

Russia's GRU Behind Airport Parcel Bombing Plot, European Intelligence Believes

April 23, 2025



dhl.com

European intelligence agencies believe that Russia's GRU military intelligence service was behind a series of cargo package explosions at airports in Germany, Poland and Britain last summer, German media reported Wednesday.

The coordinated attacks, which occurred over three days in July 2024, were part of an international sabotage campaign involving at least 10 individuals, according to a joint [investigation](#) by German media outlets WDR, NDR and Süddeutsche Zeitung.

On July 20, a parcel caught fire at Leipzig Airport in Germany. A similar incident occurred at Warsaw's international airport the next day, followed by a third airport fire on July 22 in Birmingham, England. A fourth package intended for Poland was intercepted before it exploded.

Investigators found that the four packages, all of which were traced to Lithuania, [contained](#) magnesium-based explosives concealed in items like cosmetics tubes and sex toys.

European intelligence agencies have since concluded that the operation was coordinated by a group of GRU agents, including high-ranking personnel, WDR, NDR and Süddeutsche Zeitung reported.

Related article: [Moscow Behind Incendiary Packages Sent Across Europe, Lithuanian Official Says](#)

One of the alleged organizers is GRU Colonel Denis Smolyaninov, who was sanctioned by the EU in December 2024.

Rather than relying solely on trained operatives, the GRU reportedly recruited civilians — referred to as “disposable agents” — through messaging apps, offering money for seemingly harmless tasks.

One of those recruits was a 27-year-old Ukrainian man living in Katowice, Poland, who has since been arrested. According to investigators, he drove the packages to Lithuania, where he activated the explosives’ timers and handed them to a Lithuanian national identified as Aleksandr S., who allegedly sent the parcels.

In early August 2024, another Ukrainian man in Poland, identified as Viacheslav C., sent two more packages — containing tracking devices rather than explosives — to the U.S. and Canada. Prosecutors believe the devices were intended to help map out shipping routes for potential future operations.

Aleksandr S. and Viacheslav C. were arrested and now face charges of engaging in sabotage on behalf of a foreign state.

The Russian Embassy in Berlin has denied the allegations, calling them “paranoia” and “conspiracy theories.”

According to The New York Times, Washington [issued](#) a warning to President Vladimir Putin via then-CIA Director William Burns and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan that it would hold Moscow responsible for “enabling terrorism” if the sabotage led to casualties in the U.S. The package explosions in Europe have since ceased.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/04/23/russias-gru-behind-airport-parcel-bombing-plot-europe-an-intelligence-believes-a88846>