

Pilot Not in Control of Gunship That Misfired on Zapad Bystanders — Kommersant

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Screenshot Youtube

A Russian military helicopter misfired on bystanders at the Zapad 2017 exercises without the pilot's command, the Kommersant newspaper [reported](#) Wednesday.

Footage [published](#) on Tuesday appeared to show a combat helicopter misfiring during the week-long drills in Western Russia in the direction of camera crews, resulting in three injuries.

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Kommersant cited unnamed sources as saying that the Ka-52 helicopter's weapon control system malfunctioned and its unguided rocket fired without the pilot's command. A preliminary investigation reportedly found that the rocket was fired immediately after the pilot turned off the safety switch.

The Defense Ministry has said there were no casualties other than a  damaged truck.

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A source close to the Air Force said the incident took place at the Luzhsky range near St. Petersburg on Saturday, Sept. 16. President Vladimir Putin [visited](#) the range on Monday.

A special commission comprising Defense Ministry and aviation industry officials was formed to ascertain the causes of the mishap and identify those responsible.

Kommersant says it was the third aviation accident in a week: a supersonic long-range bomber skidded off the runway on the day the Zapad 2017 drills kicked off on Sept. 14, and a training aircraft crashed two days later.

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