

U.S. Patriot Missile System Shot Down Russian Military Plane – Putin

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Investigators at the crash site of the Il-76 military transport plane. **Russian Investigative Committee / TASS**

Russian investigators have concluded that a U.S. Patriot air defense system was used to shoot down an Il-76 military transport plane that crashed near the border with Ukraine last week, President Vladimir Putin [said](#) Wednesday.

“It’s been definitively established that the plane was shot down by an American Patriot air defense system,” Putin [said](#) during an event with supporters as part of his presidential campaign.

He added that Moscow “insists” on an international investigation into the incident, which took place in western Russia’s Belgorod region last Wednesday.

Putin said Friday it was “obvious” that Kyiv had shot down the Il-76 transport plane.

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Moscow claims that 65 Ukrainian prisoners of war were killed in the air disaster, in addition to nine other Russian crew members.

Ukraine has not confirmed or denied its involvement in the crash.

The Kremlin [said](#) earlier Wednesday the investigation into the Il-76 crash was still ongoing and it was too early to speculate about its findings.

Russian media reported Tuesday that work on decoding the aircraft's onboard flight data and voice recordings was nearing completion, but preliminary findings indicated the aircraft was shot down.

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