



COI QUERY

Country of Origin	Ukraine
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. General Information on the so-called Luhansk (or Lugansk) Guard, in particular:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modalities of recruitment• Amount, frequency and currency of the salary received by its members• Hierarchical structure and command mechanism• List of military commanders2. Information on military campaigns and operations in which the so-called Luhansk (or Lugansk) Guard was involved, including reported evidence/suspects regarding the possible involvement of the Luhansk Guard into the shooting down, on 14 June 2014, of the military aircraft IL 76 – allegedly by pro-Russian separatist forces. (2014-2019)
Date of completion	1 February 2019
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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on the 1 February 2019. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



COI QUERY RESPONSE

- 1. General Information on the so-called Luhansk (or Lugansk) Guard¹, in particular: modalities of recruitment; amount, frequency and currency of the salary received by its members; hierarchical structure and command mechanism; list of military commanders**

General Background

Following a 'self-rule' referendum held in May 2014, pro-Russian separatist groups in the Eastern Ukraine region of Donbas self-proclaimed the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR or LNR), and the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR or DNR)² as independent states.³ The armed conflict⁴ that followed between the Ukrainian government and Russia-backed armed groups⁵ is still ongoing, in violations of a ceasefire agreement⁶, as of January 2019.⁷

A 2017 article by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty stated that it was hard to really know what was unfolding in the LPR, since no outsiders and independent media have been granted access since autumn 2015.⁸ Similarly, Ukrainian Euromaidan Press⁹ informed that it was difficult to collect 'behind the scenes' information in the LPR, since independent journalism has been repressed and the territory isolated from the rest of the world¹⁰. In its October 2018 report, International Crisis Group referred that, while they were given limited access by the DPR to carry out field research, they were unable to conduct research in the LPR.¹¹

The so-called Luhansk Guard

Information found on the so-called Luhansk Guard is scarce and fragmented. No information could be found in particular regarding its recruitment modalities, amount, frequency and currency of the salary received by its members, on its hierarchical structure and command mechanism, nor on a list of military commanders.

On 25 July 2014, the European Council added the so-called Luhansk Guard to its 'List of persons and entities subject to sanctions' over the Ukraine crisis, along with other armed groups and individuals. The EU sanctions list defines the 'so-called Luhansk Guard' as follows:

¹ For ease of reference, the spelling variation 'Luhansk' will be used throughout this document.

² For ease of reference, the abbreviations LPR and DPR will be used throughout this document.

³ BBC, Ukraine rebels hold referendums in Donetsk and Luhansk, 11 May 2014, [url](#); BBC, Ukraine Crisis: Timeline, 13 November 2014, [url](#)

⁴ UN OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 26 February – 23 March 2018, [url](#) p. 8

⁵ International Crisis Group, Russia and the separatists in Eastern Ukraine, 5 February 2016, [url](#)

⁶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, New Ukraine Cease-Fire 'Violated Almost Immediately', 5 March 2018 [url](#)

⁷ OSCE, Latest from OSCE special monitoring mission to Ukraine (SMM), based on information received as of 19:30, 25 January 2019, 26 January 2019, [url](#); Reuters, Germany urges Russia, Ukraine to de-escalate conflict, 18 January 2019, [url](#);

⁸ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, What in the world is going on in the Russia-backed separatist Luhansk 'Republic', 22 November 2017, [url](#)

⁹ Euromaidan Press is a Ukrainian online English-language news site. For more information, see: Euromaidan Press, About us, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁰ Euromaidan Press, Who is who in the Kremlin proxy 'Luhansk People's Republic', 7 September 2018, [url](#)

¹¹ International Crisis Group, 'Nobody wants us': The alienated civilians of Eastern Ukraine, 1 October 2018, [url](#) p. 5



'Self-defence militia of Lugansk, responsible for training separatists to fight against the Ukrainian government forces in Eastern Ukraine, thus threatening the stability or security of Ukraine. Associated with Mr, German PROPOKIV, active leader who is responsible for taking part in the seizure of the building of the Lugansk regional office of the Ukrainian Security Service and recorded a video address to President Putin and Russia from the occupied building.'¹²

Furthermore, the EU document provides the links to two social media¹³ pages related to the so-called Luhansk Guard, both accessible at the following links:

- <https://vk.com/luguard>,
- <https://vk.com/club68692201>¹⁴

In his book published in 2018, 'Ukraine Over the Edge', researcher Gordon M. Hahn¹⁵ referred to the Luhansk Guard (also called by this source as 'Luganskaya gvardiya') as a 'militia group' which was involved in the assault of the regional administrative buildings in Luhansk during the events of 2014. According to this source, the protestors who seized the Luhansk government in the Spring of 2014 elected as 'people's governor' Alexandr Kharitonov, who led the militia group called 'Luhansk Guard'. When government facilities were taken back by Ukraine security forces, Alexandr Kharitonov was arrested, along with other demonstrators.¹⁶ Valeriy Bolotov replaced then Kharitonov as the new elected 'people's governor' of Luhansk.¹⁷

The mention of the Luhansk Guard and its association to Alexandr Kharitonov can also be found in an archived 2014 article by local news site Nahnews, reporting that the Security Service of Ukraine's (SBU) press office informed that, on 13 March [2014], 'the leader of the organisation Luhansk Guard Alexandr Kharitonov' had been arrested.¹⁸

An article by Ukrainian Week in 2015 also reported the detention of Alexandr Kharitonov. This article contains a first-hand account by a SBU officer on the unfolding of events leading to the seize of Luhansk by pro-Russian separatist groups and the self-proclamation of the LPR. According to this source, in April 2014, the SBU 'detained the "people's governor" Kharytonov and several of his accomplices, and arrested the Major of the Russian GRU (Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian General Staff)'.¹⁹ With regards to 'the so-called Luhansk Guard', the same source stated that it 'was

¹² EU Council, Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, 17 March 2014, latest amended 21 November 2017, [url](#); Reuters, Factbox: EU targets Russian officials in sanctions list, 26 July 2014, [url](#)

¹³ VK is a Russian online social media and social networking service. For more info see: VK, About, nd., [url](#)

¹⁴ EU Council, Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, 17 March 2014, latest amended 21 November 2017, [url](#)

¹⁵ Gordon M. Hahn is an academic and senior researcher at the Center for Terrorism and Intelligence Studies. For more information, see: Center for Terrorism and Intelligence Studies, Staff, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁶ Hahn G. M., Ukraine Over the Edge: Russia, the West and the "New Cold War", McFarland & Co Inc 2018, [url](#) p. 252

¹⁷ Kofman M., et al, Lessons from Russia's Operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017, [url](#) p. 36; Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic' in Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

¹⁸ Nahnews, "The people's governor" Kharitonov was detained in Lugansk, cached page from 13 March 2014, available at [url](#)

¹⁹ Ukrainian Week, The surrender of Luhansk SBU, 23 December 2015 [url](#)



established, headed by Arsen Klinchayev, a longtime associate of Oleksandr Yefremov (long-time Governor of Luhansk Oblast and one of the most influential people there – Ed.)²⁰

Other sources mentioned Arsen Klinchayev, stating that he was deputy of the Lugansk Regional Council, and he was also arrested in March 2014 for organising the pro-Russian rallies.²¹ According to the NGO Ukraine Crisis Media Centre, Arsen Klinchayev ‘was the leader of radical organisation “Young Guard”, which together with Russian separatists organised a seizure of Lugansk Regional State Administration and forced governor Vladimir Pristyyuk to resign’.²²

Among all sources consulted within the time constraints, no information could be found regarding the affiliation of the aforementioned Young Guard with the so-called Luhansk Guard.

An article published in 2014 by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty cited the so-called ‘Luhansk Guard’ in correlation with Anastasiya Pyaterikova, ‘a former stripper who has become a prominent face of the Luhansk separatists’. The article reported about a debate on women’s rights unfolding within the LPR separatist groups, following a statement by Luhansk region city of Alchevsk, Aleksandr Mozgovoi, announcing a ban on women going to bars and clubs. The article mentioned “‘Luhansk Guard’ member’ Anastasiya Pyaterikova as one the most vocal critics of such statement, also adding that she was ‘a leader of the "anti-Maidan" movement’.²³

No additional information could be found on the so-called Luhansk Guard.

However, the following information on the Luhansk People’s Republic and its main armed groups could be relevant for the purpose of this Query.

The Luhansk People’s Republic and main armed groups

A series of articles published by the Jamestown Foundation between 2014-2015 provide insights into the power dynamics within the Luhansk People’s Republic, the main armed formations operating in the LPR, some of their leaders and prominent personalities.

The Jamestown Foundation observed that, since its establishment in 2014, the distinctive characteristics of the LPR has been a lack of unified command which has resulted in ‘an ungoverned zone for free-wheeling secessionist armed groups and non-political, criminal gangs’.²⁴ By operating within a lawless environment, some LPR forces were reported to be themselves involved in criminal activities.²⁵ Some of these armed formations not only did not operate in coordination with the Luhansk authorities or with each other, but sometimes also in rivalry with each other.²⁶

²⁰ Ukrainian Week, The surrender of Luhansk SBU, 23 December 2015 [url](#)

²¹ Nahnews, “The people’s governor” Kharitonov was detained in Lugansk, cached page from 13 March 2014, available at [url](#); UCMC, Ukrainian media digest, 14 August 2014, [url](#); Ukrainian Week, The surrender of Luhansk SBU, 23 December 2015, [url](#)

²² UCMC, Ukrainian media digest, 14 August 2014, [url](#)

²³ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty 'Sit At Home And Embroider' -- Ukrainian Rebel Sparks Debate On Women's Rights, 9 November 2014, [url](#)

²⁴ Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic', Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

²⁵ Jamestown Foundation, Secessionist Forces in Luhansk 'Republic': Order out of Chaos?, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)

²⁶ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist ‘Luhansk Republic’ (Part 1), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)



The so-called Corps of People's Militia

In December 2014, the Luhansk authorities tried to impose some discipline within these various armed groups by establishing the so-called 'Corps of People's Militia'. Backed by Russia, the Corps of People's Militia was meant to be both a regular armed force and a command structure, aimed at absorbing and subordinate the various secessionist armed formations active in the LPR. Major-General Sergei Ignatov was appointed as the command of the Corps. During the same period, in December 2014, a LPR police force and civilian police were also established.²⁷

It is reported that the 'LPR acting prosecutor-general (identified as Zaur Ismayilov)' warned that armed groups 'refusing to join the newly formed command structure would henceforth be treated as unlawful armed groups by the authorities', and fighters involved in criminal activities would be prosecuted.²⁸

An article by Jamestown Foundation in 2015 explained:

'Field commanders must, to a certain extent, take orders from their Russian sponsors and from Luhansk military authorities; but they tend to be recalcitrant and insubordinate toward the "LPR's" political leadership. Turf protection is a salient characteristic of these armed formations. Based in the countryside, each of them clings to a well-defined territory, rarely venturing out from its locality or to Luhansk City. The field commander can informally function as local judge, police chief (with self-arrogated powers to arrest), tax collector and requisition authority ("for war needs"), humanitarian aid distributor, and otherwise fill the vacuum of state power. Russia delivers the arms and equipment to the Luhansk authorities, which redistribute some of that materiel to formations in the field'.²⁹

As of 2015, the self-proclaimed authorities of the LPR had control only of Luhansk city and its vicinity, while the various armed units operating autonomously, and 'self-styled as Russian Cossacks', had divided up most of the LPR's territory. 'Each one of those formations is entrenched in a specific territory and loyal to its own "ataman" (leader). Estimates of those formations' manpower range from 8,000 to 17,000. They rarely cooperate with Luhansk or even among themselves'.³⁰

The same source observed that this territorial fragmentation and the 'strong turf-orientation' of the LPR's armed units had a significant impact on a military level, since each 'brigade' tends to fight against the Ukrainian forces within its own area of operation and only occasionally conducts joint operations.³¹

According to a 2017 report by the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), separatist groups operating in the Ukraine region of Donbas could not survive without the support from Russia. ISW further added

²⁷ Jamestown Foundation, Secessionist Forces in Luhansk 'Republic': Order out of Chaos?, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)

²⁸ Jamestown Foundation, Secessionist Forces in Luhansk 'Republic': Order out of Chaos?, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)

²⁹ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 1), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 19 January 2015, [url](#)

³⁰ Jamestown Foundation, Armed Formations in the Secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 2), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 9, 15 January 2015, [url](#)

³¹ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 1), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)



that Donbas separatist groups, especially in the LPR, are disorganised, weak, involved in ‘rampant criminality, particularly theft, smuggling, extortion, and violent assault’, and that they are ‘primarily comprised of:

- Russian mercenaries, intelligence, and military personnel
- Marginalized locals from economically-distressed areas
- Radical groups from Russia and the former Soviet Union, including Cossack bands, Russian Orthodox Christian radicals, Russian nationalists, and communists
- Sports hooligans
- Defectors from Ukrainian security forces’.³²

An investigation carried out by news organisation Balkan Insight in December 2018 revealed that some ‘foreign fighters’ from Serbia have been deployed in Ukraine. Interviewed by Balkan Insight, one of these foreign fighters declared that the Luhansk People’s Republic paid him a monthly salary of 15,000 roubles (200 euros), adding that ‘the salary is not large enough for him to endanger to his life solely for financial gain’.³³

Structure and military commanders of the Luhansk People’s Republic

The aforementioned ISW report provides information on the ‘Order of Battle’ of the armed forces of Luhansk People’s Republic, including structure, unit names, estimated sizes, locations and commanders, as of 2017:

‘Head of the Luhansk People’s Republic: Igor Plotnitskiy

“Operational Command Luhansk”/2nd Army Corps (77077):

2nd Separate Guards Motor Rifle Brigade (L-73438)³⁷

Commander: Colonel Yan Vitalevich Leshenko

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Novoaidar, Pionersk, Svitlodarsk Arc (as of February 2017)

Reported Size: 4,500

Notable Subunits:

1st Motor Rifle Battalion “Zarya,” Commander Andrey Patrushev (possibly dead)

2nd Motor Rifle Battalion “Don”

3rd Motor Rifle Battalion “Huligan”

12th Separate Special Battalion “Rim,” Commander P. P. Gutsko

4th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade (L-74347):

Commander: Guard-Colonel Yuri Shevchenko

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Alchevsk (possibly relocated to Krasniy Luch) (as of August 2017)

Notable Subunits:

1st Motor Rifle Battalion “Leshevo”

2nd Motor Rifle Battalion “Betmen”

3rd Motor Rifle Battalion “Vityaz”

13th Separate Special Battalion “Egor”

³² ISW, The Kremlin’s Irregular Army: Ukrainian Separatist Order of Battle, September 2017, [url](#) pp. 9-10

³³ Balkan Insight, Donbass Brothers: How Serbians fighters were deployed in Ukraine, 13 December 2018, [url](#)



14th Separate Special Battalion ‘Prizrak’

16th Separate Special Battalion “Cossack Regiment Yarga,” Commander Rashid Sharkizyanov, (Luhansk Oblast: Antrastye)

6th Separate Guard Motor Rifle Regiment “Kazachiy” (L-69647)

Commander: Unknown

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Kalinovo Stakhanov Kadiyivka (as of August 2017)

7th Separate “Chistyakovskaya” Motor Rifle Brigade (08807)40

Commander: A. Kolocov

Location: Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts: Debaltsevo, Svitlodarsk Arc (as of December 2016)
Bryanka (As of July 2017)

Reported Size: 3,000

Notable Subunits:

1st Motor Rifle Battalion “Slavyanskiy”

2nd Motor Rifle Battalion “Semenovskiy”

3rd Motor Rifle Battalion “Machete”

15th Separate Special Battalion “USSR Bryanka”

Separate Artillery Brigade (L-23213)

Commander: Igor Sidorenko

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Xrustalniy (As of January 2017)

Separate Commandant’s Regiment (44444)

Commander: Colonel Sergey V Grachyov “Grach”

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Luhansk City (As of February, 2017)

Special Mechanized Squad “Pantsir (former 4th Separate Tank Battalion Avgust) (L-64064)

Commander: Possibly Alexander Kostin “Avgust”

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Luhansk City (As of February, 2017)

Separate Anti-Aircraft Battery (L-23023)44

Commander: Lt. Colonel Vitaliy Ivanovich Ugryomov (possibly Captain Ruslan Ragulun)

Location: Luhansk Oblast, Luhansk City (As of October 2016)

Separate Reconnaissance Battalion “Greka” (L-55055)45

Commander: Captain Oleg Grekov

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Luhansk City, Svitlodarsk Arc, near Debaltsevo (as of January, 2017)

Separate Repair/Construction Battalion (L 13931)46

Commander: Sergey Liysenko

Location: Luhansk Oblast, (Likely Mobile)

Separate Logistics Battalion (L-14941)

Commander: Major Vladimir Ryauza

Location: Luhansk Oblast: Possibly Luhansk City (as of 2016)

Separate Command-Security Battalion (73604)



Commander: Major Stichenko
Location: Luhansk Oblast: Luhansk City (as of 2016)

Separate Engineer-Sapper Company (L-11011)
Commander:
Location: Luhansk Oblast, Luhansk City

Separate Electric Warfare Company (L-05776)
Commander: Unknown
Location: Luhansk Oblast (Possibly Luhansk City as of September 2017)

Task Force "Falkon" (UAV Unit)
Commander: Unknown
Location: Luhansk Oblast (As of February, 2017)

Territorial Defense Battalions

17th Separate Special Forces Battalion "Bolshoi"
Commander: Sergey Krochmal
Location: Luhansk Oblast: Slavyanserbsk (as of February 2017)

18th Separate Special Forces Battalion "Poxodniy"
Commander: Unknown
Location: Luhansk Oblast: Krasniy Luch (As of 2016)³⁴

List of other prominent figures and military commanders of the Luhansk People's Republic

Although it was not possible to retrieve an exhaustive list of military commanders of the so-called Luhansk Guard, the following information provides some names of prominent personalities, in addition to the above information, holding key positions in the LPR's institutions and armed groups, as of 2015.

The so-called Luhansk Guard:

German (Herman) Prokopiv. The EU added Prokopiv into its sanctions list on 29 April 2014, stating he was an 'Active member of the 'Lugansk Guard'. Took part in the seizure of the building of the Lugansk regional office of the Security Service. Remains an active military fighter of the LNR', as of 29 April 2014.³⁵

Alexandr Kharitonov. According to aforementioned book by researcher Gordon M. Hahn, Kharitonov led the militia group called 'Luhansk Guard' and was elected as 'people's governor' following the seizure of the government facilities in Luhansk.³⁶

³⁴ ISW, The Kremlin's Irregular Army: Ukrainian Separatist Order of Battle, September 2017, [url](#) pp. 21-23

³⁵ EU Council, Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, 17 March 2014, latest amended 21 November 2017, [url](#)

³⁶ Hahn G. M., Ukraine Over the Edge: Russia, the West and the "New Cold War" McFarland & Co Inc 2018, [url](#) p. 252



Arsen Klinchayev. Prior to the events of 2014, Klinchayev held the position of deputy of the Lugansk Regional Council.³⁷ As stated above, one source reported that the so-called Luhansk Guard was established and headed by Klinchayev.³⁸ No additional sources could be found, however, to corroborate this information.

Luhansk People's Republic:

Valery Bolotov replaced Kharitonov as the new elected 'people's governor' of Luhansk.³⁹ He 'led the armed seizure of the gubernatorial, police and state security buildings, and was acclaimed as "people's governor" in early April [2014]. He formed a paramilitary unit, dubbed "The People's Army of the South-East," with Moscow's support, and received cheerleading coverage on Russia's state television channels. Elected "head of the republic" by its "parliament" in May, Bolotov turned out to be a reclusive figure, widely believed to be an alcoholic'. Bolotov resigned on August 2014.⁴⁰

Igor Plotnitsky replaced Bolotov as the head of the LPR (or 'LPR defense minister').⁴¹

Marat Bashirov was a consultant from Moscow, deployed to Luhansk in July [2014] 'as a crisis manager'. He covered the position of 'LPR prime minister'.⁴²

Sergei Ignatov was the first Major-General commander of the Corps of People's Militia, which was established in December 2014.⁴³

Pavel Dryomov (Dremov) ruled the city of Stakhanove and its surrounding district, as of 2015. The Jamestown Foundation stated that Dryomov claims to be 'an ataman and a major-general, and calls his force the First Cossack Regiment of a purported 31st District (Okrug) of Russia's Don Cossack Host. Dryomov's unit split off last September [2014] from Nikolai Kozitsyn's Cossack National Guard. Dryomov and his men insist on continuing the war to seize the remainder of the Luhansk and Donetsk provinces from Ukraine and onward for Novorossiia'.⁴⁴

Nikolai Kozitsyn was operating in the city of Antratsyt. Jamestown Foundations stated that, from May to November 2014, 'he was the most senior Russian Cossack ataman fighting against Ukraine. His 4,000-strong force, equipped with armor and artillery, operated as a Cossack National Guard, ostensibly an offshoot from Russia's Don Cossack Host, but in fact a proxy for Russia's armed forces.

³⁷ Nahnews, "The people's governor" Kharitonov was detained in Lugansk, cached page from 13 March 2014, available at [url](#); UCMC, Ukrainian media digest, 14 August 2014, [url](#); Ukrainian Week, The surrender of Luhansk SBU, 23 December 2015, [url](#)

³⁸ Ukrainian Week, The surrender of Luhansk SBU, 23 December 2015, [url](#)

³⁹ Kofman M., et al, Lessons from Russia's Operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017, [url](#) p. 36; Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic' in Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

⁴⁰ Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic' in Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

⁴¹ Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic' in Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

⁴² Jamestown Foundation, Luhansk: The Other 'People's Republic' in Eastern Ukraine, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 11 Issue: 151, 15 August 2014, [url](#)

⁴³ Jamestown Foundation, Secessionist Forces in Luhansk 'Republic': Order out of Chaos?, Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 5, 9 January 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁴ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 3), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)



[...]. Kozitsyn's units controlled long sections of what is legally the Ukrainian side of the Russia-Ukraine border and the access routes into "LPR's" interior. In late November, another Cossack unit (believed to be undercover Spetsnaz) raided Kozitsyn's headquarters, killed his two closest aides and other retainers in a shootout, and removed the ataman forcibly to Russia. Kozitsyn's troops, meanwhile, remain in control of Antratsyt.⁴⁵

Rashid Shakirzanov became the new commander of the Cossack National Guard in Antratsyt after the assault against Kozitsyn's unit.⁴⁶

Yevgeny Ishchenko was the leader ('ataman') in charge in the city of Pervomaysk since April 2014. Jamestown Foundation stated that he arrived from Russia, 'where he was wanted on manslaughter charges, according to Ukrainian Luhansk province governor Hennady Moskal'.⁴⁷

Aleksei Mozgovoy was in charge in the city of Alchevsk and the surrounding district. His unit was formed of an estimated 2 000 combatants, 'he keeps aloof both from the Luhansk authorities and from the other autonomous armed formations'.⁴⁸

S. Yu. Kosogor, was the Major-General in the city of Krasnyi Luch, as of 2015.⁴⁹

Aleksandr Gaidey, 'a Cossack chieftain who broke away from Kozitsyn's unit and formed armed detachment, called the "Gaydeevtsy," with headquarters in the captured Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) building, reportedly controls what is legally the Ukrainian side of the Russia-Ukraine border', as of 2015.⁵⁰

For a list of persons, entities and bodies included by the EU to its sanctions list due to their responsibilities over the Ukraine crisis, it is possible to consult the aforementioned COE document.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 3), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁶ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 3), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁷ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 4), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁸ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 4), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁴⁹ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 4), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁵⁰ Jamestown Foundation, Armed formations in the secessionist 'Luhansk Republic' (Part 4), Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 12 Issue: 10, 16 January 2015, [url](#)

⁵¹ EU Council, Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, 17 March 2014, latest amended 21 November 2017, [url](#)



2. Information on military campaigns and operations in which the so called Luhansk Guard was involved, including reported evidence/suspects regarding the possible involvement of the Luhansk Guard into the shooting down, on 14 June 2014, of the military aircraft Il-76 – allegedly by pro-Russian separatist forces.

The EU council document, mentioned above, refers to the so-called Luhansk Guard as ‘Self-defense militia of Lugansk, responsible for training separatists to fight against the Ukrainian government forces in Eastern Ukraine, thus threatening the stability or security of Ukraine [...]’.⁵²

Among all sources consulted within the time constraints of this Query, it was not possible to retrieve additional information regarding military campaigns and operations in which the so-called Luhansk Guard was involved or suspected to be involved. Various reports and media articles available online, however, report on military operations conducted by the pro-Russian separatist groups of the Luhansk People’s Republic in general.⁵³

On 14 June 2014, pro-Russian separatist groups of the Luhansk People’s Republic shot down the Ukrainian military transport jet Il-76, while the aircraft was about to land at Luhansk city airport. All 49 people on board were killed. Various sources reported that the separatist groups from the Luhansk People’s Republic confirmed they were responsible for the shooting down of the Il-76 aircraft, however none of the sources consulted mentioned specifically the so-called Luhansk Guard.⁵⁴

In July 2014, the Washington Post disclosed that the US government had gathered evidence that Ukrainian separatist armed groups have been trained on Russian territory to fire antiaircraft missiles,⁵⁵ including the one used to shoot down the Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 (MH17), on 17 July 2014, with 283 civilians aboard.⁵⁶

⁵² EU Council, Council Decision 2014/145/CFSP of 17 March 2014 concerning restrictive measures in respect of actions undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine, 17 March 2014, latest amended 21 November 2017, [url](#)

⁵³ International Crisis Group, ‘Nobody wants us’: The alienated civilians of Eastern Ukraine, 1 October 2018, [url](#); UN OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 May to 15 August 2018, [url](#); UN OHCHR, Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine 16 August to 15 November 2018, 17 December 2018, [url](#); Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019 – Ukraine (Events of 2018), 17 January 2019, [url](#); USDOS, 2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Ukraine, 3 March 2017, [url](#); Reuters, Special Report: Where Ukraine’s separatists get their weapons, 29 July 2014, [url](#)

⁵⁴ BBC, Ukraine crisis: Military plane shot down in Luhansk, 14 June 2014, [url](#); CNN, Source: Ukraine military plane with at least 49 aboard shot down, 14 June 2014, [url](#); New York Times, Separatists Down Military Transport Jet, Killing 49 in Eastern Ukraine, 14 June 2014, [url](#)

⁵⁵ Washington Post, Separatists said to have received antiaircraft training in Russia, 18 July 2014, [url](#)

⁵⁶ BBC, MH17 Ukraine plane crash: What we know, 28 September 2016, [url](#)



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