

Russia Resumes Partial Traffic on Crimea Bridge Following Attack

July 18, 2023



The Russian-built Crimea bridge. **Sergei Malgavko / TASS**

Russian authorities have partially resumed road traffic across the Crimean bridge connecting the annexed Black Sea peninsula to mainland Russia that was damaged in a drone attack Monday.

“As we reported to [President Vladimir Putin] today, we prepared the bridge for launch as soon as possible,” Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin [said](#) early Tuesday.

Undamaged lanes were opened for two-way traffic after the bridge spans were tested for structural soundness, Khusnullin wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Under what he called “reverse mode,” vehicles are permitted to take turns boarding the bridge in each direction.

Khusnullin [published](#) footage of the first vehicles being allowed onto the Crimean bridge since early Monday’s attack.

Embed:

Road traffic has reportedly resumed on the Crimean Bridge. Around the site of the section damaged by Monday's drone attack, officials have activated "reverse mode," splitting the intact two-lane side into two-way traffic.

<https://t.co/Vnglzdit38> pic.twitter.com/DV8ScNoqLf

— Kevin Rothrock, Mr. (@KevinRothrock) [July 18, 2023](#)

Russian state media [noted](#) that the restrictions were creating traffic jams as drivers sought to leave Crimea.

Meanwhile, Russia's Defense Ministry and Kremlin-installed authorities [reported](#) that almost 30 drones had been [downed](#) in eastern Crimea — where the bridge connects to mainland Russia — overnight. No damages or casualties were reported.

On Monday night, two explosions reportedly hit the Crimea bridge — a key supply route for Russia's military since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine — just hours before a crucial deal to export Ukrainian grain was set to expire.

Russian authorities said a couple was killed and their daughter wounded in the attack on the bridge, which was also damaged last year in a blast Moscow blamed on Kyiv.

Sources told AFP that the Ukrainian navy and its SBU security service carried out Monday's attack on the bridge.

"Today's attack on the Crimean bridge is a special operation of the SBU and the navy," the security service source told AFP Monday. The strike was carried out using waterborne drones, according to the same source.

The Kremlin said President Vladimir Putin has [ordered](#) to organize the flow of traffic, including assistance to drivers, to and from Crimea.

Kyiv has repeatedly said it plans to take back the peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014.

AFP contributed reporting.

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