

Aerospace Forces General Reportedly Shot and Wounded in Saratov Region

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Major General Nikolai Varpakhovich. **Russian Defense Ministry**

A senior Russian Aerospace Forces officer was shot and wounded in the southern Saratov region, law enforcement authorities and Russian media reported Thursday.

The Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body, [said](#) it opened a criminal probe into attempted murder and arms trafficking following "an attempt on the life of a serviceman" in the city of Engels.

"Cartridge casings and bullets from a firearm were recovered at the scene," the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

The officer was airlifted to a military hospital in Moscow, law enforcement sources [told](#) the newspaper Kommersant.

While authorities did not immediately identify the officer, unverified [reports](#) claimed the victim to be Major General Nikolai Varpakhovich, who heads a strategic bomber division at

Engels-2 airbase.

Russia's Defense Ministry has not commented on the shooting.

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The reports, which The Moscow Times was unable to independently verify, claimed Varpakhovich was shot twice in the torso and the face by a gunman riding a motorcycle and wearing a helmet outside a private cottage.

The shooting occurred after Ukrainian law enforcement authorities [pressed](#) formal criminal charges against Varpakhovich in absentia on Monday.

Kyiv accuses Varpakhovich of ordering a fatal missile strike on the Okhmatdyt children's hospital in the Ukrainian capital in July 2024.

Ukraine has not commented on the shooting in Engels on Thursday.

If confirmed, Varpakhovich would be the seventh Russian general to have been targeted in assassination attempts in nearly two years, [according](#) to analysis by the exiled news outlet Meduza.

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