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Russian Attack Helicopter Crashes Near Annexed Crimea

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Igor Dvurekov / WikiMedia

A Russian Mi-24 attack helicopter crashed off the coast of annexed Crimea on Wednesday morning, according to a Defense Ministry statement shared with state news agencies.

"At around 6:00 a.m. Moscow time, the Mi-24 helicopter crashed near the western coast of the republic of Crimea while performing a scheduled flight over the Black Sea," the statement reads.

The ministry named aviation equipment failure as a preliminary cause of the crash.

Prominent pro-war bloggers meanwhile blamed Russia's air defense systems for the incident, the independent news website The Insider noted.

The Defense Ministry said a search-and-rescue mission was working at the crash site, without indicating whether the Mi-24 pilots were thought to be dead or alive.

Russia has lost at least four Mi-24 helicopters since invading Ukraine in 2022, according to

the Dutch open-source intelligence project Oryx.

Earlier Wednesday, the Ukrainian armed forces claimed that a different Russian military helicopter, a Ka-27, was either downed or exploded near the western Crimean settlement of Chornomorske. It was not immediately clear whether these were separate or identical incidents.

Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and launched a full-scale invasion of the country in 2022.

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