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Su-34 Crashes During Training Flight in Central Russia

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Vitaly V. Kuzmin / Wikimedia

A Russian Sukhoi Su-34 fighter-bomber crashed during a training flight in the Nizhny Novgorod region, the Interfax news agency reported on Tuesday, citing the Defense Ministry.

The aircraft was said to have experienced mechanical failure with part of its landing gear. Despite attempts by the two pilots to fix the malfunction in flight, they were ultimately forced to eject from the aircraft, according to Interfax.

Both pilots survived, and no damage was reported on the ground.

The Su-34, which is widely used by Russian forces in Ukraine and estimated to cost just under $15 million, went down around 1 p.m. local time on Tuesday in an unpopulated area.

The crash site lies about 300 kilometers (186 miles) east of Moscow, according to the Telegram news channel Baza, which has links to Russian security services.

While the Defense Ministry said a rescue team reached the site and evacuated the crew, Baza

reported that only one pilot had been found as of Tuesday afternoon.

Tuesday's crash marks at least the third such incident involving a Su-34 in just over a year, following a deadly training accident in North Ossetia last June and another crash in the Volgograd region in July, in which both pilots safely ejected, according to the exiled news outlet Meduza.

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