

Europe Operations

Russians drop explosive devices along Ukrainian grain corridor



Bojan Lepic • October 25, 2023 0 350 2 minutes read



Russian Air Force

The Russian Air Force has reportedly dropped at least four explosive devices into the transport routes of the unilateral Ukrainian grain corridor.

“For several days, there were no flights of Russian aircraft in the area of sea transport routes. However, on October 25, they intensified their activity and dropped four explosive devices. Presumably, this is done to disrupt the movement of civilian vessels and discredit the Defence Forces of Ukraine, as we continue to ensure the security of the humanitarian corridor used by ships from around the world,” a spokesperson of the Ukrainian Operational Command South told Maritime security consultant firm Ambrey.

Since the opening of the corridor, which cuts through the waters of NATO members Bulgaria and Romania to deter Russia, Ukraine has exported some 700,000 tonnes of grain.

Ambrey has previously reported that Russian forces have been targeting the transit routes to Ukraine’s seaports by deploying sea mines in the

area. It assessed that Russia would continue to use tactics that offered a level of plausible deniability.

According to the security specialist, a direct attack on a merchant vessel would result in increased freight rates and insurance coverage in the Black Sea Joint War Committee (JWC), which would harm Russian interests and likely decrease the export volumes from Russian Black Sea ports.

Ambrey has recorded three instances in the last two weeks in which vessels encountered an explosive device on the entry to the Bystroe Canal. The company assessed that Ukraine has no vested interest in falsely claiming that Russia is targeting the grain corridor because this could discourage vessels from calling Ukraine's sea ports.

Ukraine forces did not state that they managed to locate and destroy these devices. Ambrey added that six vessels were waiting east of Sulina Anchorage in Romania to transit into Ukraine's seaports.

The latest targeting of a merchant shipping lane comes as Ukraine seeks to prevent the re-election of Russia to the International Maritime Organization's decision-making body.

Ukraine said in a document to IMO members that Russia's regular attacks by its occupying forces against ships trying to leave the area of hostilities "have posed a serious threat to the navigational safety in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov, and the Kerch Strait" and that Russia's re-election to IMO's council would undermine the credibility of the organisation.

"The International Maritime Organization is the body responsible for maintaining safety and security in the maritime industry, protecting the marine environment, and promoting the welfare of seafarers. Thus, there is a strong need for its council to be comprised of states that are committed to these goals and adhere to the principles and regulations set by the organization," Ukraine said in the document.

#Russia

#Ukraine