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Russia's Interior Ministry Creates New Department to Enforce Martial Law

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Sophia Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency

Russia's Interior Ministry has created a new department to help enforce martial law, the country's state-run TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

The Main Directorate of Rapid Response will also coordinate ministry forces if a state of emergency or a counter-terrorism operation is declared in the country.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said the new measures reflected "current demands," while Interior Ministry spokeswoman Irina Volk said the department would help "strengthen" the ministry's forces.

The new department will also be charged with protecting Interior Ministry buildings, including against terrorist attacks, as well as organizing civil defense activities. It will also deal with reports on crime and administrative offenses.

Moscow has repeatedly said that is not planning to declare martial law in Russia following the

invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24. Under Russia's legislation, martial law would see military rule temporarily substitute civilian law, allowing civil liberties such as the right to free movement or freedom of speech to be temporarily suspended.

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