Negative: F-22 Ukraine

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Negative: F-22 Ukraine

INHERENCY

1. Ukraine air defenses solve

Ukraine's air defenses have destroyed Russian planes and they don't dare to fly much any more

Col. Maximilian Bremer & Kelly A. Grieco 2022 (*Bremer - U.S. Air Force colonel and the director of the Special Programs Division at Air Mobility Command. Grieco - resident senior fellow with New American Engagement Initiative at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security*) 15 June 2022 "IN DENIAL ABOUT DENIAL: WHY UKRAINE’S AIR SUCCESS SHOULD WORRY THE WEST" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) <https://warontherocks.com/2022/06/in-denial-about-denial-why-ukraines-air-success-should-worry-the-west/> (brackets and ellipses in original)

The Oryx open-source intelligence site [reports](https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/03/list-of-aircraft-losses-during-2022.html) that, since the start of the war, 96 Russian aircraft have been destroyed, including at least nine Sukhoi Su-34 and one Su-35 — [equivalents](https://www.businessinsider.com/new-russia-military-weapons-look-good-but-unimpressive-in-ukraine-2022-5) to the American F-15. Ukraine [started](https://kyivindependent.com/national/ukraines-old-air-defense-proves-unexpectedly-effective-in-combat/) the war with a total of 250 S-300 launchers, but 11 weeks later, the Russians have only managed to knock out 24 of them, at least so far as Oryx has [confirmed](https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/02/defending-ukraine-listing-russian-army.html) with photos and videos. [**END QUOTE**] Given how Ukrainian officials carefully manage information about their losses, caution is needed in drawing conclusions from our limited information about them. Still these figures suggest that the Russians are only able to attrite a small portion of the threat, and, compared to radar and battery command vehicles, the less important part at that. [**THEY GO ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT WRITING QUOTE**:] The best evidence may be Russian behavior itself. As a senior Pentagon official [argued](https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3027132/senior-defense-official-holds-a-background-briefing/), “And one of the reasons we know … [Ukraine’s air defenses are] working is because we continue to see the Russians wary of venturing into Ukrainian air space at all and if they do, they don’t stay long … And I think … that speaks volumes …”

2. No more jets needed

Status Quo fighter jets are enough.  Adding more wouldn't help

NEW YORK TIMES December 2022 (journalists Eric Schmitt, Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Julian Barnes) 22 Dec 2022 (accessed 31 Dec 2022) <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/22/us/politics/ukraine-zelensky-biden-weapons.html>

A third category covers weapons like the Abrams battle tank and F-16 fighter jets, some of the most advanced weapons in America’s arsenal. Pentagon officials say Ukraine already has enough tanks and fighter jets from other countries. More important, the officials say, the systems take months to learn how to use and require complex maintenance, usually done by civilian contractors, who might be unable to work safely in Ukraine.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Russian Air Force has already been defeated

The Russian Air Force (known by its Russian acronym "VKS") has already been defeated by Ukraine

Snehesh Alex Philip 2022 (journalist) 15 Oct 2022 " Why the famed Russian Air Force failed in Ukraine and the vital lessons IAF can draw from it" THE PRINT (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://theprint.in/defence/air-denial-over-dominance-democratised-technology-lessons-for-iaf-from-russia-ukraine-war/1167547/

Estimates of [VKS losses](https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/03/list-of-aircraft-losses-during-2022.html) run up to 175 destroyed and 68 captured aircraft — including several of the state-of-the-art Sukhoi Su-34 heavy fighters, each costing an estimated $35 million. But if the Ukrainians have air defence systems, so do the Russians and more lethal ones at that. What helped the Ukrainians were the [anti-radiation missiles](https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/uk-news/2022/09/30/ukraines-new-radar-missile-blinding-russian-air-defences/), fitted to their MiG-29 jets by United States military technicians, which enabled them to blind Russian air-defences. It gave the Ukrainians air force a potent counter-punch as the missile homes in on radiation transmissions at 3,200 kilometres per hour — either obliterating Russian radars or forcing them to shut down to avoid detection, as Thomas Harding reported in the The National last month. The sources quoted above said that the early setbacks and the failure of the original Russian thinking that Kiev will drop arms soon, led to a weakened morale within the Russian military, which was now more focused on avoiding casualties.

Russia's air capabilities were over-estimated and didn't accomplish anything in Ukraine

Tony Lawrence 2022 (Head of the Defence Policy and Strategy Programme at International Center for Defense & Security in Estonia) June 2022 "The Early Air War" - Russia’s War in Ukraine Series No. 5 (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://icds.ee/wp-content/uploads/dlm\_uploads/2022/06/ICDS\_Brief\_Russia%C2%B4s\_War\_in\_Ukraine\_No5\_Tony\_Lawrence\_June\_2022.pdf

The most notable aspect of the early air war was Russia’s failure to use its obvious airpower advantages to secure air superiority in the first days of the conflict. Had it done so, the course of the war may have been very different. Russia, and Western analysts, appear to have both overestimated its ability to carry out large-scale offensive air operations and to manage air defence in complex circumstances, and underestimated the ability of a skilled and determined defender to undermine an aggressor’s apparent advantages.

2. No remaining threat

Russia's military is weak and its air force lacks capabilities

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

Russia is much smaller, much weaker, and much poorer than its predecessor, with an economy that trails Italy's. Its military is a fifth the size of NATO's and is heavily outgunned. Also, its forces, including the Air Force, are underpaid, underfunded, and corrupt, with money slated for maintenance going into other pockets. Another problem is that Russia hasn't mastered the strategy of modern warfare. In the early days of the invasion, the Russian troops tried to emulate the West's highly coordinated tactics where many different land, sea, air, and space units operate as one in real time. In practice, they couldn't manage this and were forced to abandon plans to quickly capture Kyiv airport and other lightning attacks. Combined with a lack of the precision munitions that NATO forces rely on, Russia wasn't able to suppress air defenses or to destroy Ukrainian fighter jets on the ground in any numbers, though Ukraine's casualties have been high. Layered on top of this, Russia is waging a much longer war than it planned while having to defend its other interests at home and losing soldiers and materiel in unsustainable numbers. As a result, it can't afford to waste aircraft or trained pilots that it can't replace in battles with heavy losses.

SOLVENCY

1. No military benefit

Link: The only benefit of F-22s would be to deter Russia from using their air force to support an advancing army

Robert M. Farley 2014 (senior lecturer in the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky) 1 Apr 2014 "No, F-22s Can’t Save Ukraine" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://medium.com/war-is-boring/no-f-22s-cant-save-ukraine-216d502626b8

First, F-22s could only destroy the Russian air force if the latter engaged, which of course it would not. The Russians know that the F-22 can defeat any fighter flown by their air force. The Kremlin would respond to a “purely defensive” deployment of F-22s by only operating their own aircraft in conditions of overwhelming superiority. At best, the F-22s could deter Russia from using its air force to support advancing Russian army spearheads.

But that's useless because: Russia isn't using air power to support ground troops in Ukraine.

Phil Stewart and Idrees Ali 2022 (journalists) 2 March 2022 " What happened to Russia's Air Force? U.S. officials, experts stumped" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) SWISS INFO https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/reuters/what-happened-to-russia-s-air-force--u-s--officials--experts-stumped/47392918

Military experts have seen evidence of a lack of Russian air force coordination with ground troop formations, with multiple Russian columns of troops sent forward beyond the reach of their own air defense cover. That leaves Russian soldiers vulnerable to attack from Ukrainian forces, including those newly equipped with Turkish drones and U.S. and British anti-tank missiles. David Deptula, a retired U.S. Air Force three-star general who once commanded the no-fly zone over northern Iraq, said he was surprised that Russia didn't work harder to establish air dominance from the start.

2. Short supply

F-22s are in short supply, so we can't consider them going to Ukraine

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

The upshot of all this is that the US and NATO are seriously considering arming the Ukraine Air Force with advanced Western fighter jets. The questions now are, will this go ahead, which jets might be sent, and will any of this make a difference? One of the first things to get out of the way is that some fighters are simply not on the list. Ukraine isn't going to get the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II or F-22 Raptor, or the Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet. These are simply too advanced, too expensive, and in too short supply to consider.

Can't ramp up supply: Aircraft orders already ramped up in response to the war. There's no extra planes available

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

Adding to changes in the battlefield, the NATO countries have responded to the invasion by a rapid build up of their own defense forces. Orders for warplanes rose [80.6 percent](https://www.census.gov/manufacturing/m3/adv/pdf/durgd.pdf) in June and with such demand it may be that there won't be many aircraft surplus to requirements to send to Ukraine.

3. No Ukrainian pilots

Ukraine has no pilots that could use the new aircraft and no time to train them

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

However, the biggest need, and one that may squash the deal, is training the pilots. In many ways, training is much more important than equipment and the difference in the effectiveness of one air force over another is how much training they get. Simply giving Ukraine a ready-made air force of superior jets is useless unless the pilots are not only briefed, but practiced in flying them. This is a real problem because the days are long gone when you could train a Spitfire pilot from scratch in six months. Modern aircraft and all their support gear are much too complex for that sort of a time-frame. It's even worse for the Ukraine Air Force because they aren't being trained for a new variant of planes they've already flown, but entirely new aircraft. To top all this off, these pilots are needed now and can't take time off to go abroad for training. As a result, the new planes may be pointless to send because there isn't anyone to fly them.

4. Russia can evade

Russia can easily evade F-22s using: 1) Quick dash attacks 2) Cruise missiles

Robert M. Farley 2014 (senior lecturer in the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky) 1 Apr 2014 "No, F-22s Can’t Save Ukraine" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://medium.com/war-is-boring/no-f-22s-cant-save-ukraine-216d502626b8

Finally, Moscow can use air power creatively to give itself an even greater advantage on the battlefield. Assuming that the USAF’s “defensive deployment” won’t result in rules of engagement that allow F-22s to shoot down Russian aircraft in Russian airspace—a truly apocalyptic prospect—the Kremlin’s fighter-bombers can conduct quick dashes across the border, deliver ordnance and then return to the safety of the Motherland. Moreover, Russia possesses a bevy of air-launched conventional cruise missiles that can hit targets across Ukraine without ever requiring Russian aircraft to cross the border.

5. Already too late

Maybe planes could have helped at the beginning of the war, but it's too late now to matter

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

The more vexing question is whether it's already too late to send more planes. According to retired USAF General Larry Stutxriem with the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, if something like the A-10 had been available in the early days of the war, it might have had a decisive impact, but the Russians have now moved in S-300 surface-to-air missile systems and other air defenses and they are better defending their ground forces. They've even deployed electronic warfare units that have had some success countering Ukrainian drone attack and reconnaissance missions.

6. Benefits of air power are exaggerated

US Air Force (USAF) radically overstates benefits of air power, creating the illusion of cheap painless conflict

Robert M. Farley 2014 (senior lecturer in the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky) 1 Apr 2014 "No, F-22s Can’t Save Ukraine" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://medium.com/war-is-boring/no-f-22s-cant-save-ukraine-216d502626b8

But whether the USAF’s system of professional military education produces senior officers with shallow knowledge of air power theory and operations, or whether it simply creates incentives for senior officers to radically overstate the utility of air power, the problem remains essentially the same. The Air Force has an institutional pre-disposition to overstating the potential impact of air power, a pre-disposition that goes hand-in-hand with a proclivity for advocating diplomatically reckless foreign policy. If the United States wants to deter Russia, it needs to make a clear political commitment to Ukrainian territorial integrity. If it wants to fight Russia, it needs to prepare for a real war, not a fanciful delusion of a cheap, easy, painless conflict.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Billions of dollars wasted

Russian ballistic missiles will easily destroy billions of dollars worth of F-22s on the ground if they are deployed

Robert M. Farley 2014 (senior lecturer in the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky) 1 Apr 2014 "No, F-22s Can’t Save Ukraine" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) https://medium.com/war-is-boring/no-f-22s-cant-save-ukraine-216d502626b8

The 97K20 Iskandar theater ballistic can hit targets 250 miles away with an accuracy of five meters. Not only does this give advancing Russian forces a strike option not solvable by F-22s, it also means that Russia can attack, with considerable precision, Ukraine’s air bases. Not incidentally, this means that the USAF would also have to find secure bases for its F-22s. Patriot anti-missile batteries would help, but the Air Force won’t leave its half-a-billion-dollar-apiece stealth fighters at the mercy of Russian ballistic and cruise missiles for long. Indeed, the Kremlin might find the prospect of destroying several billion dollars of USAF equipment attractive—even if the the United States based the planes in Poland.

2. Escalation risk

Link: Providing fighter planes to Ukraine could push Russia too far - they will view it as an act of war

David Szondy 2022 (journalist) 13 Aug 2022 "Ukraine Air Force seeks game-changing fighter jets from NATO" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) NEW ATLAS https://newatlas.com/military/ukraine-air-force-seeks-game-changing-fighter-jets-from-nato/

Whatever the state of any deal for Ukraine to get Western warplanes, such a transfer has to be looked at in the light of the larger context. Russia is already extremely touchy when it comes to NATO involvement in Ukraine and has already expressed the view that a fighter plane deal could be regarded as an act of war. This is a point that is more than theoretical, since NATO forces are already in theater and may have aided Ukraine, such as reports that Britain's Special Boat Service (SBS)-trained Ukrainian frogmen participated in the mission to retake Snake Island and the Royal Navy provided intelligence for the operation. There are also rumors that the SAS has been involved in strikes against Russian airfields.

Brink and impact: There's no room for more escalation - Russia is already talking about nuclear war

J.D. Tuccille 2022 (contributing editor) 10 June 2022 REASON magazine " Ukraine War Unlikely to End Anytime Soon" <https://reason.com/2022/06/10/ukraine-war-unlikely-end-anytime-soon/> (accessed 23 June 2022)

Inevitably, the Russian government [threatened retaliatory strikes](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/putin-warns-west-rocket-systems-russia-ukraine-war_n_629c95d6e4b090b53b865dd9) against unspecified targets that had previously been left alone. What that means is unclear, given that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was [already hinting in April at nuclear war](https://reason.com/2022/04/27/the-world-is-back-on-a-war-footing-and-well-all-pay-the-price/) with the West. Whatever it does militarily, Putin's regime isn't leaving a lot of room for further rhetorical escalation. Those threats understandably have some western countries looking for solutions that don't involve widening the conflict.

Voting Impact: Risk of escalation outweighs any additional benefit of fighter jets to Ukraine

Joe Walsh 2022 (journalist) 9 Mar 2022 "Pentagon Opposes Sending MiG-29 Fighter Jets To Ukraine" (accessed 31 Dec 2022) FORBES <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joewalsh/2022/03/09/pentagon-opposes-sending-mig-29-fighter-jets-to-ukraine/?sh=388071f14483> (brackets added)

He [Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby] also warned sending fighter aircraft to Ukraine “may be mistaken as escalatory” by Russia, raising the threat that NATO could be dragged into a broader fight—unnamed U.S. officials raised similar concerns to [NBC News](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/national-security/proposed-plan-sending-fighter-jets-ukraine-hits-logistical-snag-rcna19083) earlier this week, telling the outlet Russia may perceive adding fighter jets as direct NATO involvement in the war.  
CRUCIAL QUOTE  
“At this time, we believe the provision of additional fighter aircraft provides little increased capabilities at high risk,” Kirby said Wednesday. “We also believe that there are alternative options that are much better suited to support the Ukrainian military.”