

Helicopter Reportedly Blown Up by Anti-Kiev Militia (Video)

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A screenshot from video footage showing smoke, purportedly from the stricken helicopter, rising above trees near the airbase.

A Ukrainian military helicopter has exploded in the eastern Ukraine city of Kramatorsk at an airfield that government forces took over from anti-Kiev separatists last week, a Ukrainian security official said Friday.

The explosion came after an unidentified sniper shot the helicopter's fuel tank while it was on the ground, injuring the aircraft's commander, the deputy head of the Ukrainian Security Services, Vasily Krutov, said at a briefing in Kiev, Interfax reported.

Krutov's announcement came amid conflicting reports on how the explosion occurred.

A [statement](#) on the Ukrainian Defense Ministry's website said that the helicopter explosion was the result of a grenade launcher attack and that there were no casualties. An unidentified

ministry official also said that the chopper was shot while airborne, Interfax reported.

An unidentified representative of the separatist militia in Kramatorsk told RIA Novosti on Friday afternoon that his forces had fired an anti-tank grenade launcher at a grounded helicopter before retreating under machine gun fire from Ukrainian soldiers.

A video purportedly taken not far from the airfield and posted on YouTube on Friday shows clouds of smoke rising into the air followed by a loud explosion.

The airfield near Kramatorsk, a city of less than 200,000 people in the Donetsk region, was the site of a Ukrainian "anti-terrorist" operation that saw government troops take control of the landing strip from separatists who had taken over key points in the town.

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