



Electronic Tokens to Track Soldiers

OE Watch Commentary: Alongside incorporating the latest technology into their weapon systems, the Russian military has introduced high tech advances into how it manages personnel. The accompanying excerpt from the pro-Kremlin source *Izvestia Online* describes a new electronic token issued to military personnel which both monitors movement and stores vital personal information. Domestically produced, “the electronic token is a small plastic card,” which has been battle hardened to withstand extreme temperatures and EW measures.

The excerpt describes how these tokens will allow the Defense Ministry “to monitor the movement of troops on the unit’s territory, the time taken to get to secure facilities, and can keep track of access to restricted information resources.” The collection of this information will make “it possible to analyze the work of both the military unit and a specific soldier.” A successful trial program using these tokens has already been completed, “and their mass issue began in the autumn of this year [2017] to serving conscripts and contract soldiers.”

The article quotes a military expert who asserts that besides personal and health information, the token “stores the serviceman’s financial documents, food certificates, weapon securement logs, and much other information.” This will purportedly streamline bureaucratic processes within the military, since all the soldiers’ vital “information is stored on a chip and changes in data are entered instantly.” Another expert quoted in the article suggests that these tokens will help “to improve discipline among servicemen and security in military units.” Advances in technology continue to change how militaries operate, and issuing electronic tokens to Russian soldiers may improve both bureaucratic procedures and accountability. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

“The introduction of the new tokens will allow the Defense Ministry to monitor soldiers’ access to secure facilities, track the time spent in a particular premises, ... confirm the right to social, financial and other services and maintain their records.”

Source: Vladimir Zykov and Aleksey Ramm, “Военным начали выдавать электронные досье (Soldiers Start to be Issued with Electronic Dossiers),” *Izvestia Online*, 20 November 2017. <https://iz.ru/671424/vladimir-zykov-aleksei-ramm/voennym-nachali-vydavat-elektronnye-dose>

The mass issue of electronic tokens to Russian servicemen has begun.... The tokens record personal data, access keys to various premises, biometric and medical information, and the results of combat training. Thus, the Defense Ministry now has the capability to monitor the movement of troops on the unit’s territory, the time taken to get to secure facilities, and can track of access to restricted information resources. Experts are confident that all the gathered information will be provided to a unified information system of the Ministry of Defense. This will make it possible to analyze the work of both the military unit and a specific soldier.

As Izvestia was informed by the Defense Ministry, the first pilot batch of electronic tokens was issued to privates and sergeants at the end of last year. The trial was deemed a success, and their mass issue began in the autumn of this year to serving conscripts and contract soldiers....

The electronic token is a small plastic card. Hidden inside the chip is an information store. All the electronics are developed and produced in Russia. The chip is capable of operating at temperatures from minus 50 to plus 50 degrees Celsius. The information on it will be retained if an adversary employs electronic warfare [EW] measures or the token is exposed to electromagnetic radiation. Data from the electronic tokens can be read using special fixed and mobile scanners. The latter is especially important in a combat environment. Doctors will be able to easily acquire all the information about a wounded serviceman within seconds.

The introduction of the new tokens will allow the Defense Ministry to monitor soldiers’ access to secure facilities, track the time spent in a particular premises, and confirm the right to social, financial and other services and maintain their records. The chip records all the information from a military ID card: full name, military rank, unit number, blood group, and so on.

“The electronic tokens will very much simplify military bureaucracy,” Izvestia was told by military expert Vladislav Shurygin. “Aside from personal information, the unit stores the serviceman’s financial documents, food certificates, weapon securement logs, and much other information. Previously the records had to be constantly maintained and the data verified. That was especially difficult when transferring a person between units. In such cases it was necessary to collect a package of documents, verify them, and correctly fill them out. Now all the information is stored on a chip and changes in data are entered instantly....”

...Andrey Kolesnikov, director of the Association of Internet of Things, considers that the use of electronic tokens will allow the Defense Ministry to improve discipline among servicemen and security in military units. “The Russian Army will get objective data on which to make the necessary conclusions,” the expert told Izvestia. “Discipline among servicemen as well as the security of facilities will be improved since it will be clear who is where....