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Shuttered Airports Ready to Reopen After Military Approval, Rosaviatsia Says

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The Kursk region airport. **Roman Bugayenko / yandex.ru/maps**

Russian civil aviation authorities said Friday that all airports closed after the start of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine are prepared to reopen as soon as the Defense Ministry grants final approval.

Flights at 11 airports across southern and central Russia were suspended in February 2022 because of safety risks as President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops into neighboring Ukraine. Three have since reopened.

Rosaviatsia chief Dmitry Yadrov told the state news agency TASS that the remaining eight airports are "ready to reopen," but said the Defense Ministry must sign off before flights can resume.

"We're always in dialogue with the Defense Ministry," Yadrov said.

Transportation Minister Andrei Nikitin said this week that preparations were underway to

restart operations at the airports as soon as federal security agencies issue the necessary clearances.

The Defense Ministry has not yet commented on the possibility of air travel resuming at the eight airports, which include those in the Belgorod, Bryansk and Kursk regions, as well as annexed Crimea.

Rosaviatsia has kept staffing at roughly 90% of pre-2022 levels at 10 southern airports and received 11 billion rubles ($139 million) last year to offset losses caused by the shutdowns.

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