for armored vehicle shortages. Trehubov also stated that Russian forces are using electric scooters, Soviet-era T-55 tanks, and civilian cars to transport personnel to the frontline in order to minimize personnel losses due to Ukrainian drone strikes.[65] The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 1 that Russian forces do not use armored vehicles in the direction, instead attacking on foot and with various drone types.[66] The battalion commander stated that Russian forces have a five-to-one artillery advantage compared to Ukrainian forces in the Pokrovsk direction.[67]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction. [68]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Kurakhove direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 31 and April 1 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced northwest of Andriivka (west of Kurakhove) and that Russian forces recently seized Rozlyv (southwest of Kurakhove).[69] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) credited elements of the Russian 36th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) and 43oth Motorized Rifle Regiment (likely a mobilized regiment) with the seizure of Rozlyv.[70]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on April 1 that Russian forces recently advanced near Bahatyr and Oleksiivka (both west of Kurakhove).[71]

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Oleksiivka and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv on March 31 and April 1.[72]

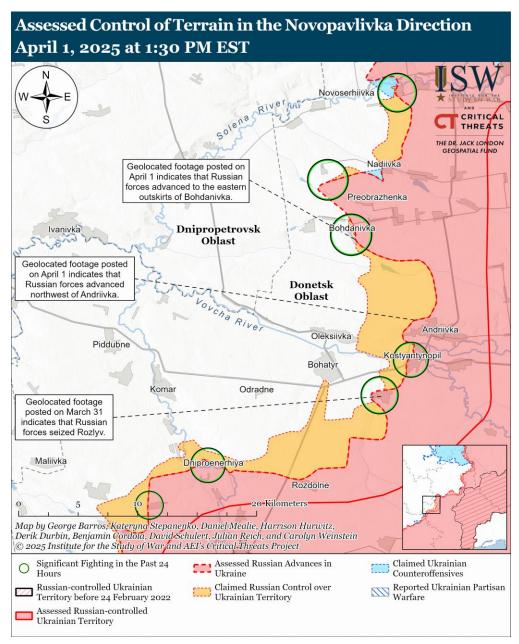
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Zorya (northwest of Kurakhove).[73]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on April 1 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced east of Dniproenerhiya (northwest of Velyka Novosilka) and east and south of Shevchenko (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[74]

Russian forces attacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Burlatske and Dniproenerhiya; west of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Vilne Pole; and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka and Novopil on March 31 and April 1.[75] Geolocated footage published on March 31 indicates that Russian

forces recently conducted a platoon-sized mechanized assault with three armored vehicles southeast and east Skudne (northwest of Velyka Novosilka) but did not advance.[76]



<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

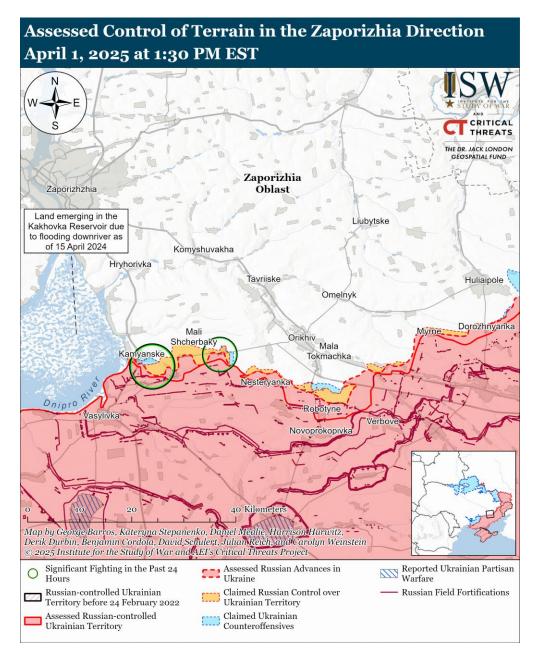
Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 1 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on March 31 and April 1 that Russian forces advanced northwest of Robotyne near Shcherbaky, Mali Shcherbaky, Lobkove, Kamyanske, and Stepove.[77] A milblogger claimed that positional fighting near Kamyanske is turning into meeting engagements, suggesting that the combat has recently become more active.[78] The milblogger claimed

that elements of the Russian 7th Airborne (VDV) Division advanced in southern Lobkove and southwest of Stepove toward northern and central Lobkove.[79] The milblogger also claimed Russian forces are pushing Ukrainian forces out of Nesteryanka (northwest of Robotyne) toward Novoandriivka (northwest of Robotyne).[80]

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on March 31 and April 1 that Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Robotyne near Novodanylivka and northwest of Robotyne near Mali Shcherbaky, Lobkove, Shcherbaky, Kamyanske, and Stepove.[81] Russian milbloggers claimed on March 31 and April 1 that fighting continued near Kamyanske and toward Lobkove.[82] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 1 that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked Russian forces near Stepove and Lobkove.[83]

Ukrainian Zaporizhia Oblast Military Administration Head Ivan Fedorov reported on April 1 that Russian forces recently are increasingly moving military equipment towards the frontline via occupied areas of Zaporizhia Oblast, particularly Melitopol.[84] Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned on March 15 and 18 that Russian forces may conduct an offensive operation in southern Ukraine, and the movement of military equipment to the Melitopol area may be an indicator of preparations for such offensive operations.[85]

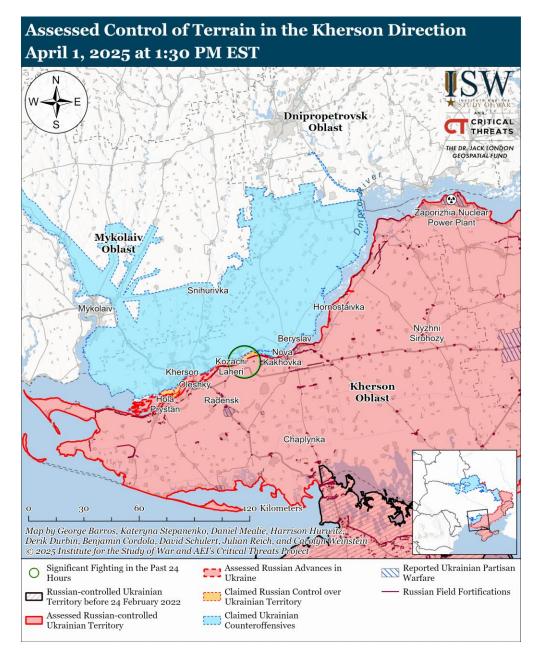


Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Dnipro direction but did not advance.

Ukrainian General Staff reported on March 31 and April 1 that Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the Dnipro direction.[86]

A Russian milblogger posted footage on April 1 purportedly showing Russian forces using fiber-optic first-person view (FPV) drones near the Antonivka Road Bridge that runs between Oleshky (southeast of Kherson City on the east bank of the Dnipro River) and Antonivka (directly east of Kherson City on the west bank of the Dnipro River).[87]

Order of Battle: Elements of the 337th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (104th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Kherson direction.[88]



<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 strikes against Ukraine on the night of March 31 to April 1. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched two Kh-59/69 cruise missiles in the Zaporizhia direction.[89] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed both missiles. This is the first Russian overnight strike series in months that did not include any Shahed or decoy drones.

Kharkiv City Mayor Ihor Terekhov reported that Russian forces conducted twice as many long-range drone strikes against Kharkiv City in March 2025 compared to February 2025.[90] Terekhov added that Russian forces started using swarms of Shahed drones to strike residential areas, critical

infrastructure, and business facilities in recent weeks, followed by "double tap" strikes targeting first responders.

<u>Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Nothing significant to report.

<u>Russian Technological Adaptations</u> (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

Nothing significant to report.

<u>Activities in Russian-occupied areas</u> (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

ISW is suspending occupation coverage in its daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessments. ISW is introducing a new product line tracking activities in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine. The occupation updates will examine Russian efforts to consolidate administrative control of annexed areas and forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems. Click here to read the March 31 Russian Occupation Update.

<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.



- [1] https://t.me/olexandrprokudin/6995
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