The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Wagner Group Becomes Legal Entity in Russia – BBC

January 17, 2023

PMC Wagner Centre in St. Petersburg. **Valentin Yegorshin / TASS**

Once a shadowy organization whose very existence was unconfirmed, Russia's notorious Wagner mercenary group, whose profile has grown exponentially since the war in Ukraine began last year, has now been registered as a joint-stock company in Russia's second city St. Petersburg, the BBC Russian Service reported on Tuesday.

A joint stock company called "PMC Wagner Center" has now been registered in St. Petersburg, according to the BBC, which also established that until now there had never been a legal entity called Wagner officially registered in Russia.

In its registration documents, PMC Wagner Center described its activities as including business and management consulting, publishing, media, scientific development, and the leasing of ships and airplanes.

The company, whose shareholders were not disclosed, was registered at the St. Petersburg address of the Wagner Technology Center, which opened last year.

Wagner operated behind the scenes for years before the Russian invasion of Ukraine forced its public profile to grow due to its role supplying thousands of privately contracted soldiers for the conflict.

Prigozhin, a St. Petersburg business magnate often referred to as "Putin's chef" for his long-time role supplying catering to the Kremlin, confirmed last year that he had founded Wagner after years of denying any connection to the mercenary organization whose fighters have been spotted in conflict zones all over the world.

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