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imagery analysis report

Zapad-83 Exercise, USSR (S)

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JANUARY 1984

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AA	Antiaircraft
ABS (T)	Amphibious bridging system (tracked)
APC	Armored personnel carrier
ASM	Air-to-surface missile
AWACS	Airborne warning and control system
Bn	Battalion
BRDM	Amphibious armored reconnaissance vehicle
CCD	Camouflage, concealment, and deception
CHS	Combat helicopter squadron
CL	Light cruiser
CVHG	Guided missile v/stol aircraft carrier
DD	Destroyer
DDG	Guided missile destroyer
ECM	Electronic countermeasure
FF	Frigate
FFG	Guided missile frigate
GA	Guards army
GMRD	Guards motorized rifle division
GTD	Guards tank division
ISS	Independent security and service
LCMA	Air cushion medium landing craft
LCM	Medium landing craft
LCUA	Air cushion utility landing craft
LCPA	Air cushion personnel landing craft
LPD	Amphibious assault transport ship
LSM	Medium assault amphibious landing ship
LST	Amphibious vehicle landing ship
MD	Military district
MRR	Motorized rifle regiment
MSF	Fleet minesweeper
nm	Nautical mile
PC	Patrol craft
PGG	Guided missile patrol combatant
PMP	Ponton ribbon bridge
PTGH	Hydrofoil missile attack boat
SNA	Soviet naval aviation
SNI	Soviet naval infantry
SS	Attack submarine
SP	Self-propelled
SSG	Cruiser missile attack submarine
TA	Tank army
VTA	Military transport aviation

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ZAPAD-83 EXERCISE, USSR (S)

INTRODUCTION

1. This report provides an imagery-derived analysis of Zapad-83—a large scale, Soviet combined arms exercise conducted in late June and early July 1983. The exercise, staged in Western USSR, was similar in many respects to Zapad-81 and, accordingly, has been designated Zapad-83. The Zapad (Western) series of exercises have involved large numbers of Soviet ground, air, and naval forces. The primary exercise area is in the Baltic and the Belorussian MDs and in the Baltic Sea. (S/WN)

2. This report is divided into three separate sections on ground, air, and naval activity associated with Zapad-83. Airborne activity is included in the air section, and naval infantry activity is included in the naval section. Unit designators and subordinations were derived from collateral sources.¹⁻⁴ This report contains one location map, one table, and 16 annotated photographs. The information cutoff date is 9 August 1983. (S/WN)

3. Significant Zapad-83 exercise-related activity included the following:

- a. The participation of the restructured 120th GMRD at Minsk.
- b. The employment of the ABS (T) in a river-crossing exercise at Borisov.
- c. The identification of a major command/communications center at Riga.
- d. The first observation of FROGFOOT A (possibly in regimental strength in an exercise) at Vitebsk Airfield Northeast.
- e. The first observation of the MAINSTAY A AWACS with an operational unit in an exercise at Siauliai Airfield.
- f. Preparations for a probable airborne/paradrop exercise at Krechevitsy Airfield and Pskov Airfield.
- g. The possible participation of the transport unit at Balice Airfield, Poland.
- h. The observation of rehearsal for a major assault on Saltnicken Beach. (S/WN)

DISCUSSION

Ground Forces

4. Ground force units from both the Baltic and Belorussian MDs participated in Zapad-83 (Figure 1). Eight of ten maneuver divisions in the Baltic MD were imaged during the Zapad-83 exercise period. Three of the eight probably participated in the exercise. Nine of 12 maneuver divisions in the Belorussian MD were imaged during the exercise period, and one of these probably participated. In addition, front- and army-level assets of both MDs were involved in this exercise or were active during the exercise period. Units that probably participated are listed in table 1. (S/WN)

Significant Ground Forces Activity

5. Major elements of the restructured 120th GMRD had departed Minsk AL-1 [redacted]. The 120th GMRD had been restructured into a probable new-type army corps prior to Zapad-83, the first major field training exercise after the conversion. Participating units included four probable maneuver brigades (three former MRRs and the former tank regiment); probable elements of the artillery and SA-11 regiments; and probably the signal, reconnaissance, and engineer battalions. Some of these units probably exercised in the Borisov area. [redacted] the restructured 120th GMRD had returned to garrison, 38 nm southwest of the Borisov training area. (S/WN)

6. A river-crossing exercise employing two separate bridging systems, the ABS (T) and the PMP, was in progress in Borisov Training Area 1 and Range West [redacted] in the Belorussian

MD [redacted] (Figure 2). This was the first time that an operationally deployed ABS (T) was observed on satellite imagery. The probable new-type army corps garrisoned at Minsk is the only unit in the Belorussian MD where the ABS (T) has been observed, suggesting the presence of probable army corps elements at the Borisov training area. (S/WN)

7. [redacted] a field command post was in a wooded area adjacent to Riga Army Barracks Ropazi AL-26 [redacted] (Figure 3). The command post consisted of at least six areas containing numerous net-covered, signal-associated vehicles. Also, elements of a probable ISS unit were within Riga AL-26 (usually occupied by a training MRR) and in the adjacent training area. [redacted] 11 cargo trucks, 34 UAZ 69s/469s, 11 buses, and 43 sedans (probably organic to a special-purpose transport battalion), and 158 squad tents were in the garrison. Elements of a probable ISS battalion were in the adjacent training area [redacted]. Elements included four POL trucks, 28 cargo trucks, 33 van trucks, 20 dual-axle trailers, eight squad-size tents, and 26 40-man tents. [redacted] both the command post and the probable ISS unit were not present. The status of the training MRR at Riga AL-26 could not be determined [redacted] however, elements had returned [redacted] (S/WN)

8. **Imagery Analyst's Comments.** Ropazi Joint Command/Bnk/Hd [redacted], a hardened command and control facility immediately west of Riga AL-26, probably served as one of the command centers associated with Zapad-83. The probable ISS unit observed at Riga AL-26 [redacted] might have temporarily relocated to that facility

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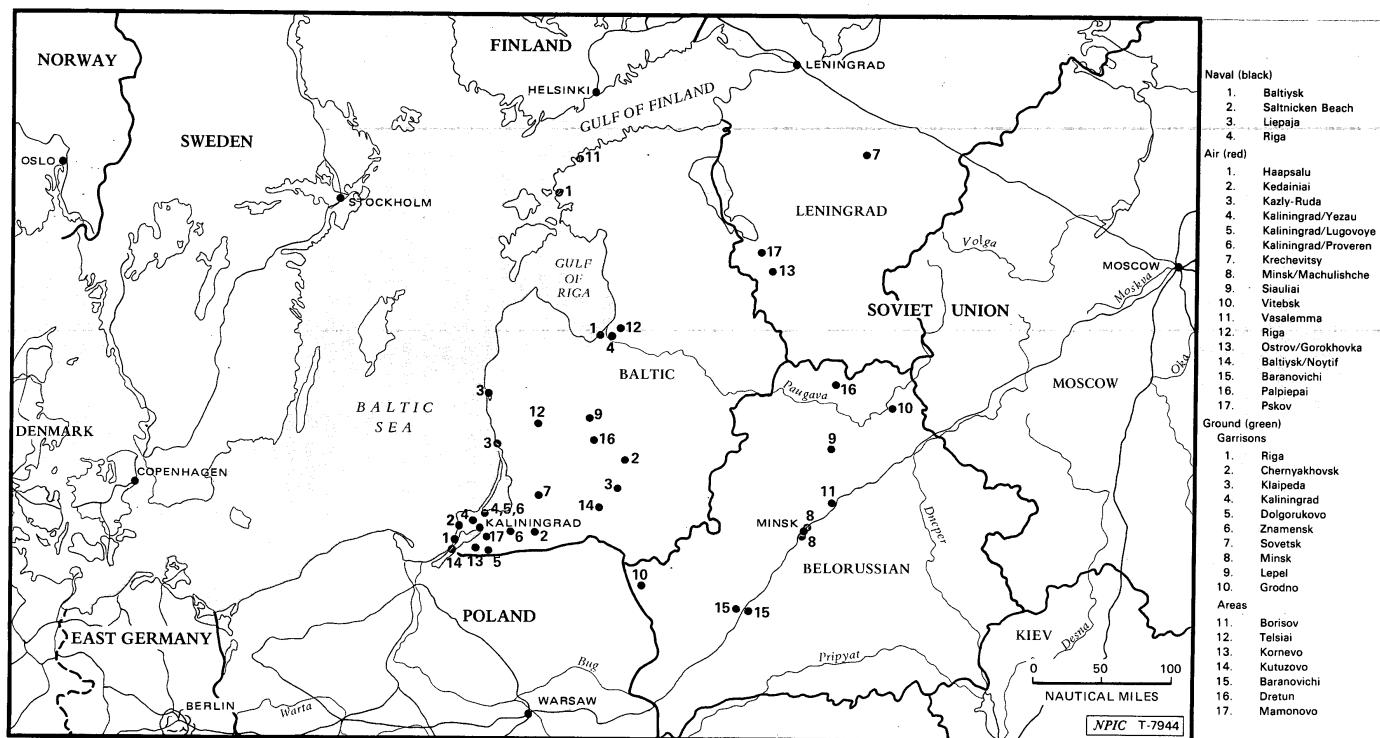


FIGURE 1. ZAPAD-83 EXERCISE AREAS AND HOME GARRISONS OF PARTICIPATING UNITS, USSR

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Table 1.
Probable Participating Units in Zapad-83
and Units Active During Exercise Period

Baltic MD

MD Subordinate Units

ISS regiment (probable)	Riga Army Bks E AL-2 [redacted]	25X1
Air assault brigade	Chernyakhovsk Army Bks N AL-3 [redacted]	25X1
SCALEBOARD brigade	Chernyakhovsk Army Bks N AL-3	
ECM air defense battalion	Chernyakhovsk Army Bks W AL-8 [redacted]	25X1
3rd GMRD	Klaipeda Army Bks N AL-1 [redacted]	25X1

11th GA Subordinate Units

ISS battalion	Kaliningrad Bks Charlottenburg AL-3 [redacted]	25X1
SCUD brigade	Dolgorukovo Tac SSM A Army Bks AL-1 [redacted]	25X1
SA-4 brigade	Znamensk Army Bks AL-1/SA-4 Spt Fac [redacted]	25X1
Signal regiment	Kaliningrad Army Bks Ponart AL-8 [redacted]	25X1
Ponton bridge regiment	Sovetsk Hq Gds Tk Div A AB AL-2 [redacted]	25X1
1st GMRD	Kaliningrad Hq Gds MTZ R Div AL-7/SAM [redacted]	25X1
1st GTD	Kaliningrad Hq Tk Div A AB AL-4 [redacted]	25X1

Belorussian MD

MD Subordinate Units

120th GMRD (restructured)	Minsk Hq GDS MTZ R Div AL-1 [redacted]	25X1
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7th TA Subordinate Units

SCUD brigade	Lepel Tac SSM Bks AL-7 [redacted]	25X1
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28th Army Subordinate Units

ISS battalion	Grodno Army Bks E AL-1 [redacted]	25X1
Early-warning battalion	Grodno Army Bks AL-2 [redacted]	25X1
Radio relay battalion	Grodno Army Bks E AL-1 [redacted]	25X1

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from Riga AL-2, where the Baltic MD subordinate ISS regiment is garrisoned. No concurrent imagery of Riga AL-2 during the exercise period was available. Upon completion of Zapad-83, the probable ISS unit probably returned to Riga AL-2, its home garrison, where the unit was observed [redacted] (S/WN)

Activity in the Baltic MD

9. **MD Subordinate Units.** The air assault brigade housed at Chernyakhovsk AL-3 had departed garrison [redacted] By that date, one

probable howitzer battery, one GAZ-66 multiple rocket launcher battery, one AA gun battery, and approximately 45 trucks were absent from open storage. Increased levels of activity in the facility [redacted] probably represented exercise preparations. (S/WN)

10. [redacted] SCALEBOARD training was in progress at Chernyakhovsk Tac SSM Training Area [redacted] The SCALEBOARD brigade is housed at Chernyakhovsk AL-3. An ECM jamming battalion was absent from open storage at Chernyakhovsk AL-8 on the same date. The battalion has been out of garrison [redacted] (S/WN)

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11. Elements of the 3rd GMRD probably participated in Zapad-83. [redacted] at least 17 BTR-60 APCs were in convoy formation in a subordinate MRR at Telsiai Army Bks AL-1 [redacted]. These elements had probably just returned to garrison. In another subordinate MRR, at Klaipeda AL-1, the atypical parking arrangement of the BTR-70 APCs (Figure 4) suggested that the unit might have participated in Zapad-83-associated activity. (S/WN)

12. **Activity in the 11th GA.** High levels of activity were observed throughout the 11th GA in the Baltic MD during the Zapad-83 exercise period. [redacted] two convoys consisting of approximately 20 vehicles were in the ISS battalion at Kaliningrad AL-3. Lower than normal activity levels at Kaliningrad AL-8 suggested that elements of the signal regiment had departed garrison. (S/WN)

13. [redacted] elements of an SA-4 brigade were in convoy, departing Znamensk AL-1. In addition, SCUD missile training was in progress in the deployment area adjacent to Dolgrukovo AL-1.

[redacted] two ponton bridge companies were missing from open storage in the ponton bridge regiment housed at Sovetsk AL-2. The ponton bridge companies were present [redacted] (S/WN)

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14. [redacted] elements of the 1st GTD at Kaliningrad AL-4 and Kaliningrad Army Barracks AL-16 [redacted] were departing or preparing to depart garrison. At Kaliningrad AL-4, a motorized rifle battalion was in convoy immediately outside the installation. Vehicles had been removed from storage in the MRR, the SA-6A regiment, the engineer battalion, and the signal battalion (Figure 5). At Kaliningrad AL-16, a 122mm Howitzer D-30 battalion and numerous support vehicles had been removed from covered storage. [redacted] two tank regiments were departing from Kornevo Army Barracks AL-1 [redacted] at Mamonovo Army Bks AL-2 [redacted], the tank regiment was out of garrison. In addition, a train carrying armored vehicles was in a nearby rail yard at Mamonovo. (S/WN)

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15. Elements of the 1st GMRD probably also participated in Zapad-83. [] elements of the tank regiment housed at Dolgrukovo AL-1 were being loaded onto railroad flatcars. Two loading ramps were used. [] elements of the other two divisional MRRs at Kaliningrad AL-7 had returned to garrison. Vehicles and equipment were being prepared for storage on that date. (S/WN)

[] Tank training included a battalion-size unit mix of two tank companies and one BMP-equipped motorized rifle company. Kaliningrad Training Area SE 4 and Znamensk training area are army-/MD-level training areas commonly used by 11th GA subordinate units. (S/WN)

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Activity in the Belorussian MD

16. **Command/Communication Activity.** On [] a command post was identified in Kutuzovo AR/SAM Mnv Tng Area 1 [] Vehicles and equipment included one deployed TWIN PLATE set, two TWIN PLATE sets in travel mode, 20 van trucks, and six tents. (S/WN)

18. In addition to the probable participation of the former 120th GMRD in Zapad-83, high levels of activity were observed in both the 7th Tank Army and the 28th Army of the Belorussian MD. [] the 7th Tank Army SCUD brigade was deployed outside of Lepel AL-7. This training, late in the Zapad-83 exercise period, might have been part of the normal training cycle. (S/WN)

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17. **Activity in Training Areas.** [] MRR elements were bivouacked in Kaliningrad Training Area SE 4 [] and a PMP ribbon bridge was deployed across a river near Znamensk AR/SAM MNVR Tng Area [] [] Elements of an SA-6A regiment and a tank regiment were at Znamensk training area []

19. [] low levels of activity in the ISS battalion and in the radio relay battalion of the 28th Army at Grodno AL-1 indicated that major elements of those units were out of garrison. At Grodno AL-2, elements of the early-warning battalion had departed garrison [] In addition.

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13 squad tents (possibly for reserve personnel) observed on a parade field [redacted] were no longer present [redacted] (S/WN)

20. **Command/Communication Activity.** Preparations for Zapad-83 were in progress at Borisov Army Training Area 1 and Range West on [redacted] Equipment included nine electronics van trucks with dual-axle trailers, six electronics van trucks with single-axle trailers, at least 15 additional electronics van trucks, and 11 tents. (S/WN)

21. [redacted] command post activity was identified at Dretun Army Training Area [redacted] and at Minsk Army Training Area Uruchye TA 1 [redacted] The command post at Dretun consisted of a probable PARK DRIVE communications satellite station, five electronics van trucks, two electronics van trailers, and at least two large electronics van trailers. At least four vehicles were within a visibility screen. The command post at Minsk consisted of at least eight signal van trucks and 20 tents (six large, nine medium, and five small). (S/WN)

22. [redacted] a communications unit was deployed at Baranovichi Tng Area Lesnaya SW [redacted] Equipment consisted of three operationally deployed TWIN PLATE sets, one TWIN PLATE set in travel mode (Figure 6), five trucks, four buses, 13 sedans/UAZ-69s, and six tents. A nearby communications equipment deployment contained a possible satellite communications station, three TWIN EAR sets, three TWIN EAR mast trucks in travel mode, and several support vehicles. (S/WN)

23. **Activity in Training Areas.** [redacted] at least two batteries of probable SP guns, support vehicles, and 20 tents were at Dretun Army Training Area. [redacted] elements of a tank regiment were deployed at Baranovichi Training Area (Figure 7). The garrison area at Baranovichi, housing elements of the 46th GTD, was not imaged. Additional probable exercise-associated activity [redacted] included SA-4 brigade elements on several trains at Brest RR Clf Yard Vostochnyy [redacted] and Brest RR Transloading Yard Severnyy [redacted]

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Air Forces

24. Activity probably related to Zapad-83 was observed at 17 Soviet airfields. One Polish airfield might also have been involved in the exercise. (S/WN)

25. Soviet aircraft participating in the exercise included BACKFIRE B, BADGER, BLINDER, FENCER, FITTER, FLOGGER, FISHBED, CANDID, CUB, COOT A, MAIL, HIND, HIP, HAZE A, and HOPLITE. Polish aircraft that possibly participated in the exercise included COKE/CURL and CRATE. (S/WN)

26. Soviet airfields that probably participated in Zapad-83 included:

Baltiysk/Noytif Airfield
Baranovichi Airfield
Haapsalu Airfield
Kaliningrad/Lugovoye
Heliport
Kaliningrad/Proveren
Airfield
Kaliningrad/Yezau Airfield
Kazly-Ruda Airfield
Kedainiai Airfield
Krechevitsy Airfield
Minsk/Machulishche
Airfield
Ostrov/Gorokhovka
Airfield
Palpiepai Airfield
Pskov Airfield
Riga Airfield West
Siauliai Airfield
Vasalemma Airfield
Vitebsk Airfield Northeast

(S/WN)

27. Balice Airfield [] was the Polish airfield possibly involved in Zapad-83. (S/WN)

Frontal Aviation and VTA Activity

28. [] FROGFOOT A, in possible regimental strength (22 aircraft), had deployed to Vitebsk Airfield Northeast, a VTA Airfield in the Belorussian MD (Figure 8). Twenty-one FROGFOOT As were on an apron normally occupied by CANDIDs, and one was on the parallel taxiway; at least 12 FROGFOOT As were canvas/net covered. The FROGFOOT As probably deployed from Sital Chay Airfield [] a training base where a new FROGFOOT unit has been forming. Twenty-seven FROGFOOT As were at Sital Chay [] This was the second Zapad exercise in which FROGFOOT As have participated. During Zapad-81, two FROGFOOT As were also temporarily deployed to Vitebsk, apparently to participate in the exercise. A normal complement of 25 CANDIDs was observed at Vitebsk [] (S/WN)

29. One MAINSTAY A AWACS aircraft (Figure 9) was at Siauliai Airfield in the Baltic MD on [] Siauliai Airfield normally houses the only MOSS early-warning unit in the USSR. The MAINSTAY A was parked on a hardstand normally associated with the MOSS. Several maintenance/

service vehicles were nearby. The MAINSTAY A probably came from Akhtubinsk Flight Test Center [], where the MAINSTAY A AWACS test program has been in progress since August 1980. The MAINSTAY A was not observed on subsequent coverage of Siauliai Airfield. The MAINSTAY A had returned to Akhtubinsk [] (S/WN)

30. Other probable exercise-associated activity was also observed at Siauliai Airfield. [] additional communications equipment was observed at the TWIN DISH troposcatter site on the northeastern edge of the airfield. One TWIN EAR troposcatter set, one probable TWIN EAR, and one R-400/404 radio relay set has arrived since [] a FENCER fighter/bomber regiment (Figure 10) was present. Fifteen FENCERS were on a fueling apron, and 17 were on a dispersal taxiway. All FENCERS were uploaded with long-range auxiliary fuel tanks. Also, one CANDID and only two of the normal complement of 15 to 25 CUBs were present [] The missing CUBs were subsequently identified at Kedainiai Airfield. CCD activity was also underway at Siauliai [] Camouflage netting had been placed over a revetment containing the electronics and support equipment usually associated with the air-defense zone command post. In addition, a bivouac with one large and 33 small personnel tents was at the airfield. (S/WN)

31. Activity appeared to be returning to normal at Siauliai Airfield [] the day after the exercise had been completed. The FENCER regiment was not observed in the cloud-free areas of the airfield, and a convoy of electronics and support vehicles (the types normally associated with an air-defense zone command post) was forming, probably preparing to depart. The CUB regiment was still absent [] (S/WN)

32. Possible airborne/paradrop-associated activity was in progress at Krechevitsy Airfield (Figure 11) and at Pskov Airfield [] Each airfield houses a VTA CANDID regiment in the Leningrad MD and is associated with the 76th Guards Airborne Division. At Krechevitsy Airfield, 27 vehicles, eight possible pallet carriers, and at least 300 troops in formation were in three CANDID revetments/hardstands at the northeastern end of the parallel taxiway. At least 140 two-man tents were near the dispersal taxiway. The normal complement of 25 CANDIDs was observed. (S/WN)

33. At Pskov Airfield, preflight/postflight activity was in progress on at least 12 of the 21 CANDIDs observed in the cloud-free areas of the airfield. Possible exercise-related activity was also in progress at Pskov Airfield [] when 35 CANDIDs were present; a count of 25 to 29 CANDIDs is normal. Twenty-five CANDIDs were present on subsequent coverage [] Six CANDIDs, which might have come from Pskov Airfield, were at Baranovichi Airfield on 25 June. CANDIDs are not normally observed at Baranovichi Airfield, which supports a BLINDER ASM regiment subordinate to the Smolensk Air Army and a FOXBAT counter-air regiment subordinate to the Belorussian MD. (S/WN)

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34. Major elements of the Polish transport regiment (five COKEs/CURLs and three CRATES) had departed Balice Airfield by 14 June. Normal complements of nine to ten COKEs/CURLs and three to five CRATES were present [redacted] Balice Airfield houses the only transport regiment in Poland and supports the 6th Airborne Division at Krakow. The aircraft had returned [redacted] the third day of Zapad-83. None of the aircraft from Balice were observed at another airfield during the Zapad-83 exercise. (S/WN)

35. A FISHBED regiment (40 aircraft) was at Vasalemma Airfield in the Baltic MD [redacted] This regiment has been deployed at Vasalemma [redacted] but was not present [redacted] It has not been determined from which airfield the FISHBED regiment originated. (S/WN)

36. One CUB was observed in the cloud-free areas of Kazly-Ruda Airfield [redacted] Aircraft are not normally observed at Kazly-Ruda, in the Baltic MD and associated with the 7th Guards Airborne Division headquartered at Kaunus, 12 nm east-northeast of the airfield. (S/WN)

37. Major elements of the attack helicopter regiment (19 HINDs and two HIPs), absent from Kaliningrad/Yezau Airfield [redacted] had returned [redacted] The missing aircraft might have been at Palpiepai Airfield, an alternate/dispersal airfield in the Baltic Fleet Air Force, where 22 HIND Ds and nine HIP Cs/Es were observed [redacted] (S/WN)

38. The CHS normally observed at Kaliningrad/Lugovoye Heliport was not present [redacted] The CHS—consisting of six HINDs, six HIPs, and 15 HOPLITES—was present in April. This CHS probably supports the 1st Guards Motorized Rifle Division of the 11th Guards Army. (S/WN)

SNA Activity

39. Eight BACKFIRE Bs, five BLINDERS, and only 18 BADGERs were observed at Ostrov/Gorokhovka Airfield [redacted] (most of the BADGER parking areas were cloud-free on that date). A normal complement of 52 BADGERs was present [redacted] The BLINDERS probably came from Kaliningrad/Proveren Airfield, where five were missing [redacted] the BACKFIRE Bs possibly came from Bykhov Airfield, approximately 250 nm north-northeast. One BADGER squadron (12 aircraft) possibly deployed to Minsk/Machulishche Airfield, where the aircraft were observed [redacted] seven BACKFIRE Bs, two BLINDERS, and 14 BADGERs were discernible in the cloud-free areas at Ostrov/Gorokhovka Airfield. [redacted] the BACKFIRE Bs and BLINDERS had departed, and the BADGER regiment had returned to normal size, with 51 aircraft present. (S/WN)

40. [redacted] one BADGER squadron and seven CUBs were at Minsk/Machulishche Airfield, which supports a BLINDER ASM regiment subordinate to the Smolensk Air Army and a FLOGGER B regiment subordinate to the Belorussian MD. BADGERs are not normally at this airfield, and CUBs are occasionally seen. Neither the BADGERs nor the CUBs were discernible in cloud-free areas of the airfield [redacted] (S/WN)

41. Seventeen BLINDERS and 26 FITTERS were at Kaliningrad/Proveren Airfield [redacted] and only 14 BLINDERS and 24 FITTERS were ob-

served in cloud-free areas of the airfield [redacted] At least seven HIP transport helicopters, not usually observed there, were also present. The missing BLINDERS probably deployed to Ostrov/Gorokhovka Airfield, where five were observed [redacted] The status of the missing FITTERS could not be determined. Activity at Kaliningrad/Proveren had returned to normal [redacted] when the normal complement of 19 BLINDERS and 38 FITTERS was observed. (S/WN)

42. [redacted] one COOT A and 14 HIPs/HAZEs were at Riga Airfield West, an SNA-associated airfield which supports a MAY ASW squadron subordinate to the Baltic Fleet Air Forces. The COOT A and HIPs/HAZEs, not normally seen at Riga Airfield West, have arrived [redacted] one COOT A and four HIPs/HAZEs were in cloud-free areas of the airfield. [redacted] aircraft counts had returned to normal, with four MAYs and one CUB present. (S/WN)

43. ASW aircraft deployed to Haapsalu Airfield in the Leningrad MD [redacted] when eight MAILs (two not on graphic; Figure 12) were observed. These aircraft probably deployed from Baltiysk/Noytif Airfield, which supports a MAIL ASW squadron subordinate to the Baltic Fleet Air Force and where only three MAILs were present [redacted] Eleven MAILs, a normal count, were at Baltiysk/Noytif on subsequent imagery [redacted] (S/WN)

Naval Forces

44. From mid-June to early July, amphibious warfare ships, surface and patrol combatants, a variety of submarines, and the SNI brigade of the Baltic Fleet participated in Zapad-83. Almost all of the rehearsal landings in late June culminated in a major assault on Saltnicken Beach (north of Baltiysk), Baltiysk Naval Infantry Training Area [redacted] The exercise had been completed [redacted] (S/WN)

Amphibious Operations

45. Preparations for the exercise began in mid-June, when an unusually large number of amphibious warfare ships were at Baltiysk Naval Base [redacted] Figure 13). [redacted] these ships included an Ivan Rogov LPD (Figure 14), the largest and most capable amphibious warfare ship in the Soviet Navy; five Ropucha LSTs; two Alligator LSTs; 16 Polnocny LSMs; seven LCUAs; four Lebed LCMAAs; nine Gus LCPAs (Figure 15); and six LCMs. Unlike Zapad-81, there was little participation by the Black and Northern Fleets in the Zapad-83 exercise. The only Soviet non-Baltic Fleet ship observed participating in the exercise was a Ropucha class LST from the Northern Fleet. (S/WN)

46. [redacted] a major sortie of amphibious ships and surface/patrol combatant—including at least five Aist/LCUs, at least five Ropucha LSTs, two Alligator LSTs, and five Polnocny LSMs—had departed Baltiysk for the Zapad-83 exercise. In a related movement, two East German Frosch LSTs (Figure 16), which deployed to Riga Naval Base and Shipyard Bolderaja [redacted] in late June, had departed for the exercise [redacted] These units were the only East European ships

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observed in Zapad-83. The main landings during Zapad-83 involved conventional assault ships and air cushion landing craft. Several amphibious warfare ships and part of their escort force were observed dead in the water off Baltiysk. Their decks were empty, indicating that the exercise had been completed. (S/WN)

Surface and Patrol Combatant Activity

47. A number of surface and patrol combatants participated in Zapad-83. a Kotlin DDG, a modified Kildin DD, a Riga FF, and two Nanuchka PGGs departed Liepaja Naval Base Winter Harbor probably to support a landing rehearsal. With the exception of the Riga FF, these ships returned to Liepaja the next day. (S/WN)

48. a significant number of surface and patrol combatants departed the Baltiysk area. This sortie consisted of a Sverdlov CL, a Modified Kashin DDG, a Krivak-II FFG, and a Krivak-I FFG. This force represented a very strong mix of capabilities—with the Sverdlov's twelve 152mm guns providing fire support, the Modified Kashin providing air defense, and the Krivak providing the ASW screen. In addition, by two Nanuchka PGG, a Poti PC, and a T-43 MSF had left Liepaja Naval Base Winter Harbor. These vessels probably provided additional support for the amphibious ships. A probable aggressor force, used to attack the amphibious ships and their escorts, left Baltiysk Missile PT Boat Base and Shipyard Kamstigal during the same time. This force consisted of two Tarantul-II (Band Stand Radome/SS-N-2C equipped) PGGs, one Tarantul-I PGG, two Nanuchka PGGs, and five Matka PTGHs. Most of these vessels had returned to their respective bases (S/WN)

Submarine Activity

49. Submarines frequently participate in amphibious-oriented exercises like Zapad-83. Submarines are used as aggressor units, and their movements can indicate major exercises. Six WHISKEY

SSs left Liepaja Naval Base and were probably involved in the rehearsal exercise. Four of these submarines had returned to Liepaja three WHISKEY SSs again departed the base, probably in time for the main landings at Saltnicken Beach, A JULIETT SSG, also probably involved in the exercise, had left Liepaja Winter Harbor and had returned (S/WN)

Aircraft Carrier Activity

50. Unlike Zapad-81, no Soviet aircraft carriers were involved in Zapad-83. Since the Baltic Fleet does not have an assigned aircraft carrier, the carrier subordinate to the Northern Fleet has been utilized in the past. The Kiev CVHG, subordinate to the Northern Fleet, was undergoing a major overhaul at Nikolayev in the Black Sea during the exercise and was unavailable to participate in Zapad-83. Its replacement, the recently completed Novorossiysk CVHG, had just completed a transit from the Black Sea to the North and was also unavailable to participate in Zapad-83. (S/WN)

Soviet Naval Infantry

51. The SNI brigade at Baltiysk Naval Infantry Installation was preparing to depart the facility when twelve PT-76 light amphibious tanks and seven BRDMs were staging in the central portion of the installation. Elements of the 122mm SP artillery battalion (Figure 17) were staging as well. Two bivouac areas were established north of the installation. Nine tracked amphibious transporters, two radio relay vans, and eight tents were in one of the bivouac areas, and six radio relay vans, four generators, three cargo trucks, and two tents were in the other bivouac area. elements of the brigade were departing. Two convoys, with approximately 50 vehicles, were in front of the shed at the vehicle storage area. The SNI brigade had departed the installation for the exercise a BTR-60 company was near the beach. The SNI brigade had returned to garrison (S/WN)

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