Russia Says Downed Ukrainian Drone Over Leningrad Region

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Authorities in northwestern Russia's Leningrad region said Sunday that air defense systems shot down a Ukrainian drone flying in the area, as airspace over that region and the city of St. Petersburg was closed "to ensure safety."

"An unmanned aerial vehicle was spotted by observation posts on the territory of the Leningrad region," the regional governor Aleksander Drozdenko said on the messaging app Telegram.

"Airspace was closed. The air defense forces destroyed the aircraft near the town of Fornosovo in the Tosnensky district," he said, adding that no injuries or damage to buildings were reported.

Fornosovo is located around 20 kilometers southeast of St. Petersburg, and both are located more than 800 kilometers from Russia's border with Ukraine.

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Russia's Defense Ministry [said](#) the drone had come from Ukraine, adding that defense systems shot down the aircraft at around 6:00 pm local time.

Just an hour earlier, Russia's state civil aviation agency Rosaviatsia [announced](#) that flights to and from Pulkovo International Airport in St. Petersburg were suspended "to ensure safety," as quoted by the state-run TASS news agency, but it did not provide further details.

Videos shared on social media showed a large plume of smoke rising on the southwestern side of St. Petersburg, near Pulkovo International Airport, with local media [reporting](#) that a fire had broken out at a warehouse there.

Two people were reportedly injured in the blaze.

It was not immediately clear whether the fire was connected to the drone downing.

Air traffic at Pulkovo International Airport was [restored](#) at 6:22 pm local time.

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Meanwhile, authorities in the Novgorod region, just south of the Leningrad region, [said](#) that three drones had been shot down over that region.

While Russian regions bordering Ukraine have frequently been attacked by drones since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion over two years ago, St. Petersburg and the surrounding Leningrad region have only recently faced such attacks.

In early March, St. Petersburg authorities [announced](#) strengthened security measures throughout the city after a drone crashed into an apartment building and exploded there.

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