

Daily Report 295/2021

16 December 2021¹

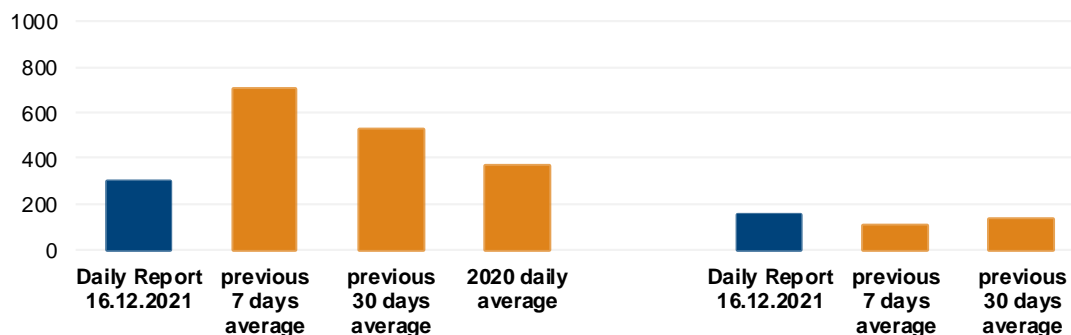
Summary

- In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded 257 ceasefire violations, including 123 explosions. Of these, 154 were assessed as live-fire training exercises. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 444 ceasefire violations in the region.
- In Luhansk region, the Mission recorded 81 ceasefire violations, including 30 explosions. Of these, 40 were assessed as live-fire training exercises. In the previous reporting period, it recorded 104 ceasefire violations in the region.
- Members of the armed formations twice denied the SMM passage near Zolote and Molodizhne, and once delayed its passage near Stanytsia Luhanska, Luhansk region.*
- The Mission continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske.
- The SMM facilitated the operation of critical civilian infrastructure.
- The Mission continued following up on the situation of civilians, including at three entry-exit checkpoints and four corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.
- The SMM visited a border crossing point and monitored areas near the border outside government control in Luhansk region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted, including twice in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region and once at a border crossing point near non-government-controlled Voznesenivka (formerly Chervonopartyzansk), Luhansk region. Its unmanned aerial vehicles encountered instances of GPS signal interference assessed as caused by probable jamming.*

Ceasefire violations²

Number of recorded ceasefire violations³

Number of recorded explosions⁴



¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 15 December 2021. All times are in Eastern European Time.

² For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, weather conditions limited the observational capabilities some SMM cameras.

³ Including explosions.

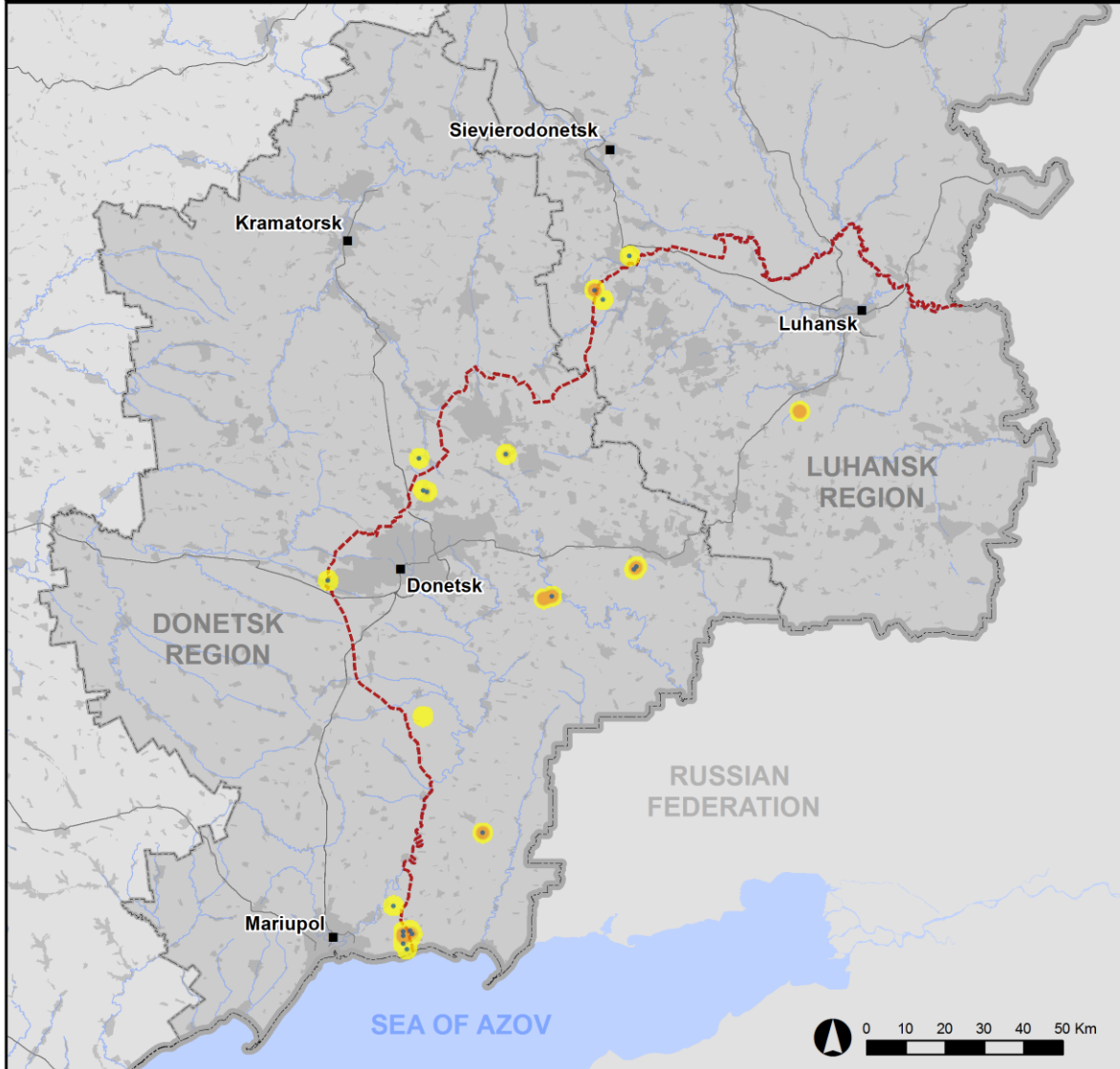
⁴ Including from unidentified weapons.

Map of recorded ceasefire violations

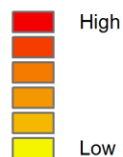


Organization for Security and
Co-operation in Europe
Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

Ceasefire violations observed by the SMM 15 December 2021



Ceasefire violation concentration



- Explosion
- Settlement
- Estimated line of contact

Sources: Administrative Boundaries - OCHA; Roads, Rivers - OpenStreetMap; Sea - VLIZ (2005). IHO Sea Areas; Other - OSCE.

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 37N

This map is provided for illustrative purposes only. Its content is not warranted to be error-free and does not imply endorsement or acceptance by the OSCE SMM.

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Created: 16/12/2021

In Donetsk region, the SMM recorded 257 ceasefire violations, including 123 explosions (two impacts and 121 undetermined). Most ceasefire violations occurred in areas north and north-north-east of Shyrokyne (government-controlled, 100km south of Donetsk). Of the 257 ceasefire violations, the Mission assessed 154 as live-fire training exercises: 45 inside the security zone, of which 35 north of Svobodne (non-government-controlled, 73km south of Donetsk), and ten north-west of Staropetrivske (non-government-controlled, 35km north-east of Donetsk) in violation of the decision of the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG) of 3 March 2016 that prohibits the conduct of live-fire training in the security zone; and 109 outside the security zone, of which 38 south-east of Vynohradne (non-government-controlled, 34km east of Donetsk), 37 west-north-west of Manuilivka (non-government-controlled, 65km east of Donetsk) and 34 south-east of Pokrovka (non-government-controlled, 36km east of Donetsk). In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded 444 ceasefire violations in the region, almost half of which were also assessed as live-fire exercises and most of which also occurred in areas near Shyrokyne.

In Luhansk region, the SMM recorded 81 ceasefire violations, including 30 undetermined explosions. The majority of ceasefire violations occurred north of Kruhlyk (non-government-controlled, 31km south-west of Luhansk) and in areas south-east of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk). The Mission assessed the 40 ceasefire violations heard north of Kruhlyk as a live-fire training exercise outside the security zone. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission recorded 104 ceasefire violations in the region, some of which were also assessed as a live-fire training exercise.

Following agreement reached at the meeting of the TCG on 22 July 2020 regarding Measures to strengthen the ceasefire, from 00:01 on 27 July 2020 until the end of the reporting period, the SMM has recorded at least 95,254 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 25,609 explosions, 23,108 projectiles in flight, 414 muzzle flashes, 406 illumination flares and at least 45,717 bursts and shots).⁵

Armed formations twice denied the SMM's passage near Zolote and Molodizhne, and once denied its passage near Stanytsia Luhanska, Luhansk region

On 15 December, the armed formations in Luhansk region twice denied, and once delayed, the Mission's passage to government-controlled areas from non-government-controlled areas.

The first denial occurred at 09:17 at the checkpoint of the armed formations near the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote. The second occurred at 11:02 at a checkpoint of the armed formations on road T-0504 about 1.5km south-west of Molodizhne. Members of the armed formations cited a "lack of security guarantees" on the first occasion and "orders from their superiors" on the second.

At 09:30, the passage of another SMM patrol travelling through the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge was delayed for 25 minutes. A member of the armed formations cited a "lack of prior notification" and a "lack of order from superiors". In all instances, the SMM had preannounced its passage as a temporary, COVID-19 related courtesy. (See [SMM Spot Report 42/2021](#).)

⁵ In the SMM Daily Report of 15 December, this sentence should have read "(...) the SMM has recorded at least 94,916 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 25,456 explosions, 23,063 projectiles in flight, 414 muzzle flashes, 406 illumination flares and at least 45,577 bursts and shots)."

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske⁶

Inside the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk), the Mission saw six members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them) south of the repaired span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north-east of Luhansk).

While positioned about 3km north of Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58km west of Luhansk), an SMM patrol heard two undetermined explosions, assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk) but within 5km of its periphery.

Near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the disengagement area, the SMM saw four members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them). The Mission again saw the seven previously observed containers located south of the area’s southern edge and inside the disengagement area. It saw that the previously reported road barriers across road T-1316, on the area’s southern edge, continued to be closed.

While positioned about 2.5km north of Petrivske (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), the Mission heard four bursts of small-arms fire, assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Petrivske** but within 5km of its periphery.

Weapons that the SMM could not verify as withdrawn⁷

At a heavy weapons holding area in a government-controlled area of Donetsk region
10 December

The SMM noted that 12 self-propelled howitzers (2S7 Pion, 203mm) were present and no weapons were missing, compared to the previous visit to this area on 10 September 2021.

Withdrawal of weapons

The Mission continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum and the Package of Measures and its Addendum.

Beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites, the SMM observed four tanks in a government-controlled area of Luhansk region. (For further information, see the table below.)

Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone

In a residential area of Avdiivka (government-controlled, 17km north of Donetsk), the SMM saw a soldier of the Ukrainian Armed Forces carrying a missile, assessed as part of an anti-tank guided missile system (probable Konkurs-M).

⁶ Disengagement is foreseen in the Framework Decision of the Trilateral Contact Group relating to disengagement of forces and hardware of 21 September 2016.

⁷ The SMM observed weapons that could not be verified as withdrawn, as their storage did not comply with the criteria set out in the 16 October 2015 notification from the SMM to the signatories of the Package of Measures on effective monitoring and verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons.

The Mission also observed an armoured personnel carrier and an anti-aircraft gun in government-controlled areas of Donetsk region. (For further information, see the table below.)

Presence of anti-tank mines near Yasne and Olenivka, Donetsk region

On 14 December, near the eastern outskirts of Yasne (non-government-controlled, 30km south-west of Donetsk), an SMM mini-unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) spotted at least 17 anti-tank mines (including four not previously reported and not seen in imagery from 26 April 2021 and 13 previously reported, four of which were burned out) on road T-0509. In a field about 800m north of the eastern edge of Yasne, the same UAV also spotted at least 60 previously reported anti-tank mines. All these mines were assessed as belonging to the armed formations. (For previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Report of 21 April 2021](#) and [SMM Daily Report of 24 June 2021](#).)

During the same day, in a field about 700m south of the south-western edge of Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk), an SMM mini-UAV spotted at least 15 previously reported probable anti-tank mines, assessed as belonging to the armed formations. (For previous observations in the area, see [SMM Daily Report of 20 April 2021](#).)

SMM facilitation of the operation of critical civilian infrastructure

The SMM continued to facilitate the operation of the Donetsk Filtration Station (15km north of Donetsk). While positioned about 500m north-east of Kamianka (government-controlled, 20km north of Donetsk), the Mission heard ten undetermined explosions, assessed as within a 5km radius of the station.

Situation at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints

In Donetsk region, the Mission observed that the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations near Olenivka (non-government-controlled, 23km south-west of Donetsk) was closed.

In Luhansk region, the SMM observed that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) near Stanytsia Luhanska and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations south of the repaired span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge were open, with people queueing to travel in both directions.

The SMM noted that the EECPs near Zolote and Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk) were open, but that the corresponding checkpoints of the armed formations south of the disengagement area near Zolote and 3km south-east of the bridge in Shchastia were closed. While positioned at the EECP near Shchastia, the Mission saw a wheeled mobile crane and a truck with a semi-trailer loaded with new guard shackles.

Areas near the border outside government control⁸

While at a border crossing point near Voznesenivka (formerly Chervonopartyzansk, 65km south-east of Luhansk), the Mission saw no traffic entering or exiting Ukraine. Upon its arrival at the location, a member of the armed formations told the SMM to leave the area.*

⁸ According to decisions in 2014 by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, operations are officially designated as suspended at these and other border crossing points located outside government control.

The Mission also monitored areas close to the border with the Russian Federation near Krynychne (formerly Biriukove, 75km south-east of Luhansk) and south of Panchenkove (67km south-east of Luhansk) and observed no change in the security situation.

The SMM continued monitoring in Kherson, Odessa, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Kharkiv, Dnipro, Chernivtsi and Kyiv.

***Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate**

The SMM's monitoring and freedom of movement are restricted by security hazards and threats, including risks posed by mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other impediments – which vary from day to day. The SMM's mandate provides for safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. All signatories of the Minsk agreements have agreed on the need for this safe and secure access, that restriction of the SMM's freedom of movement constitutes a violation, and on the need for rapid response to these violations. They have also agreed that the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) should contribute to such response and co-ordinate mine clearance. Nonetheless, the armed formations in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions frequently deny the SMM access to areas adjacent to Ukraine's border outside control of the government (for example, see below). The SMM's operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions remain restricted following [the fatal incident of 23 April 2017 near Pryshyb](#); these restrictions continued to limit the Mission's observations.

Denials:

- Near Staropetrivske (non-government-controlled, 35km north-east of Donetsk), two visibly armed members of the armed formations denied the Mission passage west towards Panteleimonivka (non-government-controlled, 26km north-east of Donetsk) citing “ongoing military exercises” in the area.
- At a checkpoint near Bezimenne (non-government-controlled, 100km south of Donetsk), six visibly armed members of the armed formations denied the SMM passage west citing “ongoing de-mining activities” in the area. While at the checkpoint, the Mission saw civilian traffic passing through.
- At a border crossing point near Voznesenivka (formerly Chervonopartyzansk, non-government-controlled, 65km south-east of Luhansk), a member of the armed formations asked the Mission to leave the area. (See above.)

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians' movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines, UXO and other obstacles.

Other impediments:⁹

⁹ For cases of probable jamming and jamming mentioned in this section, the interference could have originated from anywhere within the radius of tens of kilometres from the UAVs' positions.

- A planned SMM mid-range UAV flight was cancelled near Mykolaivka Druha (government-controlled, 55km north of Donetsk) due to GPS signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming.
- SMM mini-UAVs experienced GPS signal interference, assessed as caused by probable jamming, during six flights: twice each over areas near Raivka (non-government-controlled, 16km north-west of Luhansk) and Oleksandrivsk (non-government-controlled, 10km west of Luhansk) and once each over areas near Teplychne (non-government-controlled, 8km west of Luhansk) and Mykolaivka Druha.

Table of weapons

Weapons beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
15/12/2021	4	Tank (probable T-64)	Near Sievierodonetsk (74km north-west of Luhansk)	Patrol

Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone¹⁰

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
14/12/2021	1	Anti-aircraft gun (ZU-23, 23mm)	Near Pionerske (101km south of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV
15/12/2021	1	Armoured personnel carrier (BTR-70)	Near Novobakhmutivka (28km north of Donetsk)	Patrol

¹⁰ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

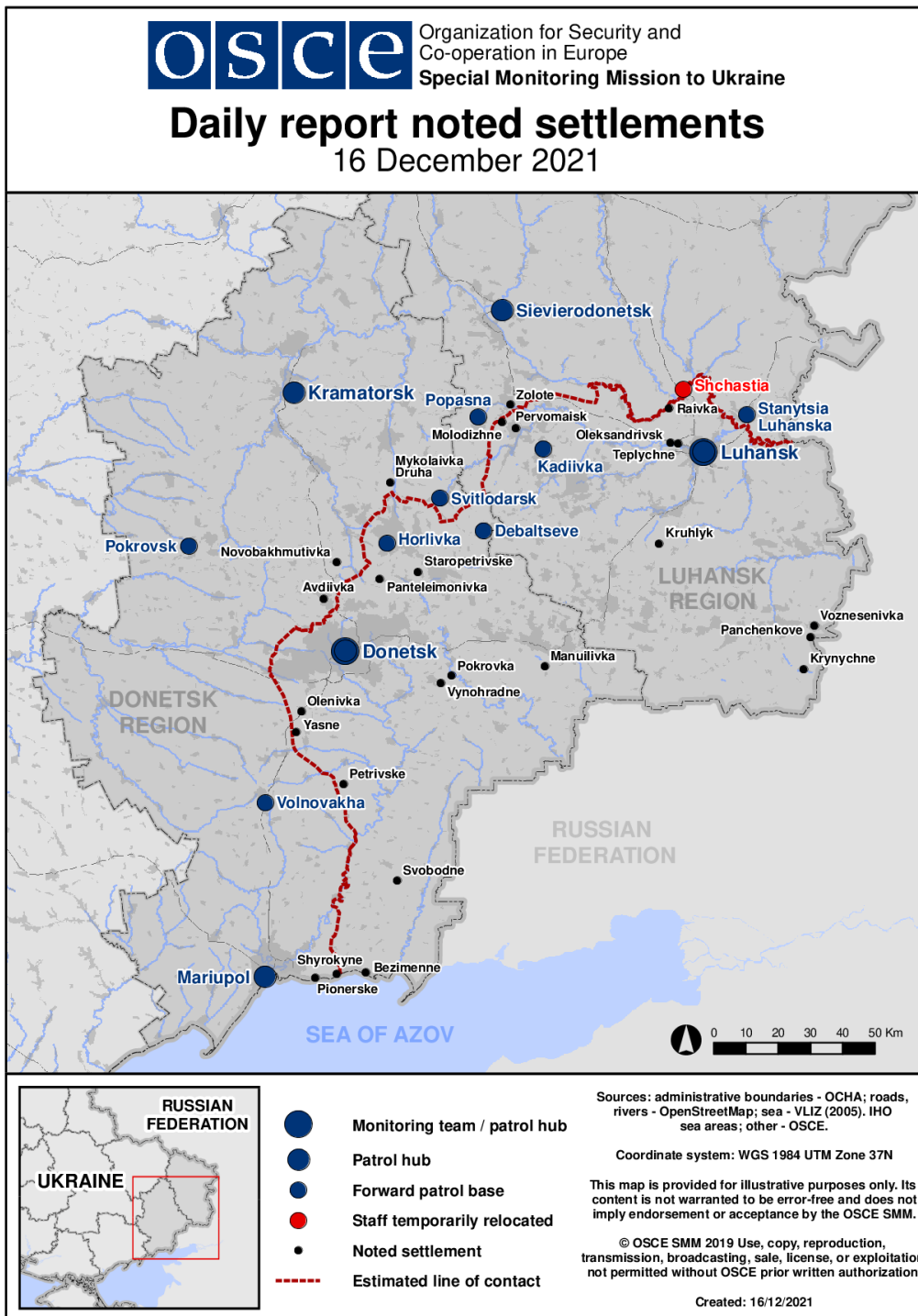
Table of ceasefire violations as of 15 December 2021¹¹

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, time
SMM camera at entry-exit checkpoint in Marinka (government-controlled, 23km SW of Donetsk)	2-4km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 22:49
SMM camera 1km SW of Shyrokyne (government-controlled, 100km S of Donetsk)	2-4km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 19:11
	3-5km N	Recorded	3	Projectile	W to E	N/K	14-Dec, 19:25
	3-5km N	Recorded	2	Projectile	W to E	N/K	14-Dec, 19:26
	4-6km N	Recorded	16	Projectile	SE to NW	N/K	14-Dec, 19:49
	4-6km N	Recorded	2	Projectile	S to N	N/K	14-Dec, 19:49
	4-6km N	Recorded	10	Projectile	SE to NW	N/K	14-Dec, 19:50
	5-7km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 19:50
	4-6km N	Recorded	1	Muzzle flash		N/K	14-Dec, 19:53
	4-6km N	Recorded	1	Projectile	SW to NE (subsequent to previous event)	N/K	14-Dec, 19:53
	4-6km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Impact (subsequent to previous event)	N/K	14-Dec, 19:53
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 19:58
	4-6km N	Recorded	3	Projectile	SW to NE	N/K	14-Dec, 20:01
	4-6km N	Recorded	2	Projectile	SE to NW	N/K	14-Dec, 20:02
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 20:45
	5-7km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 20:46
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 20:48
	5-7km N	Recorded	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 20:48
	4-6km NNE	Recorded	1	Projectile	W to E	N/K	14-Dec, 21:44
	5-7km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 22:00
	5-7km N	Recorded	3	Projectile	SW to NE	N/K	14-Dec, 22:01
	5-7km N	Recorded	1	Projectile	SW to NE	N/K	14-Dec, 23:04
	5-7km N	Recorded	1	Explosion	Impact (subsequent to previous event)	N/K	14-Dec, 23:04
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	4	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 17:24
	4-6km NNE	Recorded	1	Projectile	SSW to NNE	N/K	15-Dec, 17:25
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 17:25
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 17:26
	5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 17:50
5-7km NNE	Recorded	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 17:51	
5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 18:20	
5-7km NNE	Recorded	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 18:21	
2-4km N	Recorded	1	Projectile	SSW to NNE	N/K	15-Dec, 18:21	
5-7km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 18:22	
2-4km N	Recorded	1	Projectile	SSW to NNE	N/K	15-Dec, 18:51	
About 500m NE of Kamianka (government-controlled, 20km N of Donetsk)	4-6km ESE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:35
	5-7km ESE	Heard	9	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 13:00
About 1.5km NE of Staropetrivske (non-government-controlled, 35km NE of Donetsk)	1.5-2km NW	Heard	10	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 10:00-10:07
Orlivske (government-controlled, 82km S of Donetsk)	5-7km SSE	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:08-11:10

¹¹ The table only includes ceasefire violations directly observed by SMM patrols or recorded by the SMM cameras, and it may include those also assessed to be live-fire exercises, controlled detonations, etc. Details provided – in terms of distance, direction, weapons-type, etc. – are based on assessments provided by monitors on the ground and technical monitoring officers, and are not always necessarily precise. When information is not known (indicated with an “N/K”), the SMM was unable to ascertain such information due to distance, weather conditions technical limitations and/or other considerations. Ceasefire violations recorded by more than one patrol/camera and assessed to be the same are entered only once.

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, time
About 2km NW of Pionerske (government-controlled, 101km Sof Donetsk)	6-9km E	Heard	4	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:04-11:20
About 2.5km SE of Lebedynske (government-controlled, 99km Sof Donetsk)	5-7km NE	Heard	5	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 12:54-12:58
Svobodne (non-government-controlled, 73km S of Donetsk)	1km E	Heard	15	Burst		Small arms	15-Dec, 13:40-13:48
	1km E	Heard	20	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 13:40-13:48
Vynohradne (non-government-controlled, 34km E of Donetsk)	2-3km SE	Heard	10	Burst		HMG	15-Dec, 09:08-09:10
	2-3km SE	Heard	15	Shot		Small arms	15-Dec, 09:08-09:10
	2-3km SE	Heard	3	Burst		Small arms	15-Dec, 09:17-09:20
	2-3km SE	Heard	10	Shot		Small arms	15-Dec, 09:17-09:20
Pokrovka (non-government-controlled, 36km E of Donetsk)	2-3km SE	Heard	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 09:27-09:35
	2-3km SE	Heard	7	Burst		Small arms	15-Dec, 09:27-09:35
	2-3km SE	Heard	25	Shot		Small arms	15-Dec, 09:27-09:35
About 2.5km N of Petrivske (non-government-controlled, 41km Sof Donetsk)	2-2.5km SE	Heard	4	Burst	Assessed as outside the disengagement area	Small arms	15-Dec, 10:35-10:50
About 4km NW of Manuilivka (non-government-controlled, 65km E of Donetsk)	2-3km WNW	Heard	22	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 10:35-10:45
About 3km NW of Manuilivka (non-government-controlled, 65km E of Donetsk)	3-5km WNW	Heard	10	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:43-11:47
	3-5km WNW	Heard	5	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 11:52-11:54
About 700m WSW of the railway station in Yasynuvata (non-government-controlled, 16km NE of Donetsk)	10-15km N	Heard	7	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 13:00-13:07
N edge of Popasna (government-controlled, 69km west of Luhansk)	4-7km SE	Heard	13	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	14-Dec, 23:35-23:50
	4-7km SE	Heard	3	Burst		HMG	14-Dec, 23:35-23:50
	4-7km SE	Heard	12	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 00:01-00:20
	4-7km SE	Heard	8	Burst		HMG	15-Dec, 00:01-00:20
About 3km NW of Almazna (non-government-controlled, 55km west of Luhansk)	8-10km NW	Heard	3	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	15-Dec, 09:05-09:07
About 3km N of Pervomaisk (non-government-controlled, 58km west of Luhansk)	4-7km NNE	Heard	2	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area near Zolote)	N/K	15-Dec, 09:28-09:34
About 3km N of Kruhlyk (non-government-controlled, 31km south-west of Luhansk)	1.5km N	Heard	40	Shot		HMG	15-Dec, 09:46-09:50

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions¹²



¹² The SMM is deployed to ten locations throughout Ukraine – Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipro, Chernivtsi, Luhansk and Kyiv – as per Permanent Council Decision 1117 of 21 March 2014. This map of eastern Ukraine is meant for illustrative purposes and indicates locations mentioned in the report, as well as those where the SMM has offices (monitoring teams, patrol hubs and forward patrol bases) in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. (In red: a forward patrol base from which SMM staff have temporarily relocated based on recommendations of security experts from participating States, as well as SMM security considerations. The SMM uses the premises during daylight hours and also patrols in this settlement during daylight hours).