

Russia Plans to Have 4 'Massive' Military Training Ranges

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Each of Russia's four military districts will have its own training range capable of hosting large-scale exercises involving all branches of the armed forces, a senior defense official said Saturday.

First Deputy Defense Minister General Arkady Bakhin said in an interview with Echo Moskvy radio that the first such training range, dubbed Mulino, was being constructed in the Nizhny Novgorod region for the Western Military District.

According to Bakhin, construction of the Mulino training range is expected to be completed in summer next year.

"A contract for the construction of the second range, based on the Ashuluk training facility in the Southern Military District, has been signed," Bakhin said.

Its size and advanced equipment will allow the Defense Ministry to train and inspect combat capabilities of large military units, including entire armies, the official said.

The expansion of the Ashuluk facility in the Astrakhan region is expected to be completed in 2017, he added.

The third training range will be built near the town of Tsugol in Siberia for the Eastern Military District, while the site for the training facility in the Central Military District has not yet been determined, the general said.

The Russian army held about 3,000 drills in 2013, including some 400 involving multiple army branches, Bakhin said.

This year's biggest drill, West-2013, took place in the Russian western exclave of Kaliningrad and neighboring Belarus, Russia's major European ally.

Bakhin announced Saturday that the Russian military would hold its biggest drill of 2014 in the country's east.

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