



Brigade Field Training in Russia's Eastern Military District

OE Watch Commentary: The 38th Guards Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (Belogorsk, Amur District) and the 64th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade (Knyaze-Volkonskoye, Khabarovsk Region) conducted a combination of force-on-force and live-fire training exercise, moving east-west along the Chinese border in the Russian Far East. The force-on-force involved movement to contact, river crossings, mobile defense, artillery targeting, electronic jamming, road construction, as well as aerial, electronic and ground reconnaissance. Live fire was conducted on training area ranges. A lot of the equipment used was state of the art, but the Eastern Military District sometimes lags in getting the latest equipment. The air defense included the venerable ZSU 23-4 Shilka. Still, Russia is determined to meet its ground forces goal of 70% new equipment by the end of 2020. End OE Watch Commentary (Grau)

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ZSU-23-4 Shilka.

Source: <https://www.vitalykuzmin.net/Military/MsSVU/i-6wVWKX7/A>



Continued: Brigade Field Training in Russia's Eastern Military District

Source: Konstantin Lobkov, "Trehrech'ye and Bidzhan tested the Motorized Riflemen", *Krasnaya Zvezda*, <http://redstar.ru/motostrelkov-proverili-tryohreche-i-bidzhan/>, 12 August 2020

Trehrech'ye and Bidzhan Tested the Motorized Riflemen

Two brigades of the 35th Combined-Arms Army opposed each other on two ranges. Practice battles and tactical actions were conducted over one and one-half weeks on a vast territory intersected by woods and small round top mountains in the Bureyskiy Rayon of Amurskaya Oblast and in Leninskiy Rayon of Jewish Autonomous Oblast. Here two Eastern Military District separate motorized rifle brigades under the command of Colonels Andrey Kurbanov and Andrey Golubkov interacted in a near-real situation.

Colonel Pavel Lopanov, chief of staff of the exercise directorate stated that over 4,000 servicemen were called out on a practice alert prior to the beginning of the exercise. Subunits and staffs moved out to Bidzhan Range in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast and Trehrech'ye Range in Priamur'ye in order for the two brigades to oppose each other in a mutual tactical exercise. Covert troop movement was practiced. Troops moved on main and lateral roads under the cover of tactical air defense weapons.

During the movement to the training areas, military engineers of one of the brigades launched a dummy bridge to deceive a simulated enemy and conducted a fast ferry crossing for a reinforced tank battalion across a water obstacle in the vicinity of Trehrech'ye Range. According to the exercise scenario, enemy forces had used a precision weapon strike to destroy the main bridge, the floodplain of which also proved to be an impassable sector.

Considering the danger of a repeat strike being delivered, engineers suggested using a pneumatic radar reflector as a bridge simulation while the main crossing was conducted on another axis using sections of a PMP engineer floating bridge. This ferry crossing covertly moved heavy equipment on the PMP sections, while personnel and other equipment moved on amphibious transporters.

Cover of the crossing against an "enemy" air raid was organized using Shilka self-propelled antiaircraft mounts and Igla shoulder-fired air defense missiles. As a result of well-coordinated actions, around 100 pieces of equipment, including over 30 T-80BV tanks, crossed to the other bank in less than two hours.

Subsequently, when subunits of the motorized rifle brigade prepared for combat on the swampy woodland terrain of Trehrech'ye Range, commanders laid several new roads in the marshes and sent subunits across bodies of water using ferries and amphibious transporters to achieve surprise.

Great attention was given to covert troop movement in areas difficult to negotiate, to the actions of reconnaissance patrols, and to employing tanks and artillery in the limited expanse of forest roads.....

One of the exercise episodes in Amurskaya Oblast was the destruction of "enemy" command posts and an equipment concentration. They were detected by reconnaissance teams up to 20 kilometers away using Strelets reconnaissance, command and control, and communications complexes (KRUS) that recently arrived in the unit. On receiving coordinates, artillerymen conducted firing calculations and fired a Grad BM-21 multiple rocket launcher salvo against detected targets. Immediately after this, they changed positions to avoid retaliatory counterfire.

The tankers, recently armed with T-80BV tanks along with other district units, were conspicuous during the exercise. During the combined-arms combat on Trehrech'ye Range, motorized rifle formation subunits inflicted damage on a simulated enemy's troop grouping of a superior size. But the tank battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Ivanov, was the main mobile striking force.

The motorized rifle brigade headquarters organized a mobile defense in the forest and on swampy terrain, engaging attacking "enemy" forces by fire on the lines from all kinds of weapons and executing swift counterattacks by tank armored groups. Takhion UAVs and ground reconnaissance equipment, including the Strelets KRUS, provided complete monitoring of the tactical situation.

The brigade was able to disrupt the system of command and control of "enemy" subunits by putting a station of the Borisoglebsk-2 complex into operation. A total of over 2,000 servicemen and around 400 pieces of armored, automotive, and special military equipment, including Grad MLRS and Akatsiya self-propelled howitzers, took part in this portion of the training.

During a tactical exercise with the motorized rifle brigade in early August, an electronic warfare [EW] subunit on Bidzhan Range in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast comprehensively worked out new methods of opposing offensive air weapons and commando teams of the simulated enemy. According to the exercise scenario, the "enemy" employed guided missiles and precision artillery projectiles to destroy the motorized rifle formation command post. He also used commando teams with radio equipment for vectoring targets and adjusting fire.

EW specialists used the Rtut-BM modernized proximity fuze jammer and other systems including the Borisoglebsk-2 special equipment that arrived recently. These were used to create a protective cupola above the electronically-guarded terrain sector, where artillery proximity fuses were disabled at a safe distance. Using the Borisoglebsk-2, soldiers were able to scan for and suppress operation of radio equipment and also determine the location of "enemy" commando and artillery observer teams. Major troop groupings opposed each other on the two ranges over the course of ten days. The opposed-forces tactical exercise ended with a live-fire phase including mobile combat.

....The brigade commanders' expanded their use of their automated command and control systems, UAVs, and teams for combating UAVs. The command and control system that largely had been organized on Azart system radio equipment has been upgraded.

According to Col Lopanov, the 35th Army exercise staff used the opposed-forces brigade tactical exercise to analyze the brigade commanders' decisions, study their decisions chosen methods and forms of employing subunits, observe their mathematical modeling and determination of the best method of executing a mission and conducting mobile live fire actions on the ranges.

Colonel Lopanov stated that "The final phase was distinguished by live fire with the employment of motorized rifle, artillery, and tank subunits and of short-range and medium-range reconnaissance-fire complexes. It was held at a high tempo of modern combined-arms combat."

Problems of the actions of tank subunits and their execution of lightning-swift counterattacks and raids into the depth of the enemy defense, and of the organization of tank ambushes using Strelets KRUS reconnaissance complexes and Takhion UAVs were worked thoroughly during the exercise. Special attention was given to mastering new reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and communications assets. New tactics were used in employing subunits and their deception and camouflage measures....