



The Last Line of Air Defense: Russia's Verba MANPADS

OE Watch Commentary: The accompanying excerpted article from *Izvestia* discusses Russian plans to defend radar sites with the new 9K333 Verba (SA-25) Man-Portable Air-Defense System (MANPADS), which is replacing the 9K338 Igla-S (SA-24 Grinch) MANPADS. According to *Izvestia*, the Verba will not only be the last line of defense for Ground Forces' maneuver brigades and divisions, but also for more strategically oriented assets such as Electronic Warfare brigades and the large radars operated by the Aerospace Forces and Ground Forces. **End OE Watch Commentary (Bartles)**



9K333 Verba MANPADS.

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“The Verba-armed units are the final line of air defense. Their job is to destroy targets that have penetrated past the long-range S-300 and S-400s and also medium-range and close-quarters missile systems like the Buk and Tor...”



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Verba Missile.

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Continued: The Last Line of Air Defense: Russia's Verba MANPADS



9K333 Verba MANPADS.

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Source: Aleksey Ramm and Bogdan Stepovo, “Радар под прикрытием: зенитные комплексы «Верба» защитят РЛС (Radar Under Cover: Verba SAM Systems to Protect Radar Stations),” *Izvestia Online*, 6 December 2019. <https://iz.ru/951143/aleksei-ramm-bogdan-stepovoi/radar-pod-prikytiem-zenitnye-kompleksy-verba-zashchitiat-rls>

Radar Under Cover: Verba SAM Systems to Protect Radar Stations

Verba portable SAM teams are to take over the protection of long-range radar stations. Their mission will be to shoot down cruise missiles and drones. Combat operations in Syria showed that the greatest threat to radar stations is posed by drones. The enemy uses them to attempt to destroy the stations and deprive anti-aircraft missile systems of their eyes. Radar station defenses have been inadequate until recently and the new portable SAM systems, say experts, will help to beef them up.

*The first Verba portable SAM systems have already entered service with electronic warfare brigades and regiments. Not only that, but during the Tsenter-2019 exercise, there was a successful practice of coordination between the crews of radar stations and portable SAMs, and also of a tactic for repulsing drone and cruise missile attacks, *Izvestiya* was told at the Defense Ministry. The radar stations maintain a constant field along the perimeter of Russia's borders, Lieutenant General Aytech Bizhev, former Air Force deputy commander for the CIS joint air defense system, said to *Izvestiya*.*

“These radars are the eyes and ears of the air defense forces and fighter aviation,” he commented. “They are the first to detect border intruders and forward the information to the air defense troops and aircraft. In the event of hostilities breaking out, radars will immediately come under attack so reinforcing them with anti-aircraft assets is a timely and justified measure.” Cover was previously provided by the crews of DShK heavy machine guns, but they cannot shoot down modern means of attack. Only new-generation anti-aircraft assets can counter a massed attack by drones or cruise missiles. The Verba-armed units are the final line of air defense. Their job is to destroy targets that have penetrated past the long-range S-300 and S-400s and also medium-range and close-quarters missile systems like the Buk and Tor...

In the first instance, Verbas will be sent to units that have the Niobium-SV radar in their inventory and also the latest radars, which the troops have dubbed ground-based “AWACS'es” by virtue of their capabilities. The latter are designed for long-range detection of aerial targets and to guide their own side's aircraft and air defense systems to them. They can also automatically track several dozen enemy aerial assets, to a high degree of accuracy determine the motion coordinates and parameters of aircraft and missiles, and identify any type of military hardware. In the future, these radars will become the principal element of an air defense automated command and control system and will be integrated into the troop command and control system, so that in the event of enemy attack, the entire gamut of anti-aircraft weaponry in various branches of the armed forces can be brought to bear...