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Bellingcat 'Identifies' Russian Soldiers Who Transported MH17 Buk Missiles

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Vadim Ghirda / AP

Online investigation network Bellingcat has released a report linking Russian soldiers with the Buk anti-aircraft missile which brought down Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine in 2014.

The new report details Russian military drivers who allegedly brought the weapons to Ukrainian separatists between June and July 2014. The convoys included Buk 332, the weapon which Bellingcat reports struck the passenger jet as it made its way from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur on July 17, 2014.

Bellingcat previously used photos released on Russian social media site Vkontakte to link Russia's 69th Separate Logistics Brigade to a convoy which reached the Russia-Ukraine border between 23-25 June 2014.

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The group's latest report allegedly identifies individual drivers within the brigade who were reportedly involved in the operation. Their names, which have been removed from the public report, have been passed on to investigators, Bellingcat said.

The group said that they had not been able to identify which soldier transported Buk 332 to the Russia-Ukraine border. Geotags on photos of the Buk 332, reportedly taken in 2013, confirm that it had been based with the 53rd Brigade at their camp in the village of Marshal Zhukov, close to Kursk.

Bellingcat also used new images to confirm that trucks in the convoy appeared again in Russia in October 2014.

Almost all the "soldier-drivers" who were involved in the June 2014 Buk convoy officially ended their military service in the end of June or early July 2014.

A report by the Dutch Safety Board (DSB) in 2015 also concluded that Russian-made Buk surface-to-air missile was responsible for downing of MH17. All of the 298 people onboard died in the crash.

The Kremlin said in response the report was "unlikely to be true."

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