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Russia Allows Private Security Firms to Use Firearms to Counter Drone Attacks

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Alexander Reka / TASS

President Vladimir Putin has signed a law allowing private security companies to temporarily use firearms to protect critical infrastructure from drone attacks during the war in Ukraine, the state-run TASS news agency reported Monday, citing official documents.

The measure extends to facilities operated by strategic enterprises, state companies, state corporations and natural monopolies, reflecting growing concern in Moscow over the vulnerability of key assets to unmanned aerial strikes.

Under the law, private guards will be able to obtain weapons through Russia's National Guard (Rosgvardia) and must return them within two weeks after their security contracts end or upon request by the agency.

The legislation also grants security firms the right to purchase service weapons, expanding their capabilities beyond the limited-lethality arms and self-defense tools they were previously restricted to.

Lawmakers who drafted the bill cited a surge in drone strikes on critical infrastructure, including energy sector facilities, as justification for the changes. They argued that automatic firearms are among the most effective means of countering such threats.

More than 80% of Russia's fuel and energy complex is protected by private security firms, whose personnel have until now faced strict limits on the types of weapons they could carry, the lawmakers said.

"The possibility of obtaining combat firearms for temporary use during the special military operation will significantly improve the protection of critically important facilities," said State Duma lawmaker Vasily Piskarev, one of the bill's co-authors.

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