

WAR IN UKRAINE | APR. 7, 2023

The Pentagon Wants to Know Who Leaked Secret Ukraine Docs

By Matt Stieb, Intelligencer staff writer



Photo: Muhammed Enes Yildirim/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

Earlier this week, a small number of printouts of purported U.S. intelligence on the war in Ukraine leaked on Twitter and the encrypted chat app Telegram. Labeled “top secret,” one of the documents provides a “status of the conflict” as of March 1 with troop placements on the front in Donetsk; others depict a timeline for training American-supplied brigades and how fast Ukrainian troops are using ammunition for HIMARS rocket systems supplied by western allies.

With the public glimpsing a rare view of how the war is conducted, the Pentagon has confirmed that it is now investigating how the classified information was leaked. Biden administration officials also told the *New York Times* that they are working to get the pictures off of Twitter and Telegram, where they are still being shared.

Analysts who scanned the documents have said that parts of them appeared to be real and that they could provide Russia with usable intelligence on the timeline for troop and weapon delivery. But some of the leaked information appears to have been doctored. One slide claims that between 16,000 and 17,500 Russian soldiers have been killed compared to as many as 71,500 deaths of Ukrainian troops. U.S. and European estimates suggest that Russian casualties, including those killed and injured, is near 200,000, while Ukraine is around 100,000.

Much of the information is at least a month old, so the leak is less likely to be an immediate threat to Ukrainian troops, but it could impact how the U.S. and Ukraine share intelligence. At the beginning of the war, Ukraine largely kept the U.S. in the dark on its intelligence gathering. But as the U.S. provided intelligence and the Biden administration approved billions upon billions in military aid, Ukraine began to open up. With their fears surrounding potential leaks realized — even if it’s not known which side could have let the docs slip — it could put some distance between the allies as Ukraine prepares for what is expected to be a pivotal spring counteroffensive.

TAGS: WAR IN UKRAINE

10 COMMENTS