

Putin Orders Russian Troops Back to Bases After Exercises

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin has ordered his forces in the Western and Central military districts to return to their usual posts, ending exercises that sparked concerns over Russia's intentions in Ukraine, though Russians still occupy Crimea.

Putin received a briefing on the military's performance in the drills on Monday evening. Having been informed of their success, Putin "issued an order to the forces taking part in the military exercises to return to their places of permanent deployment," Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov said, Interfax reported.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on Tuesday acknowledged the order and commanded all units of the Western and Central military districts return to their posts by Friday.

On Monday, Putin flew by helicopter to the Leningrad region, where the snap inspection was conducted. Shortly after arriving he met with Shoigu and other senior Russian military

officials in a command post in Kirillov to observe the final phase of the exercises.

When bad weather appeared to hamper the maneuvers planned by the 76th Airborne division, Putin called off the paratroopers' jump. "No need to take the risk," he said.

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