Problems of the MH17 track-a-trail narrative

The images, videos, postings and intercepts

This review is under permanent construction
Important sources

[Gr] Arnold Greidanus – What you see is all there is; Re-examining the Oplot, Buk and Vostok convoys on July 17th 2014
http://www.whathappenedtoflightmh17.com/what-you-see-is-all-there-is/

[Ke] Kemet, administrator of Russian MH17 discussion forum, examining photo’s and footage
http://mas17.webtalk.ru/viewtopic.php?id=159

[Ko1] Micha Kobs – Bellingcat the launch site: recherche zur recherche
https://www.scribd.com/doc/267001590/Bellingcat-the-Launch-Site

[Ko2] Micha Kobs – Haunt the Buk

[Ma1] Sergey Mastepanov – MH17: An examination of the social media evidence
http://energia.su/mh17/

[Ma2] Sergey Mastepanov – The Buk videos are fake
http://energia.su/mh17/buk vids/fake_buk_vids.html

[We] Max van der Werff – Lying for justice
http://kremlintroll.nl/?p=605
Abbreviations:

ADMS – Air Defense Missile System
AP – American Press
DSB – Dutch Safety Board, investigating safety issues
EEST – Eastern European Standard Time
JIT – Joint Investigation Team, the prosecutor
SAM – Surface-to-Air Missile
SBU – Ukrainian secret service
VK.com – VKontakte, Russian Facebook
I. Problems of the photos and videos

All photos and videos, salient detail:

- All images and footage have been published after the crash, so not in “realtime” when the alleged actual events were taken place or before the plane was downed.

Site: Donetsk (48.002375° 37.855124°)
Source: Anonymous “freelance photographer”.
First known publication: Paris Match magazine, 23 july (large Buk in small format), 25 july (cropped Buk, large format)

Image – probably a dashcam still – published by Paris Match in small format on 23 July 2014. The cropped version, which was published on the 25th, received all the attention.
Salient details:
• Two stills from the dashcam video (probably) have been published, not the entire video;
• First location was said by the freelancer and Paris Match to be Snizhne. It appeared to be Donetsk;
• Sourcing: this is one of only few (three) existing cases of first hand accounts conveyed by journalists, however anonymously, though the alleged “freelance photo-journalist” has been into contact with Bellingcat. [Gr]

Problems:
• Official time of capture changed a few times to fit a suggested timeline of the Buk trail when confronted with new evidence. According to the photographer it was 10:00 AM. Bellingcat first claimed 11 AM but revised it later on to 10:45 AM. Blogger Ukraine-at-war calculated to 10:05 AM. Most probable assessment was made by Michael Kobs, who set it on 11:05-15 AM [Ko2, p.45]. See also [Gr].

According to a shadowcasting analysis Micha Kobs arrives at a time of capture of about 11:05 AM.
• Pictures are fake, but possibly the truck with low-loader was there on the 17th. See Haunt the Buk report [Ko2] by Micha Kobs and Paris NO Match by Sergey Mastepanov [9] for details. Clues are: Perspectives don’t add up; the Buk has another vanishing point than the rest of the objects in the picture. The shadows contradict the object; There are clues for digital alterations. The Buk is positioned in a strange way on the low-loader (see [Ko2, p.75-77] and [10] and [11];

[10] https://twitter.com/JonKriet/status/7218305068166532480
Still of the Makeevka video showing digital artefacts when the Buk drives beneath a tree and is covered by its shadow. Instead of a Buk top we see trees. It shows the low quality of the video with respect to its resolution.

Salient details:

• The video appeared on social media only 22 months after the crash;

• Bad quality with respect to resolution; many markers that could verify the Buk are invisible; retouche software has been used [12].

• Truck with Buk was allegedly coming from Makeevka at about 9 AM according to a Vk.com group “Donetsk is Ukraine!” posting (see section II: Problems of the sightings on social media), but is then moving back again to Makeevka via a different road about 2 hrs. later.

• All license plates on the video are intentionally blurred. This could be to protect witnesses, but even fact is to assert this is to block the finding of witnesses who could falsify the existence of this convoy at this day.

[12] https://twitter.com/Key371A/status/733335374118916098 Probably with this software the quality was lowered to even show artefacts leading the Buk to vanish under the shadow of a tree, see this image http://imgur.com/hmcZXht from a poster named Basic Dimension.
Problems:

- No date visible on dashcam video, timestamp unknown;

- Alleged time of capture (11:07 EEST) doesn’t fit Micha Kobs’ analysis (timing Donetsk Paris Match 11:05 – timing Makeevka video Olifirenko 11:30), see also [13]

- The timeline of the trail is problematic because of the high average speed that is needed to reach Zuhres/Torez (>50 km/h), not confirmed by calculated speeds from Makeevka (~40 km/h, by Micha Kobs) and Zuhres videos (~25 km/h, by Kobs and Ukraine-at-war).

- Possibly the video stems from an earlier date: Damage done to the road by a convoy that drove on there two days before, can not be seen; see remarks and examples given by “Ole” [13].

- The video is possibly a forgery, though the truck may have been there on the 17th (i.e. the Buk was photoshopped in). There seem to be fake shadows.

Does this video frame miss some sound shadowcasting? [14]


[14] https://twitter.com/masamikuramoto/status/730813145258840069
Site: Makeevka, Avtrotransporta Street (48.018095° 37.984661°)
Source: Stratfor, private intelligence firm, in cooperation with AllSource Analysis; publication on www
URL: https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/examining-evidence-russias-involvement-malaysia-airlines-crash
First known publication: 13 May 2016

Salient details:
• Publication only 22 months after the crash;
• No source, date or geolocation given by Stratfor; some mistakes in article suggest it is not written by an expert in MH17 case;
• Satellite image has been taken at almost the same official (=Bellingcat endorsed) time as Makeevka video shows according to shadowcasting analysis (11:08 EEST);

The Satellite image was captured at almost the same spot as the Makeevka video showed. It showed up a day after Bellingcat announced finding of the video. From this was concluded the Buk was filmed in the Makeevka video from 11:07 EEST. Image credit: Micha Kobs

• So the truck with cargo was captured at almost same site as the 3 May 2016 video, but the image is cropped, keeping the source of the dashcam video out of sight;
• Late appearance is remarkable for as US intelligence community would probably study satellite imagery on a daily basis and put all military convoys under surveillance, including transport vehicles implicated in these transports – like the unique truck. This imagery must have been assessed on 17.7.2014 or shortly thereafter. The question is why they were withholding this evidence to put it out in the open almost 2 years later.
Problems:

- Low resolution results in observations that few markers for verification are visible. Nor is the cargo, the alleged Buk, clearly visible;
- Obviously an important marker is missing (blue stripings on the truck cabin); More trucks with white cabins were available in Donetsk truck yard [15];
- No accompanying cars visible. Two objects, obviously cars, seem to drive on the other side of the road.

Were are the transporting cars on the satellite image? Positions calculated on webtalk.ru.

- Independent investigation is impossible as there seems to be a ban on obtaining satellite imagery of these coordinates on 17.7 as stated by a German Digital Globe subseller “the image is not available because of Ukrainian law for space imagery”. [16] [17]

[15] https://twitter.com/HectorReban/status/73260533594059008
The deleted 17.7 tweet from @3Andryu, which didn't get much attention at first. With the nickname @m_a_s_h_ua he tried again on the 22nd.

[18] https://www.google.com/maps/@48.0173376,38.301823,345m/data=!3m1!1e3
[19] https://twitter.com/m_a_s_h_ua/status/491610039854317568
@3Andryu's twicsy site reveals he is the same person as the one posting on twitter with the nickname MASH (@m_a_s_h_ua). All photos have been deleted from this account.

**Salient details:**
- Tweeted along with coordinates; Evidence on a silver platter, so to speak.
- Both times the video was published on twitter, it was sent directly to Dajey Petros (renowned anti-Russian blogger Ukraine-at-war). Petros even first dismissed the video because of suspicion of fraud. When Higgins pointed to him it fit the timeline of a Buk trail, he caved in.
- Before it got attention from Bellingcat and Ukraine-at-war on the 22nd, on the 19th the SBU published a still from this video together with two pictures of the Vostok convoy to suggest the Buk drove in a big “terrorist” convoy (see also Sections II and IV).

**Problems:**
Unknown original source. According to investigation on location by Max van der Werff, see [We], the apartment from where the video was taken, was inhabited by an alcoholic, who was frequently absent and died a few months after the video was taken. His home was probably used as an observation post. In a 2015 blogpost Ukraine-at-war used the designation “SBU video” to refer to the Zuhres video [20].

- Unrealiable date if taken into account the wind seems to blow from a southern direction where eastern wind was expected [21]. See also report [Gr] for confirming eastern wind direction on 17th at that time. Weather – cloudy with now and then some sunshine - and wind (4-5 Bft from a southern direction) at this time of day match forecasts of 30 June, 11 and 14 July.
- Though metadata are circulating on social media, these data can be altered. See for example this tweet [22] (the video has been taken with an I-phone 5).

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[22] https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/735377659790798849
Southern wind seen at the zuhres video, as shown by “Ole” [21], was not present on the 17th. This way can be concluded the video must originate from another day (see weather forecasts 11 and 14 july below).

Weather in Zuhres on the 11th and 14th match the weather as seen on the Zuhres video, clocked at 11:40 EEST. Southern wind could not be seen from 29.6 – 17.7. South-eastern winds on depicted days come closest. From the Vostok videos is known the wind at the 17th at that time was north-eastern.
Site: **Torez**, Gagarin Street in front of StroiDom shop  
Source: Unknown.  
First known publication: 17 July, published on a few Vkontakte portals/chat groups (deleted), first traceable to Ruslan Nasadyuk in a reply on the Euromaidan VK.com account (20:08 EEST).

**Salient details:**
- In a later posting in the same thread Nasadyuk explained the picture he downloaded was posted in VK.com chatgroup “Overheard in Torez” together with the tag the Buk was moving “from Torez to Snizhne”.
- Point of view photographer, lying down on the ground or kneeling (in front of a tank station), is interesting: Was he on a surveillance mission? Only 1 photo was published, though one could expect there might be more if the photographer took special position.

**Problems:**
- Unknown timestamp, original source unknown.
- Suspected of wrong dimensions and so possibly fake, shown in calculations performed by Kemet, administrator of webtalk.ru (see [Ke]).

Site: **Snizhne**, Karapetyan Street in front of flat 15A [23]  
Source: Unknown.  
First known publication: 17 July 2014, 23:04 EEST.

*The picture of a skewed Buk on Karapetyan street Snizhne, driving against the curbs. The story it was hiding behind the appartment blocks sustains the “demand for secrecy” narrative, an irrational explanation.*
**Salient details:**

- The Buk was also allegedly seen parked across No. 1 Schools at Karapetyan street 80, a few hundred meters away, according to rumors and hearsay after the 17th; Was the unloaded Buk parked twice at the same road? [24] Was it driving by when it was captured on photo and did it park later? Or were rumors spread which evolved in a way not entirely consistent with the picture that appeared late in the evening of the 17th? For an elaboration, see section IV, the 25 july AP article.

- Reason for unloading the Buk in the city is not clear; The question comes up why the truck is not hauling the missile launcher all the way to Pervomaiskoye village near the alleged launchsite. The story about a Buk hiding behind a few apartment buildings because of its need for stealth existence, seems to be irrational.

- Position of the self-propelling Buk on the street is skewed, as if it is driving against the curbs on the other side of the road.

**Problems:**

- Unknown timestamp, no original source known. First known poster lived in Kiev at the time [25]

Vlad Polienko, first known poster of the Snizhne Karapetyan picture, was in Kiev at the time he relayed the information. (Translation: “Ksuhin, at the moment I am in Kiev, but most of my life in Snizhne”). He also claims the Buk was parked on Karapetyan for a pretty long time, so this was obviously part of the information package he retrieved or received. So did the Buk park in front of flat 15A, as the photo suggests, or across the street in front of No. 1 Schools as rumors had it? Or both?

- According to measurements on location performed by Max van der Werff and calculations done by Micha Kobs, the dimensions of the Buk seem to be an anomaly. It is much too big to fit into the picture (not published).

- Witness account on the spot from 25 july Peter Leonard (AP) [26] article says tracks were visible because the Buk damaged the street. For unknown reason no visual confirmation (photo, video) was captured of this.

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[26] http://bigstory.ap.org/article/what-happened-day-flight-17-was-downed
NB: the interview appears to have been taken place on the same spot as where the Buk was seen, because the witness is said to point to the tracks. Obviously reporter and witness have been brought in to contact with each other. Its not plausible the 64 year old retired miner was coincidentally at the same spot, when he met Leonard on the 25th, as he was on the 17th. Question is of course how and/or by whom Leonard is led to this very rare first hand witness.

- Time of capture, calculated at about 13:45 EEST by Micha Kobs [27], is inconsistent with timing of the Snizhne video (12:30-13:00, but closer to 12:30 EEST, see [Ko2, p.58-63].

Site: **Snizhne**, T0522 street (48°00’25.00¨ 38°45’51.00¨)
Source: Video shot from appartment belonging to Vita Volobueva, Gagarin Street flat 43, 9th floor, appartment 143 – see report [Gr] and article [We] for details.
First known publication: 17 july, <20:33 EEST

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Still from the Snizhne video, re-uploaded by @WowihaY the same evening.

**Salient details:**
- On the 15th Volobueva posted on her VK.com site a photo of the Saur Mogila area, a point of view in the same direction as the video. She was monitoring the fights going on there. On the video, allegedly taken on the 17th, the presence of smoke from GRAD volleys in the background is salient.

[27] [https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/644076224931831808](https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/644076224931831808)
• The video was published on a one-time used Youtube channel opened on the 17th. Original video was deleted soon after publication. A re-uploaded version appeared on Torez.info (and other channels), the website @WowihaY was working for, at 21:45 EEST.

• Volobueva lived in the same building as Andrey Tarasenko, a pro-Kiev nationalist. He was alleged witness of the launch plume and acquaintance of Buk sighting and launch plume tweeter @Wowihay (see also section II.). Both moved out of the city in August 2014 according to their social media accounts, Volobueva to Wilnius Lithuania, Tarasenko to Kiev.

Problems:
• Vita had a clear view from her appartment at the alleged launchsite, which was about 4 km. away. She filmed the Buk at 13:30, according to the Bellingcat endorsed timeline, but obviously didn't hear the alleged sonic boom from the firing of the missile as she failed to capture the plume a few hours later.

• Timeline problems regarding the timing in Snizhne city. Micha Kobs sets time of capture of this video between 12:30-13:00, but closer to 12:30 EEST (see [Ko2, p.58-63]). But the picture from flat 15 Karapetyan Street shows shadows that point to 13:45 EEST [28].

[28] https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/644076224931831808
• The date is uncertain; the weather on the video seems to be very cloudy, with an overcast sky, contradicting the sunny weather at about the same time on the Torez and Snizhne pictures. Andrey Tarasenko (via @parabellum_ua) even posted a picture of an Army Personnel Carrier in Snizhne from Gagarin street, showing bright sunny weather at about 12:05-30 [Gr].

• If not faked, as the report by Sergey Mastepanov [Ma2] shows it could be, the video could stem from the 15th or 16th, as seen on the image below:

Someone cut bushes in front of his house, as seen on a still from the video, which were still present on the Volobueva picture from the 15th. Most probable scenario is this happened not long after the photo of the 15th was taken. This way the video could stem from 15 or 16 July. Credits: Ole.
Site: Chervonyi Zhovten-Pervomaiskoye (alleged launchsite, 47°58′26.83″ 38°45′50.57″)
Source: @rescuero (Pavel Aleyinkov) plume picture, posted by @WowihaY (Vladimir Djukov)
URL: https://twitter.com/wowihay/status/489807649509478400
First known publication: 19:23 EEST

**Salient details:**

- After 5 months a second plume picture was brought to light, taken 7 seconds before the first one. (For an examining of the plume discussion, see also [29], [30], [31]).

- Ukrainian official Anton Gerashchenko, advisor for the Ministry of the Interior, is suspected of being involved in disseminating this picture; [32]

- A second witness of the plume appeared in the media [33], a source almost unnoticed. It was Andrey Tarasenko (on social media AKA “Andrey Anders” and “Andrey Andreev”). See more in section II. “Problems of the sightings on social media”.

The name “Andrey And”, the poster of the Zuhres vid, looks like an abbreviation of “Andrey Anders”. Though Anders/Tarasenko lived in Snizhne and the uploader of the Zuhres video seemed to have lived in Zuhres at the time, according to [Gr].

- The Dutch Safety Board final report doesn’t mention a specific launchspot, so is not relying on the plume as evidence.

**Problems:**

- Most prominent is that the trail consists of dark smoke curling up into a white plume, but calculations show these two trails have no relation to each other. So the dark smoke is not a trace of a first-stage exhaust from a Buk launch [34]. Nor is it smoke from a burning field set on fire by a Buk launch. [35]

- Micha Kobs did some interesting calculations to find a timeline of the events with the help of both Aleyinkov photos of the plume and the smoke from the burning wreck to determine the windspeed at the time. This way he reached the conclusion that: the launch spot was wrong; the trail was unrelated to the downing of MH17; or the EXIF data - the timestamps fixated in the internal clock of the camera - were altered; or any combination of these [36].

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[29] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2015/09/19/the-trail-that-wasnt-a-launch-plume-a-reconstruction/
[31] http://7mei.nl/2015/02/02/mh17-bellingcat-photo-proof-spoof/
[32] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2016/05/01/bellingcat-trolls-russian-ministry-of-defense-we-all-
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[34] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2015/09/06/the-mystery-of-the-two-faced-launch-plume/
[35] https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/736309633548210178
[36] https://www.dropbox.com/s/pa7v8o76zsm3mbr/Launch%20spot%20by%20numbers.pdf?dl=0
• With new Google Earth imagery (Google is a Bellingcat sponsor) Bellingcat tried to verify the launchsite [37]. They performed this by detecting certain markers – existence of a mound, tracks presumably from a Buk vehicle and a burnt field presumably because launch would have set the field on fire. These markers would be absent before the 17th, but visible a few days after. Therefore a launch inflicted them.

Micha Kobs, again, pointed to a same set of markers that were only visible on imagery right after the 17th and not before. This was at a site some kilometers more to the south, exactly at the frontline at that moment in time (Stepanovka). This site was like a twin of the alleged Buk launchsite. Except that it was not plausible it had been a launchsite as this was so close to the frontline, a location not sound for a high-value war asset like a Buk.

• Therefore Kobs pointed to an analogy: When a defined set of markers with the same designation in time cannot testify Buk launch, then it also won’t in analogous cases, like the Bellingcat field [38]. Conclusion is this set of observations can’t confirm a single site, or any site at all for that matter. Bellingcat and true followers just clearly see what they want to see.

• So geolocation of the launchsite based on this plume, centerpiece of the SBU/Bellingcat/Ukraine-at-war storyline, has been debunked in every aspect. This casts doubts on the entire Buk-trail-to-Snizhne narrative.

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[38] See thread from https://twitter.com/MichaKobs/status/737033683778035713
Site: Luhansk [39]
Source: Local police patrol unit/ Ukrainian secret service (SBU)
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4HJmev5xg0
First known publication: 18 July, 12:32 EEST, by Ukr. Secretary of the Interior, Arsen Avakov [40]

Salient details:
- Conflicting statements were given by several Ukrainian officials about transports and time. It was said two Buk transports together consisting of two TELs (loaders), a TELAR (Buk) and a CP (command post) passed the border to Russia at 2 and 4 AM [39]. The time the unique truck passed Luhansk, driving alone and carrying a Buk “missing one missile”, was set on 4:50 AM;

- Initially Avakov conveyed a wrong location. He mentioned Krasnodon, close to the Russian border, but the site the video was taken appeared to be Luhansk. See for elaboration on this video also [41].

- On the 19.7 presser counter-espionage chief Nayda published a still of this video together with a photo of Buk 312, of which soon was revealed it belonged to the Ukrainian army themselves. This was a blatant, but early detected example of spreading disinformation to construct a Buk-trail (see also [Ma2]).

«БУК-М1»
В НАПРЯМКУ КОРДОНА УКРАЇНИ З РФ

Screenshot of the Luhansk video a photo of BUK 312, shown on a Nayda presser, head of the counter-espionage department of the SBU, on the 19th. Buk 312 appeared to be Ukrainian.

[39] https://www.google.com/maps/place/48°32′44.7″N+39°15′52.6″E/@48.5453906,39.2655573,907m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0x0:0x0
[40] https://www.facebook.com/arsen.avakov.1/posts/670837696339673

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Problems:
• There are severe problems dating this video on the morning of the 18th.
  
• a. On the 18th the truck with Buk on its way to Russia must have been driven straight through front area or even Ukrainian controled territory; The M04 to Luhansk was blocked as Bile and Yubileine were captured by the Ukrainian army and the airport in Luhansk west was under fire. So even the part of north-west Luhansk, where the Buk was spotted, was a no-go area for a separatist transport, that is: when rationally avoiding danger (like a transfer over the border at Marinovka, not far from Snizhne, obviously would be too dangerous as well). See image below.

LiveUAmap from 18 july of the Luhansks area. Bile and Yubileine, villages situated at the M04, were captured by Ukrainians. Also heavy fights were reported in Luhansk West, especially around the airport area. Though along the M04 in Luhansk West no blockposts were erected yet, it would not be advisable to pass cities with presence of the Ukrainian army and areas with heavy fighting.
• **b.** From a presser by Ukrainian official Andrei Lysenko on the 17th, 17:00 EEST, could be derived there already was a video present of a Buk transport in Luhansk BEFORE the plane crashed, though this one was never published. This begs the question if actually a new video was captured in the morning of the 18th or if the posted video already existed before [42].

• **c.** According to administrator Kemet of discussion forum webtalk.ru the video shows a lightpole shining where in the morning of the 18th there was a total energy black-out in the area. [43]

[43] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2016/05/01/bellingcat-trolls-russian-ministry-of-defense-we-all-lose/

Chapter IV
II. Problems of the sightings on social media

All accounts, salient details:

All accounts seem to have been published by pro-Kiev ultranationalists who involved themselves on a regular basis in publishing information about separatist military movements.

Therefore it is plausible these people could also have been used as reliable conduits of disinformation in case someone would want to sow traces of a trail that never existed. As their only job was to do what they always did, relaying information from pro-Kiev sources to the general public or the other way around to inform ATO troops (two way streaming, so to say), there was no need they themselves were involved in a conspiracy, as some people argue.

Nevertheless, there are some interesting features to report. Many of these “infowarriors” had contacts with each other through their twitter accounts, some of them already before the 17th, especially the people from the Torez/Snizhne area. @WowihaY (Vladimir Djukov) was in contact with launch plume photographer @rescuero (Pavel Aleynikov), with Buk tweeter Roman (@MOR2567) and with second plume witness @andrushka74/@parabellum_ua (Andrey Tarasenko). It seems WowihaY was – according to an interview with the plume photographer, see below - also in contact with the Ukrainian secret service, SBU and/or with Ukrainian advisor for the Ministry of the Interior, Anton Gerashchenko.

Part of a transcript of an interview journalist Olaf Koens had with plume photographer Pavel Aleynikov for Dutch commercial channel RTL4[44]. Translation: “I got into contact with my friend [@WowihaY; HR] and gave him the photos including the originals. This friend contacted the SBU and at the SBU they showed interest in the photos. He conveyed them to the SBU.” In an interview WowihaY had a year later [45] he mentioned the contact with Gerashchenko was led by a middleman, a local Kievite politician. Gerashchenko would have received the plume pictures at about midnight. Perhaps WowihaY had forgotten Gerashchenko already posted the plume at 20:45 EEST [46].

Andrey Tarasenko was living in Gagarin street Snizhne, close to the appartment from where the Snizhne video was taken. Max van der Werff confirmed this when he was in the area interviewing people from this appartment block [We]. Possibly Tarasenko knew Vita Volobueva, who was watching the fights at Saur Mogila from her appartment and who probably was the maker of this video in which a self-propelling Buk is driving from Snizhne to the alleged launch site.

Tarasenko was also the first known uploader on Youtube (17:02 EEST [47]) of a video with smoke from the wreckage, which was used in the famous deleted Strelkov_info posting. Like his friend @WowihaY he was obviously very busy that night.

Pro-Kiev ultranationalist Andrey Tarasenko announces on twitter (@aksneo) he just uploaded a video from the smoke of the MH17 wreckage on youtube, a video also copied by the admins of Strelkov_info. Though Kiev propaganda spread a narrative which suggested Strelkov_info had used info from a first-hand account of the commander-in-chief Strelkov himself, the real origins of the information displayed were social media postings [48].

Finally Tarasenko was also mentioned as a witness of the launch plume in an article in NBC News [49]. It seems plausible he was brought in via the contacts @WowihaY had with the Ukrainian official Anton Gerashchenko and his relations with regime friendly western newsorganizations. At least, this was presumably the way plume photographer @rescuero/Pavel Aleynikov entered the anti-Russian newsservice.

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[47] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg_8iTlWpn0&feature=youtu.be&a
Aleynikov had appeared on stage as witness of the crash (not of the plume, interestingly), pointing his finger to the ‘terrorists’ in a Business Insider interview, published on the evening of the crash [50]. Both articles, the one with Aleynikov and the one featuring Tarasenko, also mention Gerashchenko as source.

Some general problems:

- Virtually all accounts seem to display second hand information and/or rumours from untraceable original sources. For elaborate discussion of the tweets, their source and the information they conveyed, see also [Gr].

- The accounts show an inconsistency when reporting transporting vehicles, i.e. the amount and type of the vehicles mentioned [51].

- There are no accounts available from the Russian border to Donetsk and from the launchsite to the Russian border mentioning or showing this alleged Buk transport, except the infamous and heavily disputed SBU Luhansk video.

- There is not one social media account from a pro-separatist person along the entire Buk trail, not from the route out of Russia to Donetsk, not from Donetsk to the alleged launchsite and not from there to the Russian border. Hundreds of kilometers of absolute silence. Not even one Omerta breaker appeared on social media.

- The absence of news about Buk possession is contradicting the news of 29 June 2014 when rebels had raided Donetsk aorce base A-1402 and, according to some pro-rebel social and traditional media sources, allegedly seized one or more Buk launch facilities [52]. It is plausible presence of a Buk anti-aircraft system would be cheered for, like it was on 29 June, especially after the bombing of Snizhne on July the 15th when 11 people died.

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[52] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2015/07/10/an-alternative-track-trail-another-buk-on-another-day/
note [2]
• The absence of any pro-separatist witness account for the 16.7-17.7 trail of delivery of the Buk to the launchsite also conflicts with known footage from a 15.7 convoy and the 17.7 Vostok convoy, of which various accounts from both sides have been captured (for details about these convoys, see reports [Ko2] and [Gr]).

• Pro-Kiev sources like Bellingcat [53] claim the absence of clear first-hand witness accounts is due to the fact people were afraid for the rebel authorities. Though this may be true in some cases, the question ought to be why people were not afraid to video a separatist convoy on the 15th and Vostok movement on the 17th. The Buk transport is an anomaly in this respect. One would expect several realtime accounts, at least until the time the story of separatist guilt spread.

[53] https://twitter.com/AricToler/status/732940459769749506
Some sources allude to a demand for secrecy as an explanation why they or others didn’t provide any visual confirmation. The story of the anonymous American Press journalist, allegedly threatened by Russian Buk crew not to take pictures of a Buk driving through Snizhne, is a vivid example of this. If this assertion had any credibility, one would not have dared to ask why a Buk transport would move through a densely populated area in the middle of the day when they would want to keep the presence of a Buk in the Donbass a “secret.”

Site: Donetsk
Source: @Occupied_Rook
URL: https://twitter.com/Occupied_Rook/status/489701199953010689
First known publication: 12:20 EEST

Translation:
In the morning, it was written that it stood at Avenue Shakhtostroitelei the intersection with Ilyich Avenue, in the direction of Makivka. They were most likely waiting …

Salient detail:
- Possibly based on a posting in VK.com group “Donetsk is Ukraine!” (see above) as it says: “In the morning it was written…”
- Same poster alludes to Buk use about ¾ hrs after the crash, tweeting: “Fits a Buk. I think it [the plane] flew over 4000 meters”. [54]

Problems:
- This is not a first hand account.
- Rumours this tweeter had picked up about the presence of a Buk in Donetsk at the crossroads of Ilycha Avenue and Shaktostrotelei Avenue, led after the crash of MH17 to a quick conclusion a Buk had been used to down the plane. Even before Ukrainian officials issued accusations and pointed their finger to Putin's missile.

Site: Donetsk
Source: @666_mancer (NecroMancer)
URL: https://twitter.com/666_mancer/status/489668680398438400 (and others)
First known publication: 17 july, 10:11 EEST

Translation:
#Donetsk 30 minutes ago at Ilyich Avenue near the dairy factory something like a Strela ADMS under an awning was carried on a platform, accompanied by 10 (passenger) cars [or: a 10 seater car or: 10 passengers?] #Stopterror

[54] https://twitter.com/Occupied_Rook/status/489773504683081730
Salient detail:
- This tweet was first ignored by Bellingcat to only pop-up in a report a year after the crash;
- According to [Gr] Necro Mancer is fed by several informants without deep knowledge of the vehicles they observed.

Problems:

The Necro Mancer tweets. Was it a Strela or “something similar to a Buk with one cannon” but “without missiles” mounted?
• Original source unknown; it's not a first-hand account; According to a tweet mentioned in [Gr] he claims not to have seen it himself.

• Several tweets from Necro Mancer about this alleged sighting show contradicting and unreliable information; His Buk account actually is an (mis)interpretation from an informant without deep knowledge, who is himself maybe influenced by disinformation spread about a Buk transport. This account should be dismissed as a Buk sighting (see image on previous page).

Site: Donetsk
Source: Vkontakte group “Donetsk is Ukraine!”
URL: https://vk.com/wall-67445695_68330
First known publication (photo): 17 July, 10:40 EEST
Translation:

The “Donetsk is Ukraine!” posting featuring a sighting lasting at least 15 minutes, from 9 – 9:15 AM, maybe – but this is not specified - assembled from several accounts. The posting mentions a RAV4, which can be seen on the Paris Match photo, and a UAZ, which showed up on the Torez picture. The dark blue Hyundai never appeared again, though the Makeevka video shows a blue VW van.
**Salient detail:**

- Made public by Bellingcat only 19 months after the crash [55]. Their report conveyed three sources more, but these seem to be copies from this posting (or have the same original source) as they contain the exact same information but were posted later that day. These other accounts were written on Vk.com group “ATO in Donetsk-Donbass News” [56] and probably via Konstantin Golubtsev [57] published on FaceNews.UA [58] and Kriminal.TV [59] too.

It is of course interesting all new Buk sightings are from Donetsk and appear only after 1 year (Neco Mancer) or almost 2 years after the events (then even 4 at the same time). With these last accounts the opaque Necro Mancer and Occupied_Rook tweets get leverage again.

- Note the wording: coming “from Makeevka” and “proceeded to the intersection with Boulevard Shakhtostroitelei”. Presumably the informant was mobile (or in a very high building), able to watch for at least a quarter of an hour where the transport came from and were it went for some kilometers. Was it under surveillance?

- VK.com messages can be edited for 24 hrs after initial posting. Photos have a timestamp, messages haven’t.

- The transport was seen, according to these postings, driving along the N21/ Makeevka Highway to the crossroads at Ilyich Avenue and Shakhtostrotelei Avenue in Donetsk, where it apparently blocked the road. This is the same site conveyed in the Occupation_Rook tweet and Necro Mancer tweet, though the heavy transport was reported on the other side of the road, near the Dairy Factory, going into the opposite direction back to Makeevka. In that same direction it was captured by the freelance photographer for Paris Match, almost 2 hours after the earliest sighting. After that they took another road through Makeevka (see section I, the Makeevka video).

**Problems:**

- Original source unknown; As this Vk.com site is a news site (the other three are too), it apparently was used to feed the information to.

- Sourcing: the question arises why this information, written by an administrator with obviously a very strong pro-Kiev affiliation, was not brought in to Bellingcat much earlier. It is not plausible this source – or the three others for that matter – did not know about the role Bellingcat has taken on in the information war, promoting firmly the US/EU/Kiev side in the conflict. Also Ukraine-at-war was a well known collector of pro-Kiev information at this time, see the Zuhres video, but wasn’t used to report these messages.

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• None of the Donetsk reports are first-hand accounts, though theoretically the posting on the newssite of ‘Donetsk is Ukraine!’ could be.

• If the truck with Buk stood almost 2 hrs standing in Donetsk and driving in between Makeevka and Donetsk on the very busy Ilyich Avenue/Makeevka highway, even blocking the road for some time, there must be tons of witnesses. However, not even one first hand account appeared on social media (apart from the Paris Match stills).

The Donetsk sightings. 1. Necro Mancer tweets; transport reported going into direction of Makeevka at about 9:45 EEST. 2. The “Donetsk is Ukraine!” posting and its offshoots, reporting the transport coming from Makeevka Highway/N21 at 9:15 AM. The Occupied_Rook tweet mentions the same crossroads as these other sources, but no direction. 3. Khmuryi and Sanych agree at 9:23 AM to take the “you know what” transport with Vostok, but Vostok left without Buk at about 10 AM. The alleged truck with Buk transport waited for another hour before it went en route itself.

• The JIT advertised the Luhansk route via Makeevka to Donetsk as the way the Russians would have brought in the Buk in the night of 16/17 July. But as we have seen reviewing the Luhansk video, this was a dangerous route these days. So if the Buk transport was moving from the direction of Makeevka at 9:00 AM, how did it pass the M04 in the Luhansk area?

• It is not clear what happened between 9:23 EEST when Vostok commander Sanych told Khmuryi where to deliver the Buk – that is: “behind” the Motel – and the time the Buk was apparently still waiting to be photographed by the freelancer at 11:05 EEST at a time Vostok had already departed an hour before? There are no intercepted calls displayed about these troubles, though Khmuryi and the DNR soldier he gives the order to organize the transport to, agree to stay in contact. “If anything happens, we keep in touch”.

– 32 –
• The late departure of the truck with Buk also lead to severe timeline problems. The 40 tons heavy transport would have to bridge the 60 km distance to Torez, where it allegedly was spotted at 12:07 EEST, in only one hour. About 60 km/h on average seems to be an impossible speed. The official trail conservators smooth this over by not mentioning it.

Site: Shakhtarsk
Source: @spice4russia
URL: https://twitter.com/spice4russia/status/489706440899432449
First known publication: 12:41 EEST

Translation:
Shakhtarsk KAMAZ terrorist [?], 3 tanks. before this probably passed Buk, covered with an awning #ato

Problems:
• Original source unknown, its probably not a first-hand account.

• Wrong information: The message was posted at the time the Vostok convoy passed through Shakhtarsk [Ko2]. Presence of a KAMAZ was reported, but that vehicle didn´t drive in that convoy that day, as can be seen on several videos available from the Vostok movement. Also @WowihaY and Necro Mancer mentioned the KAMAZ in a tweet. WowihaY even tweeted a screenshot from his phone to show the received information [Ko2].

• According to this tweeters history he was, like Necro Mancer, @WowihaY (see below) and some others, especially occupied with relaying information from other sources about separatist maneuvers. After the crash he reported the news of Buk presence in the area from a presser by Ukrainian official Andrei Lysenko, instead of mentioning his own reported
realtime sighting [61]. Probably he didn't see the Buk himself but seemed to have used the official statement to re-enforce credibility of his speculation about Buk movement.

So the Buk part of the tweet could have been arrived from hearsay or speculation. Apparently the tweet contains some mixing up of reality and rumour and should be dismissed as a Buk sighting.

Site: **Torez**  
Source: @WowihaY  
URL: [https://twitter.com/WowihaY/status/489698009148837888](https://twitter.com/WowihaY/status/489698009148837888); [https://twitter.com/WowihaY/status/489700047215685632](https://twitter.com/WowihaY/status/489700047215685632)  
First known publication: 12:07 EEST, 12:16 EEST

Translation:  
12:07 EEST: *Past us, toward the center drove air defense installation. 4 rockets, said to be Buk #stopterror #Torez in the direction of #Snizhne*  
12:16 EEST: *Buk travels through Torez at Snizhne #stopterror*

**Salient details:**  
- Poster also was the first one to tweet the image of an alleged Buk launch plume (see below).

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• “4 missile” tag conveyed; the “from Torez to Snizhne” tag conveyed;

Problems:
• Unknown original source, it’s not a first-hand account according to a tweet [63] and an interview of the source himself [64]. He claims not to have been in the area that day.

Site: **Torez**
Source: Euromaydan (Facebook)
URL: [https://www.facebook.com/EuroMaydan/photos/a.523254484437560.1073741828.523004674462541/65253661509641/?type=1&theater](https://www.facebook.com/EuroMaydan/photos/a.523254484437560.1073741828.523004674462541/65253661509641/?type=1&theater)
First known publication: 12:17 EEST

Translation:
12:17 EEST “In Torez in the direction of Snizhne drives a BUK. Information from local residents”

12:19 EEST “In Torez in the direction of Snizhne drives a BUK. **Accompanied with machines and terrorists. Information from local residents**”

12:20 EEST “In Torez towards Snizhne drives a BUK. **Accompanied with machines and terrorists. Information from local residents**”

16:32 EEST Update: According to the spokesman of the RNBO [=Andrei Lysenko from the Ukrainian National Security Council; HR] there is information the terrorist are in possession of advanced missile launching systems.

[64] [https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/interviews/2015/07/27/interview-with-wowihay/](https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/interviews/2015/07/27/interview-with-wowihay/)
Salient details:

- This message was edited a few times; first message only spoke about a Buk sighting reported by “locals”; the message edited 2 minutes later added the (probably: Vostok) convoy to the sighting; a second editing stressed clearer the “from Torez to Snizhne” tag (see also [65] and [Gr]).

- @WowihaY was a “local” who reported the Buk sighting, just 10 minutes earlier. That he was in close contact with Euromaydan Facebook can be testified by a Facebook message they posted on 17:11 EEST, showing a picture of plume photographer Aleynikov [59]. @WowihaY had these already in his possession at the time, as is known from an earlier tweet showing another Aleynikov smoke picture. He reposted the Euromaydan posting with his own conveyed picture at 18:14 EEST [67].

- To make a long story short: it is possible @WowihaY was the one informing Euromaydan about the Buk in Torez going towards Snizhne around midday. Their editing of the posting to contain the “terrorist” convoy (the Vostok vehicles) must stem from another source as @Wowihay reported this convoy separately an hour later. Of course its interesting why they decided to blend these strains of information together to construct a big terrorist convoy with Buk, which did not exist in reality but was also peddled by the SBU afterwards.

Problems:

- Unknown original source (“locals”, possibly @WowihaY), its not a first-hand account;

- After the first editing the message showed wrong information, which could be traceable to the “Khmuryi’/Motel intercepted telephonecalls (see section IV: “Problems of the intercepted telephone calls”) that stipulate the Buk would be transported along with the Vostok convoy, a convoy “with machines and terrorists” on a Ural vehicle.

Also Ukrainian politician Dmitri Tymchuk, blogger Ukraine-at-War and the SBU peddled after the crash the false story of the Buk going with this convoy, which was on its way that day to the fightings near Marinovka and passed the same route as the alleged Buk transport.

However, there is no evidence the Buk was part of the Vostok convoy (see [Ko2] and [Gr]). Nevertheless the SBU followed this storyline, by issuing a still from the truck with Buk in Zuhres together with pictures from Vostok passing Zuhres. See also [68] for details.

[66] https://www.facebook.com/EuroMaydan/photos/a.52325484437560.1073741828.523004674462541/652614801501527/?type=1&theater
[67] https://www.facebook.com/Djukov/posts/4425500693742
The invented convoy, using a still from the Zuhres video and two photos from the 17.7 Vostok movement, captured at the same site [69]. This narrative, issued by the Euromaydan Facebook posting and still propagated by the SBU and Ukraine-at-war long after the 17th, conveyed the Buk went with a “terrorist convoy”. In fact it didn't, as Micha Kobs showed in [Ko2].

Site: **Torez**
Source: “Roman”, @MOR2537
URL: [https://twitter.com/MOR2537/status/489702736766586880](https://twitter.com/MOR2537/status/489702736766586880)
First known publication: 12:26 EEST

Translation:
*Missile system was driven on a tractor + two cars for cover through Torez towards Snizhne at 12-10.*

[69] [http://rus.newsru.ua/ukraine/19jul2014/najda.html](http://rus.newsru.ua/ukraine/19jul2014/najda.html)
Salient detail:

- This tweet mentions specifics, like "two cars" and "on tractor" and the "from Torez to Snizhne" tag. The well known journalist Roman Bochkala and AP's Peter Leonard (see section III: "Problems of witness accounts by journalists") may have copied this information after the crash to claim "locals" and AP reporters saw a Buk in realtime.

Problems:

- The "two cars" tag is interesting, for as in the Zuhres vid, suspected to stem from an earlier date, 2 cars can be seen accompanying the truck with Buk. In the video showing the transport in Makeevka, published much later, there were still 5 or 6, in Donetsk, according to Necro Mancer, maybe even 10. A year after the crash WowihaY mentiones in the interview he gave [70] he also saw "two cars" in the small Buk convoy, matching the sighting of his twitter friend Roman with foreknowledge.

- Possibly this is not a first hand account; If not, it could be that this specific information has been fed to fit the imagery of the trail (tractor/trailer, two cars, as could be derived from the Zuhres video, allegedly made by the SBU). Via tweeter Roman, journalist Bochkala and The Interpreter (see section III), a large anti-Putin news agency who used Bochkala as their source, this very information was spread over the net within 2 hrs after the crash.

Site: Snizhne
Source: @HallaHupS
URL: https://twitter.com/HallaHupS/status/489709368427167744
First known publication: 12:53 EEST

Translation:
And at this time in Snizhne appeared SAM “Buk”

Salient details:

- Not mentioned in Bellingcat reports;
- No specifics given.

Problems:

- Unknown if this is a first hand account or an information relay from another source.

[70] https://www.bellingcat.com/resources/interviews/2015/07/27/interview-with-wowihay/
III. Problems of witness accounts from journalists

All accounts, salient details:
Three of reported first hand accounts of the Buk trail originate from journalists, but all anonymously. They are, next to the Paris Match picture, witness accounts from (freelance) AP and Novaya Gazeta journalists.

From all first-hand witness accounts, that is, the two mentioned above, the one from a miner in a 25 July article written by Peter Leonard (AP) and the few others, there is no visual back-up (photos, videos). The alleged need for secrecy of the Buk transport and the existence of scared witnesses with fear for reprisal comprise an implausible defense, as discussed above.

AP's Peter Leonard.

At least 4 reports, from the Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, BuzzFeed and The Independent, appeared on the same day, 22 July 2014. As it is customary in war journalism, many journalists could have been taken on a field trip together - in this particular case to Gagarin street in Torez, at the StroiDom market where the picture of a Buk was taken. Maybe journalists were even led to certain witnesses by a pro-Kiev guide and/or interviewed witnesses at the same time, leading to converging or even misinformed stories reinforcing each other.

For example, in The Guardian, BuzzFeed and The Independent articles a witness is mentioned who said loud noise of the transport was the thing that triggered the memory. The Guardian writes about a “shopkeeper in one store”, BuzzFeed says “workers in one store” and The Independent mentions “a woman working in the Sport betting shop” and a colleague she phones.

The Independent is most clear. Its witness didn’t see the origin of the noise, but “heard something heavy passing by”. Maybe the Vostok convoy was heard. Besides, a Buk on a trailer, though a very heavy transport, actually doesn’t make a lot of noise. So probably all three accounts alluding to Buk presence because of loud noise that was heard, stem from this single misinterpretation.

Its not simple to deny all witness accounts appeared in media from ideologically biased, anti-Russian (pro)western news organizations; These organizations seem psychologically and ideologically inclined to corroborate the standing anti-Russian narrative that fits their (tacit or
outspoken) editorial policy and interpret events and accounts accordingly, causing their journalist work to be biased. The only exception in this review is the 22 July article published by The Independent.

Some accounts could well have been "converged" to fit the BUK trail. Not necessarily deliberately, but that's the way how witness psychology works; one fits his memory (or other's memory) to "facts" already established or to stories that seem factual, just and fair and fit your ideology [71]. This also works for journalists. Or for pro-separatist people seeing fighter jets for that matter. Next to this, these days even courts, lawyers and police officers are aware of the ability of third parties to introduce false memories to witnesses [72].

General problems:

- It is unknown how these witness accounts came about (there are no tapes available), i.e. regarding leading questions [73], confirmation biased approach, biased interpreting of given answers, witness psychology to interpret events to a much heard or desired story [74] or incentives to bend truth for personal gains.

- Also witnesses of certain ideological affiliation routed via a pro-Kiev contact/guide could have been interviewed. Examples of this are the Business Insider interview with Pavel Aleynikov and the interview with Andrey Tarasenko in NBC News mentioned before, see section II "Problems of sightings on social media". It is not plausible the interviewers found them all on their own, its beyond assumption the journalists were made aware of their existence by certain intermediaries, presumably, in the two cases mentioned here, the WowihaY-Gerashchenko contacts.

- Furthermore, most witness accounts show information not verified, contradicting information or unreliable parts of information.

[71] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eyewitness_testimony#Misinformation_effect
[73] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eyewitness_testimony#Type_of_questioning
[74] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eyewitness_testimony#Misinformation_effect
Site: **Torez**  
Source: Roman Bochkala (journalist)  
URL: [https://www.facebook.com/bochkala/posts/771322946253430](https://www.facebook.com/bochkala/posts/771322946253430)  
First known publication: 17 july 2014, 18:07 EEST

**Salient detail:**
- Writer links Buk convoy to separatists taking in positions at UkrTelecom and Emergency Ministry in Marinovka. These separatists mentioned must be from the Vostok movement, because they drove to Marinovka that day. So also this account is probably connecting the Buk transport to the Vostok convoy on the 17th, a narrative proven untrue [Ko2]. Maybe Bochkala retrieved this information from the opaque Euromaidan Facebook posting (see section II).

**Problems:**
- Unknown original source, its not first-hand information:

  “*There is information in the news [=> second hand info; HR] about the movement of the BUK. Supposedly the passenger plane [=> posted after the event; HR] could have been shot down today from this system.*”

- Specifics are echoing the Roman Torez-tweet (see section II: “Problems of sightings on social media”):

  "*They drove the missile system on the trailer plus the two cars through Torez, in the direction of Snezhnoye, at 12:10. It looked like a BUK. The top was draped over.*"

  *Roman Bochkala, journalist, not hiding his true colours.*

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Site: **Torez**  
Source: Wall Street Journal (copied)  
First known publication: 22 july 2014

**Problems:**
- Unreliable account with contradicting information; Its not inconceivable this witness is converging his testimony to the information conveyed a week before when the SBU issued with the Luhansk video the story of a Buk “missing one missile”:  

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“He said what looked like the same truck later came back through town going the other way, without the missile.”

- Interviewer is leading the witness to verify the picture of the Buk in Torez:

“The interviewer is leading the witness to verify the picture of the Buk in Torez.

“He verified a photo of the SA-11 going through town, shot from the gas station on the main road, as what he had also seen on the day of the crash.”

The photo of the Buk transport in Torez. Also a Jeep UAZ-469 is seen (bottom-left), but there is no other account showing or reporting two Jeeps. By the way, that day also a Jeep UAZ, though a newer model (a Patriot), was reported in the Vostok convoy. That convoy drove via Torez to Marinovka [Ko2]

Site: Torez
Source: The Guardian
First known publication: 22 July 2014

Problems:
- There are no first-hand testimonies. Even third-hand accounts are put on stage in this article: The Guardian says that a shopkeeper said that his customers said some large vehicle had been a missile carrier;

- Contradicting information: according to the account 2 Jeeps were seen. There is no other account of this. The Torez Buk picture and the Makeevka video show one Jeep UAZ 469, in Vostok drove a Jeep UAZ Patriot. The Buk part of the “talk” [Were they gossiping about the
news instead of exchanging first hand sightings?!

“...In another shop further down the street, there was talk of a convoy of two jeeps and a missile launcher covered in a net driving past in the direction of the town of Snizhne.”

• Leading the witness to confirmation bias:

"I've never seen anything like it," said a middle-aged woman. She said her husband showed her a photograph of a Buk launcher afterwards and she realised that was indeed what she had seen.

• Unreliable account, biased journalism: Also in this account is said loud noise triggered the memory of the witness. But a Buk on a hauler doesn’t make a lot of noise:

"We were inside and heard a noise much louder than usual," said one shopkeeper (...).

Site: Torez
Source: Max Seddon, BuzzFeed
URL: http://www.buzzfeed.com/maxseddon/locals-say-rebels-moved-missile-launcherShortlyBefore-Mala#.explJvvjwA
First known publication: 22 july 2014

Salient detail:
• The journalist speaks of questioning customers “near” StroiDom market where the Buk photo was taken, but the shop itself was closed at the time the transport allegedly came by, because the roll-down shutters were closed. This was confirmed by [We] on the site.

Problems:
• Contradicting accounts; accounts that did not verify Buk presence are neutralized with the fear-for-reprisal argument:

“The locals all asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal from the rebels, who control the town. Many of the residents who spoke to BuzzFeed denied knowing anything about the launcher or claimed that it had never passed through the town.”

• Unreliable account, biased journalism: Noise triggered witnesses again, but actually saw nothing:

“(…) workers in one store said that the one [convoy; HR] that passed through last Thursday was much louder than ones they had seen before.”

Site: Torez
Source: The Independent
URL: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/malaysia-airlines-mh17-crash-was-a-russian-made-missile-really-parked-in-this-quiet-square-9622031.html
Salient details:

• The Independent is the only source not finding any account alluding to a Buk sighting:

  “All the Ukrainian media is lying,” said one man, Andrei Sushparnov. “We have no missiles. If we did, would the Ukrainians be bombing our cities?”

  “I saw this picture on the internet. But there was no such vehicle parked here,” said Svetlana Eivashenko, a 50-year woman with red hair. “I wish Ukraine would leave Donetsk in peace.”

  The staff at the petrol station said none of them had been on duty last Thursday. A woman who gave her name as Diana and who worked in a toy shop called Briefcase, said he had been at work last Thursday and had seen nothing, even when she stepped out for a cigarette break. “I did not see that, for sure,” she said.

  Mr Toler admitted there was no irrefutable proof the image was taken on July 17 as claimed by the Ukrainians. But he said an internet search revealed the picture did not appear before the 17th. “And it matches accounts in other videos and pictures along with audio intercepts,” he said.

  The Independent spent around 90 minutes at the location in Torez, at times drawing a number of animated locals who looked at the image and shook their heads.”

• There is that noise again, but this journalist is interpreting it in another, less loaded way than his colleagues from The Guardian and BuzzFeed:

  “The only hint of a positive answer came indirectly from a woman working in the Sport betting shop. She had also been off last Thursday but her colleague, whom she contacted on the telephone, said she had “heard something heavy passing by”.

  The colleague (a third-hand witness) also heard, but did not see. Probably she heard the Vostok movement going through town at about 13:10 EEST.

Site: Torez/Snizhne
Source: Novaya Gazeta
URL: http://www.novayagazeta.ru/inquests/69181.html
First known publication: 13 July 2015

Salient details:

• This is one of three known first hand accounts from journalists, though again anonymously:

  “On the morning of July 17th the «Buk» was sent to a position in the area of Snizhne. This was observed by locals, around 12.15 our freelance correspondent saw the Buk coming, carrying four rockets.”
**Problems:**

- The account, written down a year after the crash, displays information also known from WowihyaY and Roman tweets (Possibly they are those “locals” mentioned a few times in stories from journalists).
- There is, again, no visual back-up (photo, video) of this sighting.
- Its customary for journalists to have local, “freelance” informants in war-zones. Testimony of this “freelance correspondent” could stem from a pro-Kiev contact, e.g. a local journalist or another local Kievite informant converging his story to the desired narrative.

Of course it would add prestige to your record if you state you were there to see it, using already known information to beef up your claim. So also personal gain could give an individual local reporter or informant an incentive to invent a testimony.

Anyway, it is not advisable to trust an account of someone purportedly working “freelance” for a well respected (though fierce anti-Putin) newspaper at face value, especially when his identity is unknown, the circumstances around the emergence of his testimony are unclear and there is no visual back-up.

**Site:** Snizhne  
Source: American Press (AP), via Daily Mail  
First known publication: 17 july 2014, 17:51 EEST

**Salient detail:**

- One of few examples of first hand accounts by journalists. However it has been conveyed anonymously, so the journalist and its testimony are not publically accountable.
- Two AP reporters were known to stay in the area that time, Mtyslav Chernov and Dmitry Lovetsky. Lovetsky is the photographer who took pictures of tanks from the Oplot convoy at a gasstation in Snizhne on the 17th. He also took pictures of a Ukrainian Buk movement in Slavyansk on july the 5th.
- In an AP article on the 25th (see below), written by Peter Leonard is told the witness (– by the way, a year later Leonard said it were witnesses, plural –) heard Buk crew in strange uniforms speaking with a “distinctive Russian accent”. From this information we may assume the witness was a native speaker or very well acquainted with the language.

*The vehicles stopped in front of journalists from The Associated Press. A man wearing unfamiliar fatigues, speaking with a distinctive Russian accent, checked to make sure they weren't filming. The convoy then moved on, destination unknown in the heart of eastern Ukraine’s pro-Russia rebellion.*
Oplot tank at a gasstation in Snizhne on midday the 17th, photographed by AP’s Dmitry Lovetsky. Notice also the damage done by the tanks to the asphalt.

- Second salient observation: the source of the picture of a Buk in Snizhne, parked at Karapetyan street (see section I “Problems with images and footage”), used by Bellingcat is someone nicknamed @GirkinGirkin. In his commentary to the picture (18 July, 0:27 EEST [75] ) he also claims “Russian” crew was seen. Obviously its interesting to think about the question how this information was established, as he himself probably did not hear or see the crew himself, as he was relaying the photo from another source.

Anyway, fact is these testimonies match each other very well. The impression is there photo and witness testimonies about Russian speaking crew could well be from the same anonymous source. That is, its not plausible the Buk crew spoke around in appartments of Karapetyan street buildings – and everywhere else - to silence witnesses with their Moscovite tone in order to sustain the existence of several separate claims.

[75] https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/489884062577094656
The picture of a Buk on Karapetyan street Snizhne. The Bellingcat Buk trail source @GirkinGirkin claimed the crew was Russian. This would fit the testimony of the anonymous AP reporter who allegedly saw the Buk cruising in Snizhne and was threatened by a crew in strange uniforms and Russian accents. However, Girkin, who was a known infowarrior reporting regularly about separatist maneuvers and who copied this photo from a previous posting, was not a first hand account and at the time of his tweet he had to be unaware of this AP testimony. The question pops up how he knew about the Russian crew and who had been his source.

Problems:

• Allegedly constituting a first hand account, but first record of it is only written after the crash and therefore not in realtime when the actual event took place. This makes this account of less value, also when Chernov and Lovetsky are the sources of this information.

• Its not inconceivable large press agencies, like AP, or journalists from them, like Leonard, take their information from local sources and then claim these people are ‘freelancers’. For example, @WowihaY was also a local journalist, taking part in the Torez.info project, a local music and news station (disclaimer: this is just an example). At this time we don’t know the identity of the source and what the circumstances were in which the account came about, which renders the account of less value.

• There is no visual back-up of this alleged Buk sighting; There would have been made threats by a distinctive Russian Buk crew in strange uniforms not to take pictures, according to this witness as follows from the 25.7 Leonard article. This justification is not rational for as it would show a funny sense of being in control, knowing the Buk drove through densely populated areas in broad daylight all day.
Site: Snizhne
Source: Peter Leonard (AP)
URL: http://bigstory.ap.org/article/what-happened-day-flight-17-was-downed
First known publication: 25 july 2014

Salient detail:
- Time of this alleged first hand account is very specific (13:05 EEST), matching the official, Bellingcat endorsed timing of other social media sources constructing the trail known at that time (especially the Snizhne picture and the Snizhne video). However, this very exact time is given only 8 days after the crash, when knowledge about the alleged trail was evident.

Problems:
- Leonard is using specifics from already known information at that moment, from WowihaY (“four missiles”) and Roman (“accompanied by two cars”) tweets, with the impression added an AP journalist also saw this on the 17th. Actually its unclear which part(s) of this information stem from the alleged witness(es). Leonard starts with this:

  “AP journalists saw the Buk moving through town at 1:05 p.m.”

Then to this sentence the known information is added, but actually its not clear if this is publically known information added or from the witness itself:

  “The vehicle, which carried four 18-foot (5.5-meter) missiles, was in a convoy with two civilian cars.”

- To back his story up, Leonard released a note [76] a year after the crash.

Peter Leonard published a year after the crash a note on twitter which made the AP witness account all the more opaque. It says his colleague(s) saw the Buk on 11 AM coming from the south. According to the Bellingcat trail it should be around 1 PM, coming from the west.
• It showed a contradicting time: According to his notes a Buk was seen by his colleague (or colleagues, as he claimed now) on 11:00 instead of 13:05 EEST. Second, the note contained information about the direction the Buk was coming from. It said “coming from south”. In fact the Buk came from the west and went to the east along the Karapetyan. Eventually it took a turn to the south via the T0522. So what was this note all about?

• There is no visual back-up of this witness account, in which is said track marks of the Buk were seen on the asphalt of the street (NB: the interview is held on the very same spot):

  Valery Sakharov, a 64-year-old retired miner, who pointed out the spot where he saw the missile launcher. “The Buk was parked on Karapetyan Street at midday, but later it left; I don’t know where,” he said. “Look — it even left marks on the asphalt”.

  It was known from the Lovetsky photos of the Oplot tanks at the gasstation (see image before), the transport did severe damage to the road. If the journalist had taken photos of these Karapetyan marks, it could be investigated if the tracks there really were from a Buk or just from the Oplot tanks.

  ![Image of damaged road](https://twitter.com/Peter__Leonard/status/605701062226550784)

  Why didn’t Leonard take a picture of tank tracks on the road as pointed to by his witness?

  [76] [https://twitter.com/Peter__Leonard/status/605701062226550784](https://twitter.com/Peter__Leonard/status/605701062226550784)
• Were was it parked? Was it hiding behind flat 15A? Or was it parked near the No1. Schools? Leonard doesn't say

• Reporter is leading a witness to confirmation of a desired narrative:

  *Townspeople who spoke to AP said it [the BUK] rolled into Snizhne around lunchtime. ”On that day there was a lot of military equipment moving about in town,” recalled Tatyana Germash, a 55-year-old accountant (…)”*

Well, that was true, because the Vostok and Oplot convoys were present that day overthere. But what this isn’t, is a clear-cut account of a BUK sighting. The impression is there, but its not entirely clear she corroborates the suggestion that to all those movements also a self-propelling BUK belonged. Something like this: ”A transport of a missile carrier was reported here. Did you see it?” ”Well, I indeed saw a lot of military equipment.”

Site: **Snizhne**  
Source: BBC, John Sweeny  
First known publication: 8 september 2014

**Salient detail:**

• The interview with Putin Sweeny showed in this article and in a documentary he made for BBC “Panorama”, was edited by Dutch state newsshow “Het Journaal” to play out a story Putin was bluntly dodging tough questions about the MH17 case [77].

**Problems:**

• Unreliable witness accounts.

• The off-loading of a Buk, corresponding to already known information which emanated from the Snizhne Karapetyan picture with the offloaded Buk and the Snizhne video of a self-propelling Buk, is set on 13:30 EEST. This doesn't match the time Micha Kobs calculated of the Snizhne video, between 12:30 and 13:00 but closer to 12:30 (see section I). It is not inconceivable Sweeny interviewed a ProKiev witness who converged his testomony to a known and trusted narrative.

  *One eyewitness saw the missile-launcher roll off a low-loader at Snezhnoye, around ten miles from the crash site, at around 13:30 local time (10:30 GMT). "We just saw it being offloaded and when the BUK started its engine the exhaust smoke filled the whole town square," he said.*

• Also the story of a Russian crew - with strange uniforms and Moscovite accents, information earlier shown in the @GirkinGirkin tweet and the AP witness account – reappears.

[77] [http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2014/09/smerige_leugenaars.html](http://www.geenstijl.nl/mt/archieven/2014/09/smerige_leugenaars.html)
The witness account shows confirmation of an accusation made by Kiev regulars from the Russian army (instead of “volunteers”, as Putin claims) were operating in the area:

The eyewitness told the BBC that the crew struck him as Russian soldiers: "Well-disciplined, unlike the rebels, and not wearing the standard Ukrainian camouflage uniform sported by government and rebel troops alike." "They had pure Russian accents. They say the letter ‘g’ differently to us," he said.

In eastern Ukraine, most people speak Russian but the BUK crew did not speak Russian with a local accent. His testimony was confirmed by a second eyewitness, who added that an officer in a military jeep escorting the BUK spoke with a Muscovite accent.

The fact the information is aligned with the Kiev narrative of a “Russian invasion” and the witness speaks about “them” versus “us”, seems to make the assumption valid Sweeny interviewed proKiev nationalist sources, sources with a clear inclination or interest in matching their story to the desired narrative. The Jeep matches information known from the Torez photo.

• Also in this case we should ask how Sweeny came into contact with his witnesses.

• In an 8.9.2014 interview with “Het Journaal” about his documentary on BBC “Panorama”, in which these witness accounts were mentioned too, he himself showed some reserve with respect to the veracity of the accounts.

Site: Chervonyi Zhovten (Red October)
Source: Novaya Gazeta
URL: http://www.interpretermag.com/there-was-no-buk-in-our-field/
First known publication: 10 June 2015

Salient detail:
• Off the record the fear-for-reprisal justification is conveyed again:

  Kanygin: Then I had better turn off the camera.  
  I turned it off.  
  Nikolai: I never saw once how the Ukrainian planes attacked. 
  Nikolai Ivanovich continued confidently.  
  Kanygin: By the DNR fighters? 
  Nikolai: Well, sure. But that shot [at the Boeing] was from the ground or the air, I can’t tell you. But I didn’t see a second plane. Someone said there was one, but I didn’t see it. 
  Kanygin: Could you say the same thing on camera? 
  Nikolai: Will I be arrested tomorrow? 
  Kanygin: For what? 
  Nikolai: For the fact that I live on such a territory.
Problems:

• Unreliable and contradicting witness accounts. A witness, living within a kilometer from the alleged launchsite (Pervomaiskoye), answers this:

"No! At first I heard a shot, but where it was made from — whether from the ground or another plane — I don’t know."

A Buk fired won’t go hardly noticed from this distance to the launch.

Site: Grabovo

Source: Novaya Gazeta (video witness)

URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eRS64s4n-o4

First known publication: 25 June 2015

Salient detail:

• Novaya Gazeta is the only news organisation with a clear video of a first hand witness testimony, in this case from a boy of 17 who allegedly saw the firing of a missile.

Novaya Gazeta witness Anatoliy at Grabovo claiming he saw people falling out of the plane at 10 km height.

Problems:

• Unreliable witness account. Witness says for example:

"People began to fall out [of the plane], and the shell ripped. Then it broke into three pieces."

This begs the question how someone can see bodies falling out of a plane that still is located at some 10 kilometer height, even before the plane desintegrated.
“It came somewhere from there (points to the south-east–PK). I remember exactly, the ball flew from there, and the plane popped out from there somewhere.”

Of course, southeast from Grabovo the city of Snizhne is located. But then again, this method of locating a launchsite seems to be a bit crude. In fact he also could have pointed to the Velyka Shyshivka/Zaroshchenskoye area, which is only a small angle away when pointing with a finger somewhere from a field near Grabovo. (In this area Ukrainian Buks could have been positioned within firing range from MH17).

Opposition newspaper Novaya Gazeta prematurely taking on Russian guilt for the downing of MH17, writing: “Holland, please forgive us!” on a photo showing the repatriation of victims’ bodies.
IV. Problems of intercepted telephone calls

Designation: The Bezler confession taps
Source: SBU
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5E8kDo2n6g (full version including Kozytsin part)
In English: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbyZYgSXdyw
First known publication: 17 July 2014, 22:11 EEST (full version; a version without the Kozytsin conversation was issued at 21:41 EEST).

Salient details:
• One of the two corner stones of the “fatal mistake narrative”, which says the separatists shot down MH17 by mistake, thinking it was a Ukrainian freighter plane.

• The other cornerstone is the deliberate misinterpretation of the deletion of a Vk.com Strelkov_info message in which was reported “An AN-26 has been shot down near the mine Progress (…) We said, don’t fly in our sky!” The misrepresentation that commander-in-chief Igor Strelkov had deleted an implicit confession of his mistake in order to conceal evidence, was spread through the net within moments the admins of this site withdrew the message.
• This story, see [78] and [Ko2] for details, was backed-up by these confession taps, which the SBU released just a few hours later.

Problems:
• The video shows a manipulated information package, constructed by splicing and editing parts from intercepted calls to play out a story with the impression the separatist shot down MH17 by mistake and justified this when they realized they had done so.

• Actually, the parts which convey information about the downing of a plane, fit real events of the 16th. As these parts are glued to parts in which separatists are finding debris and bodies from the MH17 crash one day later, the impression is layed down both had something to do with each other. See also [79] and [80].

• Technical evaluation also shows this manipulation [81]. In the report by Micha Kobs “Haunt the Buk” [Ko2, p. 7-11] more details of this fraudulent narrative are given.

Designation: The Khmuryi/Motel taps
Source: SBU
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVAOTWPmMM4
Transcriptions in English: http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=9bc_1405702620
First known publication: 18 July 2014

Salient detail:
• Information from these intercepted calls, released a day after the crash, seemed to have run in reports from Euromaydan (17 July, 12:17 EEST see section II), Ukrainian politician Dmitri Tymchuk (17 July, 20:19 EEST [82]), blogger Ukraine-at-war (17 July [83]) and the SBU [19 July, 84]. All four suggested the Buk was transported in the Vostok convoy, as second-in-command of the DNR forces Khmuryi allegedly had ordered, according to these intercepts [Ko2].

[78] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2015/06/12/myth-of-the-fatal-mistake-how-the-mh17-infowar-started/
[79] https://hectorreban.wordpress.com/2015/10/24/writing-a-crime-play-and-showing-sbu-mh17-taps-are-frauds/
[81] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T34AB6CImTE
[82] https://www.facebook.com/dmitry.tymchuk/posts/529275897201070
[84] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWtH8AA42Fc from min. 2:40
Most salient is of course that the Euromaydan posting was edited in realtime – at about midday on the 17th – to convey this message. Both Euromaydan and Tymchuk posted an old video from Vostok before the plane crashed to beef up the presence of separatist maneuvers. Maybe they mistakenly blended two strains of information together to get one big “terrorist convoy” transporting a Buk. Nonetheless it’s remarkable the SBU (and their aid Ukraine-at-war as well) kept peddling this story long time after the 17th.

Deputy commander of the DNR forces “Khmuryi” orders the Buk to go with the Vostok convoy after a call to Vostok leader Sanych. However, on the 17th this convoy was already on its way to Marinovka at the time he issued an order to a minion to organize the transport. It could be these intercepts, very probably originating from an earlier date, were used as a focal point to spread rumours about a “big terrorist convoy” on the 17th, having a Buk in their midst.

Problems:

- Contents of the intercepted calls don’t make a consistent story together [Ko2, p. 12-19].

- Dating and timing seem to be flawed. When comparing pieces of information given in the taps with events known from other sources (news, social media reports) it is not possible to show this information corresponds to events from the morning of the 17th.

For example, Khmuryi mentions his group downed 2 planes the day before (Marinovka area) and two or “the second” that same day, the 17th. Researching records of lost armour, there are no two days in a row reported on which 2 planes each were downed by the separatists. When Khmuryi meant the day before yesterday instead of “yesterday”, then 14 July and 16 July show up as possibility. On both these days at least 2 planes were downed according to reports from separatists.

Then the intercepts would have recorded the call after the late afternoon on the 16th, when a
SU-25M was downed at Gregorievka at 16:55 EEST. Anyway, on the morning on the 17th – as the intercepts were timestamped by the SBU – no 2 planes were downed before the time when the conversations allegedly took place (9 AM). There weren't even reported Ukrainian sorties in the morning of the 17th!

- Timing of the intercepts is flawed as Khmuryi seems to be calling at the same time (9:08 EEST) from two different places (Marinovka and Donetsk).
- Technical evaluation reveals manipulation [Ko2, p. 12-19].

Designation: The “Birdie comes to you” taps
Source: SBU
URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emfVpkBKoow
First known publication: 25 July 2014

Salient detail:
- Presumably published to bolster the fatal mistake narrative with subcommander Bezler as coordinator of the shooting.

Problems:
- According to the story played out here a spotter reported to subcommander Bezler that an airplane was on its way. Bezler then reported this allegedly down through the chain of command to the Buk crew. The only marker testifying this spotting would have had something to do with a wrong assessment concerning the 17 July events is that the video repeats a few times the call was intercepted 2 minutes before the crash, suggesting the plane actually seen was MH17. This would obviously corroborate the “fatal mistake narrative”.

However, we do not know if this really is the time captured, even more so when we review all the evidence handed over to the public by this source. An explanation might be this
spotting originates from the 16th and is related to the 16 July downing of a SU-25 “behind Enakievo”, as reported in the Bezler confession taps.

- This spotter would obviously have mixed up a freighter plane cruising at an altitude of 5 km and a speed of 450 km/h with a civilian plane at an altitude of 10 km, with a speed of 950 km/h. The fact that this narrative is founded on the tacit assumption the DNR would use a very incompetent spotter to rely their use of a high-potential war asset on, renders this story quite implausible.

- All the more if we take into account MH17 was hit – as is assumed from its last contact – at 16:20:03 EEST. The missile must have been flying 33 seconds to bridge the 26 km distance. Therefore launch was ignited at 16:19:30. This would mean the time for a decision and launch sequence through the chain of command was limited to 1 to 1:30 minutes at the most.

To decide a missile launch in this amount of time based on vague information (spotter says: “I can't see behind the clouds. Too high.”) and knowledge of civilian planes flying over on a regular basis, seems too irrational to take serious.

Designation: The Get-away taps  
Source: JIT (publishing agency), SBU (intercepting agency)  
URL: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olQNpTxSnTo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olQNpTxSnTo) (from 7:20, Russian spoken with English subtitles)  
First known publication: 30 March 2015

Salient details:

- These intercepted calls have been published in the “call for witnesses” video made by the JIT, asking people only 9 months after the crash to come forward with testimonies confirming the standard fatal mistake narrative.

These calls would show troops in disarray after the downing, trying to get the murderweapon out of the area to their Russian accomplices, even losing track of it! The intercepts show phrases like “yesterday there was a mess”, “... a disaster you know...” and “people were phoning in all the time” to convey a story of panic.

- This story, allegedly tapped on the morning of the 18th, would fit the narrative of the Luhansk video, the only account existing as open source of a fleeing Buk allegedly on its way to the Russian border on the same morning.

- JIT chief Fred Westerbeke called these intercepts “authentic” and investigated “through and through”. While the people displayed in these calls probably are authentic voices from authentic DNR soldiers, this statement doesn't mention anything about alleged date and time reported by the SBU. (Moreover, one would expect the JIT to do some content analysis as well to sort out suggestion and interpretation from factual events!)
Intercepts shown in the 30 March 2015 “Call for witnesses” video, issued by the JIT. It seems separatists even lost track of “the car”.

Problems:

• The transscripts of the intercepted calls can not themselves reveal any hard information a Buk transport was retoured to Russia. The only phrase alluding to a vehicle brought back to Russia is person B saying “The car is in Russia”, allegedly transported on a “lowboy” (as translated from Russian). However, we cannot verify this “car” is in fact a Buk transport.

• An important marker returning is the nickname of the alleged leader of the Buk transport, as retrieved from the Khmuryi/Motel taps, someone called “Bibliothekar”. This man allegedly was involved in bringing “the car” to a desired site. This way start and finish of the trail – Donetsk and Russia (via Luhansk) - are connected. However, there are doubts about the veracity of the dating of the Khmuryi/Motel taps and about the Luhansk video as well. If these videos have been misdated, and it seems they have been, then the story of the 18.7 flight to Russia led by Bibliothekar loses all its support.

• Russia would even send a new “vehicle” under the wings of Bibliothekar, according to these intercepts (see min. 9:08). That would be really news. The SBU allegedly saw them moving 4 units out of the Donbass in the night of the 17/18th, but in the morning the Russians would have decided already to bring in a brand new one. Or they meant a new “lowboy”, but then again, we know after the 17th the famous red low-loader was in operation business-as-usual in the Donbass at least until August [note]. Anyway, there are as many interpretations as there are flavours.

• The only hard fact pointing to a valid degree of suspicion is the alleged date and time of the intercepts, namely in the early morning of the 18th. This serves as a potential focal point to construct suggestive information around, like was done in the “Birdie” video. Then looking at the contents of these intercepts it is understandable the anti-Russian public is interpreting the events as causally related to the MH17 crash and the official narrative of a Buk flight to Russia. But even without uncertainty about the dating, which is obviously there
as other intercepts like the Bezler confession tapes seem to have been misdated by the SBU as well, the story played out here needn’t have anything to do with MH17.

Second in command Khmuryi ordered the Buk to go with Vostok. At 9:54 EEST he gives a minion instructions how to proceed. At that time Vostok was already on its way as can be calculated by shadowcasting analysis performed to a video from Vostok made in Makeevka that day [Ko2]. “Bibliothekar”, also mentioned in the Get-away taps, was waiting to move “you know what is there”, a phrase everyone can interpret as (s)he pleases.

- Conclusion should be at this time that these intercepts do not contain evidence of the purported course of events as interpretation is routed to a standing narrative by using the inclination of people to fit suggestive pieces of information to a known collection of data. Content and technical analysis of the taps could be done more thoroughly, but will imho only lead to finding more irregularities.