

Daily Report 231/2020

28 September 2020¹

Summary

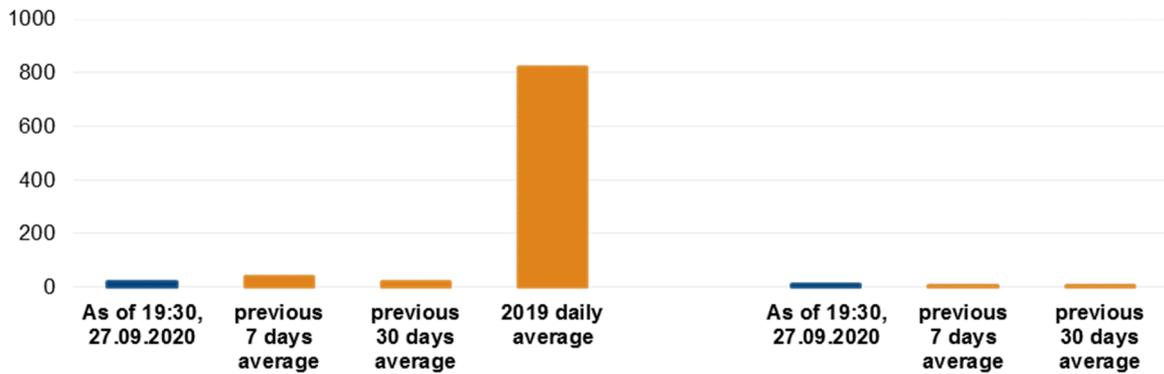
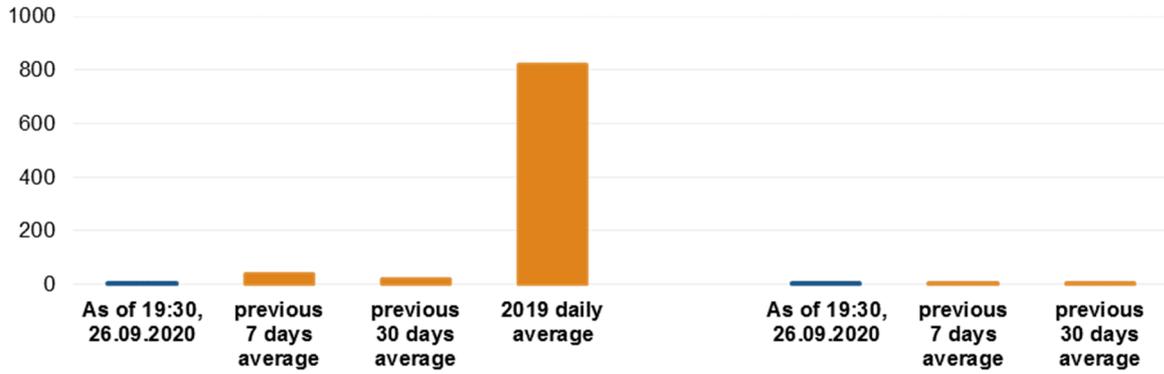
- Between the evenings of 25 and 27 September, the SMM recorded eight ceasefire violations in Donetsk region. In the previous reporting period, it recorded no ceasefire violations in the region.
- Between the evenings of 25 and 27 September, the Mission recorded in total 11 ceasefire violations in Luhansk region. In the previous reporting period, it recorded no ceasefire violations in the region.
- The Mission continued monitoring the disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske. During evening and night hours, an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle spotted people inside the latter two disengagement areas.
- The Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable repairs to and the operation of critical civilian infrastructure.
- The SMM continued following up on the situation of civilians amid the COVID-19 pandemic, at an entry-exit checkpoint and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations in Luhansk region.
- The SMM visited border crossing points in non-government-controlled areas of Donetsk region.
- SMM observed border areas outside government control, including the settlements of Ulianiivske, Novoazovsk and Markyne in Donetsk region.
- The Mission's freedom of movement continued to be restricted, including at a heavy weapons holding area and a checkpoint of the armed formations near Bezimenne, both in Donetsk region.*

¹ Based on information from the Monitoring Teams as of 19:30, 27 September 2020. All times are in Eastern European Summer Time.

Ceasefire violations²

Number of recorded ceasefire violations³

Number of recorded explosions⁴

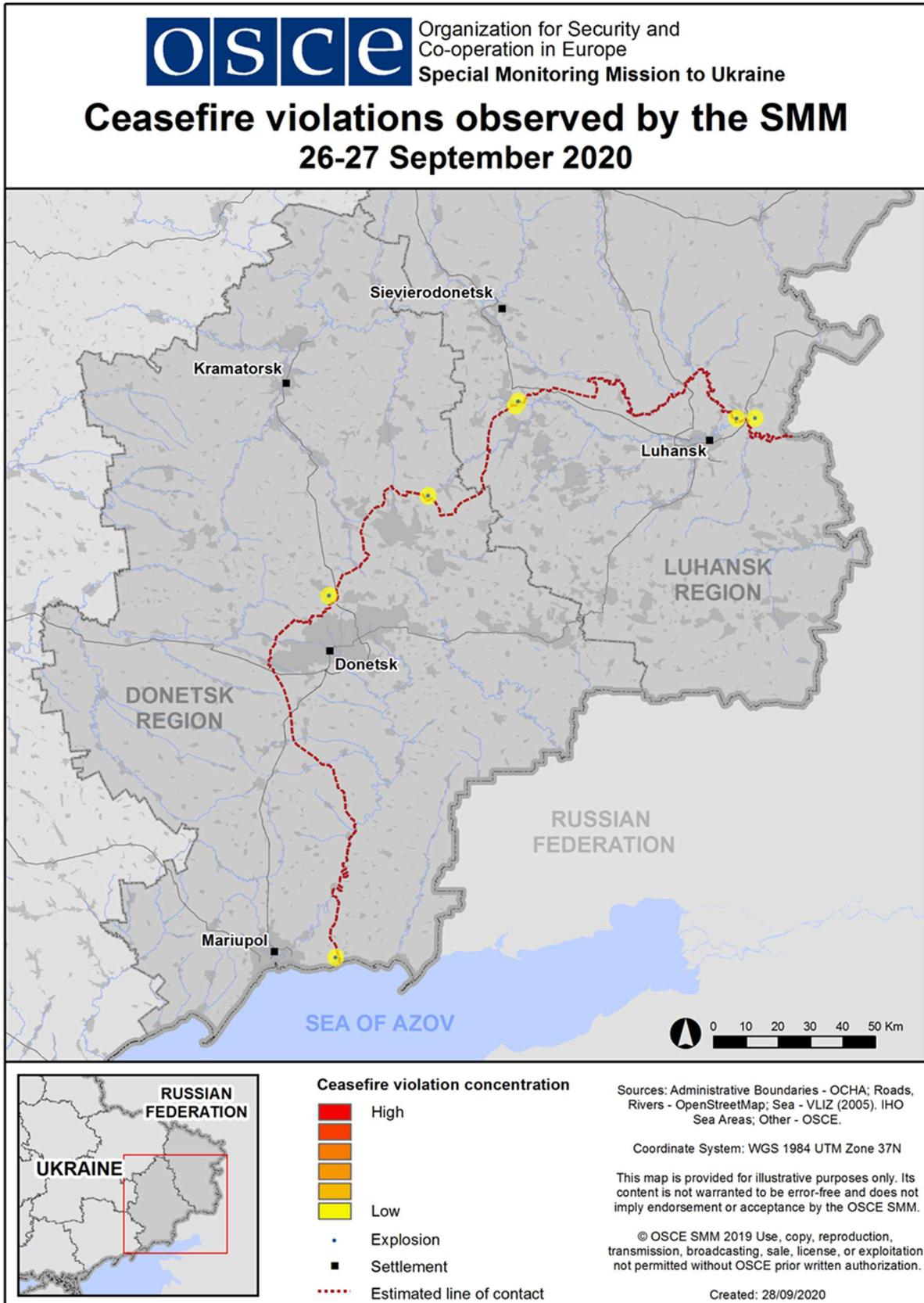


² For a complete breakdown of ceasefire violations, please see the annexed table. During the reporting period, the SMM camera in Petrivske was not operational.

³ Including explosions.

⁴ Including from unidentified weapons.

Map of recorded ceasefire violations



In Donetsk region, between the evenings of 25 and 27 September, the SMM recorded eight ceasefire violations. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission did not record any ceasefire violations in the region.

In Luhansk region, between the evenings of 25 and 27 September, the SMM recorded 11 ceasefire violations. In the [previous reporting period](#), the Mission did not record any ceasefire violations in the region.

Following agreement reached at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group on 22 July regarding additional measures to strengthen the ceasefire, from 00:01 on 27 July until the end of the reporting period, the SMM has so far recorded a total of 1,356 ceasefire violations in both Donetsk and Luhansk regions (including 243 explosions, nine projectiles in flight, three muzzle flashes, 13 illumination flares and 1,088 bursts and shots).

Disengagement areas near Stanytsia Luhanska, Zolote and Petrivske

On 26 September, the SMM camera located on the eastern edge of Stanytsia Luhanska (government-controlled, 16km north-east of Luhansk) recorded two undetermined explosions and five bursts of heavy-machine-gun fire, at an assessed range of 3-5km south-west and south-east, all assessed as outside the **disengagement area near Stanytsia Luhanska** but within 5km of its periphery.

On 26 and 27 September, inside the **disengagement area**, the Mission saw members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them) south of the new span of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge (15km north-east of Luhansk).

On the evening of 25 September, inside the **disengagement area near Zolote** (government-controlled, 60km west of Luhansk), an SMM long-range unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) spotted two people inside a former position of the armed formations near the area’s eastern edge, about 1.4km north of its south-eastern corner.

On the night of 25-26 September, the SMM camera in Zolote recorded an undetermined explosion at an assessed range of 3-5km east. On 27 September, the same camera recorded three muzzle flashes at an assessed range of 3-4km east-south-east. All of these ceasefire violations were assessed as outside the area but within 5km of its periphery.

On 26 and 27 September, near the checkpoint of the armed formations south of the disengagement area, the Mission saw members of the armed formations (wearing armbands with “JCCC” written on them). On both days, it saw two of them walk inside the disengagement area up to about 350m north of its southern edge and then return.

On 26 and 27 September, south of the disengagement area’s southern edge, the Mission saw workers from non-government-controlled areas with heavy construction equipment, laying asphalt on road T-1316. On 27 September, about 550m south of the area’s southern edge, the SMM observed a 60m long dug ditch, assessed as for laying cables.

On the night of 25-26 September, inside the **disengagement area near Petrivske** (non-government-controlled, 41km south of Donetsk), an SMM long-range UAV spotted two people inside a former position of the Ukrainian Armed Forces near the area’s south-western

corner. It also spotted two people inside former positions of the armed formations near the area's south-eastern corner.

During the day on 26 and 27 September, while positioned at two and four locations, respectively, near the disengagement area, the SMM observed a calm situation.

Withdrawal of weapons

The Mission continued to monitor the withdrawal of weapons in implementation of the Memorandum and the Package of Measures and its Addendum.

The SMM saw six weapons in violation of withdrawal lines near a non-government-controlled area of Luhansk region. Beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites, the Mission saw 18 weapons, all in government-controlled areas of Donetsk region (for further details, see the tables below).

Weapons storage sites

At two permanent storage sites in a non-government-controlled area of Donetsk region

27 September

The SMM noted that 21 tanks (7 T-64, 125mm, and 14 T-72, 125mm) were again missing.

Weapons that the SMM could not verify as withdrawn⁵

At a heavy weapons storage site in a non-government-controlled area of Donetsk region

27 September

The SMM noted that two towed howitzers (D-30 *Lyagushka*, 122mm) were again missing.

Indications of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁶

The Mission observed armoured combat vehicles in the security zone in government-controlled areas of Donetsk region (for further details, see the table below).

On 26 September, near Prokhorivka (government-controlled, 53km south of Donetsk), the Mission saw a temporary checkpoint consisting of five armed members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and an armoured personnel carrier (KrAZ Kuguar).

Also on the same day, near a training area near the road from Oleksandrivske (formerly Rozy Liuksemburh, non-government-controlled, 90km south-east of Donetsk) to Markyne (non-government-controlled, 94km south of Donetsk) the Mission observed about ten men wearing military-type clothing digging trenches and preparing the area for exercises.

On 27 September, 50m south of the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) near Maiorsk (government-controlled, 45km north-east of Donetsk), the SMM saw mounds of earth strengthened by a

⁵ The SMM visited areas previously holding weapons that could not be verified as withdrawn, as their storage did not comply with the criteria set out in the 16 October 2015 notification from the SMM to the signatories of the Package of Measures on effective monitoring and verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons. The SMM noted that one such site continued to be abandoned.

⁶ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

wooden structure and covered by a net. A representative of the Ukrainian Armed Forces told the Mission that the construction works are being carried out are to better protect the EECF.

Anti-tank mines at destroyed Donetsk international airport and near Berezove, Donetsk region

On 25 September, at the destroyed Donetsk international airport, an SMM long-range UAV [again](#) spotted 23 anti-tank mines, assessed as belonging to the armed formations, laid across a taxiway.

On 25 September, an SMM long-range UAV again spotted nine anti-tank mines (TM-62) laid across road T-0509 about 3.5km south-east of Berezove (government-controlled, 31km south-west of Donetsk), assessed as part of a larger minefield belonging to the Ukrainian Armed Forces (for previous observations, see [SMM Daily Report of 7 August 2020](#)).

SMM facilitation of repairs to and operation of critical civilian infrastructure

On 26 and 27 September, the SMM facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable construction work south of the southern edge of the disengagement area near Zolote (see above) and near Vesela Hora (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), and north and south of the bridge in Shchastia (government-controlled, 20km north of Luhansk).

On 26 September, the Mission facilitated and monitored adherence to localised ceasefires to enable work on road T-1316 in Zolote and repairs to water infrastructure near Pankivka (non-government-controlled, 16km north of Luhansk), as well as demining activities near Hirske (government-controlled, 63km west of Luhansk), and near Lopaskyne (government-controlled, 23km north-west of Luhansk) and Lobacheve (government-controlled, 17km north-west of Luhansk), where it also facilitated repairs to power lines.

On 26 and 27 September, the SMM continued to facilitate the operation of the Donetsk Filtration Station (DFS) (15km north of Donetsk).

Border areas outside government control

On 26 September, while at a pedestrian border crossing point near Ulianivske (61km south-east of Donetsk) for about 30 minutes, the Mission observed two pedestrians (a woman and a man, mixed ages) entering Ukraine and no pedestrians in the opposite direction.

On the same day, while at a border crossing point near Novoazovsk (102km south-east of Donetsk) for about an hour, the Mission observed 12 cars (including nine with “DPR” plates), three covered cargo trucks (including two with “DPR” plates) and nine pedestrians (six women and three men of mixed ages) entering Ukraine, and 21 cars (including 12 with “DPR” plates), 22 covered cargo trucks (including 12 with “DPR” plates), three minivans with covered windows (with “DPR” plates), and two pedestrians (a woman and a boy) exiting Ukraine.

On 27 September, while at the border crossing point near Ulianivske for about 20 minutes, the SMM observed no traffic in either direction. The same day, while at the border crossing point near Novoazovsk for about 20 minutes, the Mission saw 12 cars (including seven with “DPR” plates) and five covered cargo trucks (including three with “DPR” plates) entering Ukraine,

and thirteen cars (including five with “DPR” plates), nine covered cargo trucks (including three with “DPR” plates) and six pedestrians (three men and three women in their forties) exiting Ukraine.

Measures taken at entry-exit checkpoints and corresponding checkpoints to counter the COVID-19 pandemic

In Luhansk region, on 26 and 27 September, the Mission noted that the entry-exit checkpoint (EECP) in Stanytsia Luhanska and the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge were operational.

On 26 September while at the EECP at about 10:10 and 12:40, the SMM observed a total of 14 people (eight women and six men, mixed ages) queuing to enter government-controlled areas and a total of 60 people (35 women and 25 men, mixed ages) queuing in the opposite direction.

While at the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations at about 10:20, the SMM observed 19 people (eight women and 11 men, mixed ages) queuing to travel towards government-controlled areas and nine people (four women and five men, mixed ages) queuing in the opposite direction.

On 27 September while at the EECP at about 9:20 and 12:10, the Mission observed a total of 370 people (mixed genders and ages) queuing to enter government-controlled areas and a total of 32 people (16 women and 16 men, mixed ages) queuing in the opposite direction.

While at the corresponding checkpoint of the armed formations at about 12:23 and 12:55, the SMM observed five people (two men and three women, mixed ages) queuing to enter government-controlled areas and a total of 20 people (nine men and 10 women, mixed ages, and one child) queuing in the opposite direction.

On both days, the Mission saw a shuttle bus operating between the checkpoint and a bus stop south of the Stanytsia Luhanska bridge. On 26 September, the SMM saw two golf carts operating between the new section of the bridge and the EECP; on 27 September, it saw a single golf cart in operation.

Security situation in south-east Kherson region

On 24 and 25 September, the SMM observed a calm situation at checkpoints near Kalanchak (67km south-east of Kherson) and Chonhar (163km south-east of Kherson), between Kherson region and Crimea, as well as in the surrounding areas of Henichesk (176 km east of Kherson), Valok (205km south-east of Kherson) and Chaplynka (77kms south-east of Kherson), all in south-east Kherson region.

SMM visited the crash site of Antonov AN-26 transport aircraft near Kharkiv

On 26 September, about 4km north-east of Sotszmahannia (32km south-east of Kharkiv), near road M03, the SMM visited the crash site of a Ukrainian Armed Forces Antonov AN-26 transport aircraft, which came down on 25 September at 20:45. The Mission saw more than 500 personnel representing different law enforcement and security agencies. The chief of Kharkiv Regional Directorate of Emergency Services and the commander of the National Guards Academy told the SMM that on 25 September at 20:45 the Emergency Services had been notified that an aircraft had come down and had begun rescue procedures. According to

the interlocutors, 27 people were on board, two of whom survived with severe injuries and were transported to hospital. Of the remaining passengers, 22 were confirmed dead and three are unaccounted for.

The SMM continued monitoring in Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Dnipro, Chernivtsi and Kyiv.

***Restrictions of the SMM's freedom of movement or other impediments to fulfilment of its mandate**

The SMM's monitoring and freedom of movement are restricted by security hazards and threats, including risks posed by mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other impediments – which vary from day to day. The SMM's mandate provides for safe and secure access throughout Ukraine. All signatories of the Package of Measures have agreed on the need for this safe and secure access, that restriction of the SMM's freedom of movement constitutes a violation, and on the need for rapid response to these violations. They have also agreed that the Joint Centre for Control and Co-ordination (JCCC) should contribute to such response and co-ordinate mine clearance. Nonetheless, the armed formations in parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions frequently deny the SMM access to areas adjacent to Ukraine's border outside control of the Government (for example see below). The SMM's operations in Donetsk and Luhansk regions remain restricted following [the fatal incident of 23 April 2017 near Pryshyb](#); these restrictions continued to limit the Mission's observations.

Denial:

- On 27 September, at a heavy weapons holding area in a non-government-controlled area of Donetsk region, an armed member of the armed formations denied the Mission access to the site, citing the need to have a signed document allowing inspection.
- On the same day, at a checkpoint west of Bezimenne (non-government-controlled, 100km south of Donetsk), two armed members of the armed formations denied the SMM passage west through the checkpoint, citing an order not to allow any crossings.

Regular restrictions related to disengagement areas and mines/UXO:

- The sides continued to deny the SMM full access, as well as the ability to travel certain roads previously identified as important for effective monitoring by the Mission and for civilians' movement, through failure to conduct comprehensive clearance of mines, UXO and other obstacles.

Table of weapons

Weapons in violation of the withdrawal lines

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapon	Location	Source of observation
Non-government-controlled areas				
25/09/2020	2	Self-propelled howitzer (2S1 <i>Gvozdika</i> , 122mm)	Near Bile (non-government-controlled, 22km west of Luhansk)	Long-range UAV
	4	Towed howitzer (D-30 <i>Lyagushka</i> , 122mm)		

Weapons beyond withdrawal lines but outside designated storage sites

Date	No. of weapons	Type of weapons	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
25/09/2020	6	Tank (T-64)	Near Memryk (33km north-west of Donetsk)	Long-range UAV
	8	Towed howitzer (2A36 <i>Giatsint-B</i> , 152mm)	Inside a former industrial facility near Myroliubivka (46km north-west of Donetsk)	
	1	Probable towed anti-tank gun (2A29, MT-12 <i>Rapira</i> , 100mm)		
	3	Tank (T-72)	Near Paraskoviivka (75km north of Donetsk)	Mini-UAV

Table of military and military-type presence in the security zone⁷

Date	No.	Type	Location	Source of observation
Government-controlled areas				
25/09/2020	1	Armoured combat vehicle	Near Berezove (31km south-west of Donetsk)	Long-range UAV
	1	Armoured personnel carrier (BTR-80)	Near Slavne (26km south-west of Donetsk)	
	1	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP-2)	Near Novotroitske (36km south-west of Donetsk)	
	2	Probable armoured personnel carrier (BTR-80)	Near Marinka (23km south-west of Donetsk)	
	1	Infantry fighting vehicle (BMP-1)	Near Zhelanne Pershe (29km north-west of Donetsk)	

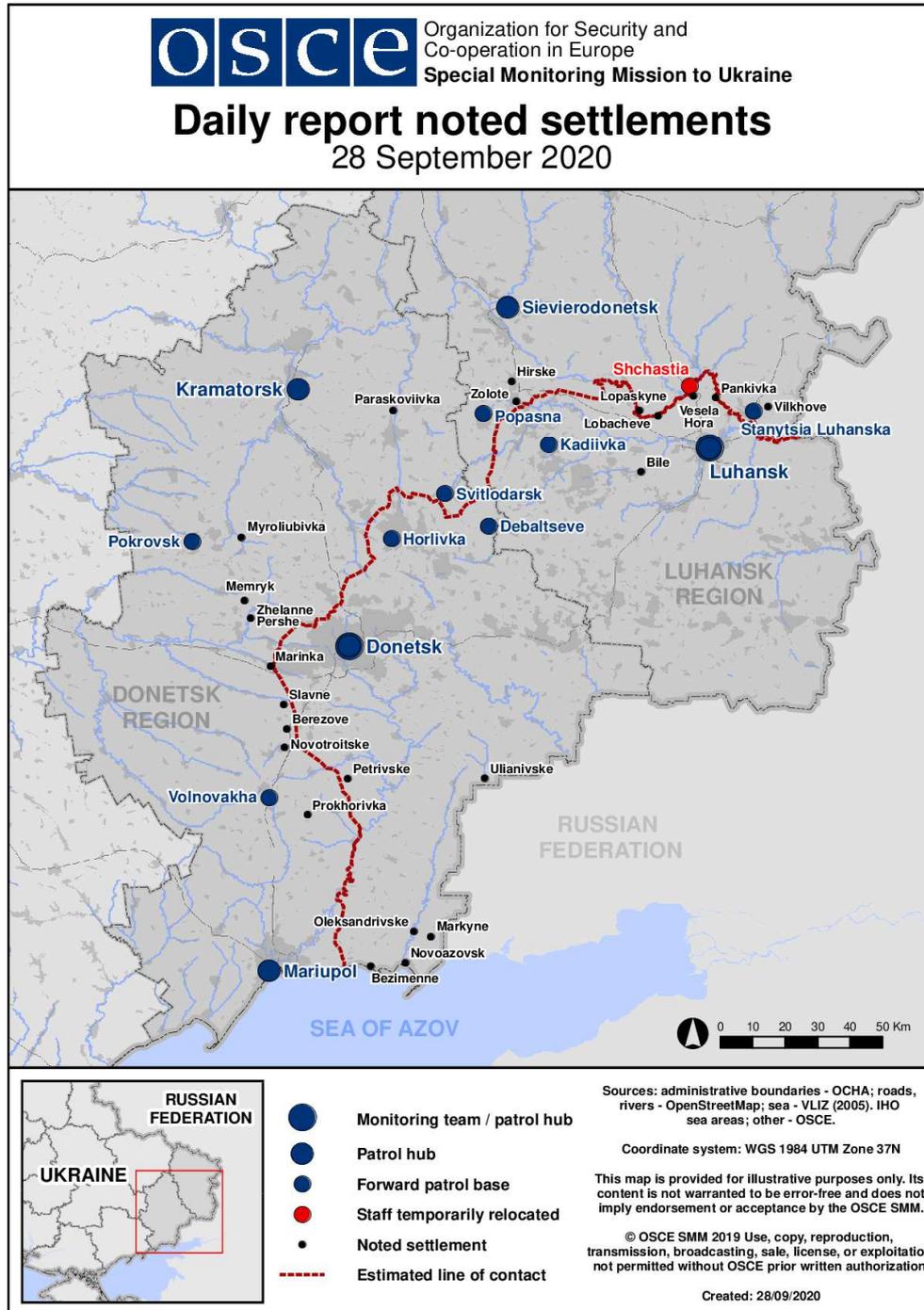
⁷ The hardware mentioned in this section is not proscribed by the provisions of the Minsk agreements on the withdrawal of weapons.

Table of ceasefire violations as of 27 September 2020⁸

SMM position	Event location	Means	No.	Observation	Description	Weapon	Date, time
SMM camera in Zolote (government-controlled, 60km W of Luhansk)	3-5km E	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined, assessed as outside of disengagement area	N/K	26-Sep, 01:04
E edge of Stanytsia Luhanska (government-controlled, 16km NE of Luhansk)	3-5km SW	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	26-Sep, 14:56
	3-5km SE	Heard	1	Explosion	Undetermined (assessed as outside the disengagement area)	N/K	26-Sep, 21:41
	3-5km SE	Heard	5	Burst	Assessed as outside the disengagement area	HMG	26-Sep, 21:48
SMM camera in Avdiivka (government-controlled, 17km N of Donetsk)	1-2km ENE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	26-Sep, 23:56
SMM camera in Svitlodarsk (government-controlled, 57km NE of Donetsk)	3-4km WSW	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	26-Sep, 21:24
	3-4km WSW	Recorded	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	26-Sep, 23:59
	3-4km WSW	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	27-Sep, 00:00
	3-4km WSW	Recorded	2	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	27-Sep, 00:01
SMM camera 1km SW of Shyrokyne (government-controlled, 100km S of Donetsk)	2-4km NNE	Recorded	1	Explosion	Undetermined	N/K	27-Sep, 01:47
SMM camera in Zolote (government-controlled, 60km W of Luhansk)	3-4km ESE	Recorded	3	Muzzle flash	Assessed as outside the disengagement area	N/K	27-Sep, 20:48

⁸ The table only includes ceasefire violations directly observed by the SMM patrols or recorded by the SMM cameras and it may include those also assessed to be live-fire exercises, controlled detonations, etc. Details provided – in terms of distance, direction, weapons-type, etc. – are based on assessments provided by monitors on the ground and technical monitoring officers, and are not always necessarily precise. When information is not known (indicated with an “N/K”), the SMM was unable to ascertain such information due to distance, weather conditions technical limitations and/or other considerations. Ceasefire violations recorded by more than one patrol/camera and assessed to be the same are entered only once.

Map of Donetsk and Luhansk regions⁹



⁹ The SMM is deployed to ten locations throughout Ukraine – Kherson, Odessa, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Dnipro, Chernivtsi, Luhansk and Kyiv – as per Permanent Council Decision 1117 of 21 March 2014. This map of eastern Ukraine is meant for illustrative purposes and indicates locations mentioned in the report, as well as those where the SMM has offices (monitoring teams, patrol hubs and forward patrol bases) in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. (In red: a forward patrol base from which SMM staff have temporarily relocated based on recommendations of security experts from participating States, as well as SMM security considerations. The SMM uses the premises during daylight hours and also patrols in this settlement during daylight hours).