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# Russia Prosecutes 12 Officers Over Conscript Deployments to Ukraine

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**Alexander Avilov / Moskva News Agency**

A dozen Russian officers have been prosecuted for sending hundreds of young conscript soldiers to fight in Ukraine, a military prosecutor announced Tuesday.

“Around 600 conscripts were involved in the special military operation, all of whom were returned as soon as possible," military prosecutor Artur Yegiev of Russia’s Western Military District said at a Federation Council meeting.

Around “12 [army] officers” have been prosecuted in connection with the conscripts' deployment, Interfax quoted him as saying.

Yegiev said disciplinary measures have been taken against those found guilty of violations.

He did not specify the disciplinary measures taken, only saying that some of the officers were dismissed from service.

**Related article**: Russia Admits Conscripts 'Take Part' in Ukraine Operation

The use of conscripts on the battlefield has been a controversial topic since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24.

As Russia increasingly grapples with manpower shortages, the Kremlin has been wary of risking public backlash by calling up conscripts to fight, analysts say.

President Vladimir Putin said on March 8 that conscripts "do not and will not participate in hostilities" in Ukraine and that only professional soldiers would be deployed.

But Moscow was forced to quickly backtrack on that pledge, with Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov admitting the next day there were "several instances" of conscripts fighting in Ukraine.

Ukrainian media has consistently reported evidence of conscripts being captured as well as killed in Ukraine.

In his comments Tuesday, military prosecutor Yegiev did not mention any instances of conscripts being captured or killed in Ukraine.

According to Russian law, conscripts are legally allowed to be deployed abroad after four months of military service.

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