

# More Than 150,000 Russian Men Called Up for Mandatory Conscription

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More than 150,000 young Russians will be called up for compulsory military service this fall, the Armed Forces said Wednesday, though residents in recently-annexed Crimea will be exempt from conscription until next year.

"During the fall draft [which takes place Wednesday] ... 154,100 men will be sent to complete their military service in the Russian Armed Forces, military formations or organs," Deputy Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Vasily Tonkoshkurov was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

Of this number, 32,500 recruits have a military background, while a further 454 men will complete an alternative form of compulsory service, said Tonkoshkurov, who heads Russia's Organization-Mobilization Directorate.

Three new science squadrons will be added to the army this year — bringing the total number up to eight — allowing recruits with an academic background to contribute to the

technological development of the armed forces, Tonkoshkurov was cited as saying.

In line with Russian law, able-bodied men aged 18-27 are required to complete a 12-month period of service in the Armed Forces, amended from 18 months in 2008.

Male residents of the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea — annexed earlier this year from Ukraine — will be exempt from military service until next year, as the region has yet to be fully absorbed into Russia, Tonkoshkurov said.

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