

Russia Readies Strategic Bombers in Snap Far East Military Drills

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia's air base of Tu-95MS Bear-H strategic bombers in the Amur Region is switching to full combat readiness as part of massive snap drills in the Eastern Military District, the Defense Ministry's press office reported on Sunday.

The exercise, which involves over 160,000 servicemen, some 1,000 armored vehicles, 130 aircraft and 70 warships from the Pacific Fleet, was ordered by President Vladimir Putin on Friday evening.

"Additionally, on order from the Russian president, the 6952nd air base of long-range aviation [at Ukrainka in the Amur Region] is switching to 'Full' combat readiness from 5:00 p.m. Moscow time, July 13. Tu-95MS strategic bombers are preparing for combat mission flights," the press office said.

The military exercise is being held in strict compliance with the endorsed plan, the press

office said. "There have been no disruptions or delays in the planned troops' regrouping."

It is the third surprise combat readiness check since January and follows a major shake-up at the top of a military establishment tarnished by persistent evidence of rampant corruption.

Putin said in May that surprise military drills is a perfect way to keep the armed forces in good shape and vowed to continue similar practices in the future.

"The main goal of the drills is to check the readiness of units to carry out their missions, and to assess the quality of their training and technical preparedness," the Defense Ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

The Eastern Military District is one of the four operational strategic commands of the Russian Armed Forces. The district was formed in 2010. It absorbed the territories of the former Far East Military District and part of the former Siberian Military District with headquarters at Khabarovsk.

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