

Moscow Soldier Kills Comrade Before Dying By Suicide

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Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS

A Russian serviceman fatally shot a fellow soldier and then died of self-inflicted wounds in the Moscow region overnight, the military [said](#) Friday.

“The service member violated safety rules for handling weapons and fatally injured a contract soldier while on duty at a lookout post,” state news agencies [quoted](#) the Defense Ministry’s Moscow Military District as saying.

It said a commission from the Aerospace Forces had arrived at the scene to investigate the incident as part of a newly opened criminal case.

Earlier media reports claimed that up to five people may have been injured in the shooting.

The Ren TV broadcaster, citing an anonymous source, [reported](#) that one of the injured soldiers contacted his mother, who then called medics and police to the unit. He was reportedly hospitalized in critical condition.

The pro-Kremlin daily Izvestia, also citing an anonymous source, [said](#) the shooting took place in the southwestern Moscow suburb of Naro-Fominsk located 80 kilometers (50 miles) southwest of the capital.

Both outlets reported that the shooter was a conscript. No motive has been reported.

The identities and ranks of both the perpetrator and the victim have not been disclosed.

No official sources have confirmed the number of casualties or the branch affiliation of the unit involved.

Independent media [noted](#) that Naro-Fominsk hosts an anti-aircraft missile brigade within the Russian Ground Forces, as well as training units for newly drafted conscripts later assigned to various Aerospace Forces branches.

Shootings at Russian military barracks are not uncommon, with the army long plagued by bullying and hazing scandals.

Russia's military rejects accusations it has a culture of hazing and says it has rooted out bullying rituals that had been common for decades.

In 2019, a 19-year-old conscript opened fire at a military base in Siberia, killing eight soldiers, including two officers.

Sentenced to 24 years in jail, he described his military service as "hell" and said he had been regularly abused.

Russia has massively ramped up the size of its army since launching its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

It has recruited hundreds of thousands of contract soldiers, hiking salaries and offering huge sign-up bonuses.

Moscow also forcibly drafted some 300,000 reservists in autumn 2022 after its troops failed to conquer Ukraine.

President Vladimir Putin said last month more than 700,000 Russian troops were fighting in Ukraine.

AFP contributed reporting.

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