

Russian Soldier Jailed for 10 Years for Shooting Comrade While Drunk

April 14, 2023



Yelena Afonina / TASS

A court in Russian-annexed Crimea found a Russian soldier guilty of mistakenly shooting one of his comrades in Ukraine while drunk and sentenced him to 10 years imprisonment, the Kommersant newspaper [reported](#) Friday.

Alexei Usenko was accused of fatally wounding a Russian National Guardsman who was accompanying a convoy in a passenger vehicle last year, as well as threatening to shoot a second guardsman in the vehicle.

Usenko pleaded not guilty to the charges, claiming that the National Guardsman may have been killed by Ukrainian saboteurs or by other Russian servicemen nearby.

Fellow servicemen who persuaded Usenko to surrender his weapon after the incident told a court that he had been “intoxicated” and had “behaved aggressively and inadequately, claiming to have detained Ukrainian saboteurs,” Kommersant reported.

Usenko's fellow servicemen reportedly said they had drunk cognac with him the day before. But according to Kommersant, a medical examination found no traces of alcohol or gunpowder on Usenko, who was also said to have successfully passed a lie detector test.

The Crimean Garrison Military Court found Usenko guilty of murder and of making threats to kill and sentenced him to 10 years in a penal colony.

While Kommersant did not give the date the initial verdict was announced, did report that a military court in southern Russia had already turned down Usenko's appeal, though Usenko's legal team is believed to be launching a second appeal shortly.

Original url:

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