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Russia

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Introduction

THE DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW) is new to Russia. In Soviet times, there was no planned destruction of surplus weapons in the Soviet Army or other militarised state agencies. During the Cold War, with the Soviet political and military leadership preparing for global war and dwelling on the Red Army's catastrophic shortage of weapons early in World War II, it seemed inconceivable for weapons of any kind to be redundant.

The concept of 'weapons disposal' as a separate process emerged in the USSR in the late 1980s. It was concerned first of all with the destruction of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery within the framework of the START Treaty.¹ Since 1991, the list of weapons eligible for disposal has been expanded. The acknowledgement that certain weapons were redundant and required disposal became possible as a result of several developments. These included: the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the formation of the Russian Armed Forces, the withdrawal of the Soviet and Russian troops from Eastern Europe, and the diminution of the threat of global conflict. In the post-Soviet era, deep cuts in military expenditure were followed by a reduction of Russia's huge stockpiles of weapons. This chapter surveys the disposal of surplus SALW in Russia from the mid-1990s to the present.

Stocks and determination of surplus

Government agencies holding SALW

In addition to the Armed Forces, the Russian Federal Law on Arms² allows the militarised formations of the following Government agencies and institutions to possess small combat arms:

- The Interior Ministry (MoI), including its Interior Troops numbering 151,000 servicemen;³
- The Ministry of Justice;
- The Federal Security Service (militarised formations with up to 4,000 personnel⁴);
- The Federal Border Service (about 140,000⁵);
- The Foreign Intelligence Service;

¹ Interview with an official from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russia, 24 December 2002.

² Federal Law of the Russian Federation 'On Arms', adopted by the State Duma on 13 November 2003.

³ The Military Balance 2001/2002. London, IISS, 2001.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ In March 2003 merged with FSB. See Zapodnitskaya, E, 'Silovoi priem', Kommerant, 12 March 2003.

- The Federal Bodyguard Service (10,000–30,000⁶);
- The Federal Service for Special Construction with its own militarised formations for special construction and road construction, the maintenance of communication lines for purposes of defence and national security;
- The Service for Special Facilities under the Russian President;
- The Federal Tax Police Service;⁷
- The State Customs Committee;
- Prosecutors' offices;
- Federal Railway Troops that are in charge of maintenance of the railways in the interests of the Armed Forces, as well as the construction of new lines and the repair and expansion of the current network. Out of its 70,000-strong personnel 57,000 are armed servicemen;⁸
- Civil defence troops that are designed for assistance to the civilian population in emergencies, for rescue and reconstruction operations. Since 1991 they have fallen under the Ministry for Civil Defence, Emergency Situations and the Elimination of Consequences of Natural Calamities;
- The Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information (FAPSI) (54,000 armed servicemen⁹);
- The State Courier Service of the Russian Government.

In addition to the above, the Law on Arms gives a number of other Government institutions the right to borrow combat small arms from MoI bodies for performing prescribed security functions. These are:

- The Central Bank of Russia (Bank of Russia);
- The Savings Bank of Russia (Sberbank);
- The main centre for special communications of the Ministry of Communications;
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA);
- Other legal entities with special chartered tasks, except private security agencies.

Civilian possession

The Russian Law on Arms allows only the Government militarised agencies listed in it to acquire small combat arms, ie small arms manufactured or modified according to military specifications for combat use. All other legal entities, government or private, with appropriate chartered objectives have the right to acquire service arms, and citizens of the Russian Federation may acquire civilian arms. Unlike combat arms, civilian and service weapons:

- Have certain restrictions in size;
- Have restrictions in the magazine size (no more than 10 cartridges);
- Must be incapable of automatic fire;
- Have ammunition of limited power.

Defining SALW surplus stocks

Russia does not have one specific government body that is responsible for defining and disposing of surplus SALW stocks. The Soviet Union had a centralised system of managing SALW flows and stocks under which all small arms and light weapons were controlled by the MoD, which also assigned weapons to Government bodies that were allowed by law to use arms for service purposes.

⁶ The Military Balance 2001/2002. London, IISS, 2001.

⁷ In March 2003 merged with FSB. See Zapodnitskaya, E, 'Silovoi priem', Kommerant, 12 March 2003.

⁸ 'On the Railway Troops of the Russian Federation', Decree of the Russian President no 1302, 26 December 1995, <www.fsgv.ru>

⁹ Disbanded in March 2003. Personnel and facilities are distributed between MoD and FSB. See Zapodnitskaya, E, 'Silovoi priem', Kommerant, 12 March 2003.

Nowadays the militarised formations that are armed with SALW deal directly with surplus SALW definition and disposal questions. Within the Armed Forces, the General Staff is responsible for these matters. Other federal militarised agencies – the MoI, the Border Service and special services – have set up their own systems to manage the transportation, stocks and disposal of their SALW.

The Main Organisational Mobilisation Department (GOMU) of the General Staff determines the required amount of arms and surplus in the Russian Armed Forces on the basis of information about SALW stocks at arsenals and Army units and depending on mobilisation deployment plans.¹⁰ It decides on the amount of weaponry necessary for the existing units of the Armed Forces, depending on their staffing (weapons in active service) and also on the size of reserves for mobilisation deployment depending on existing plans (weapons in reserve). Arms are regarded as surplus if they are:

- Excess to the amount required for regular supplies of existing formations of the Armed Forces and reserves for mobilisation deployment;
- Worn out, ie requiring repairs that would cost 70 percent of their value.

The chief of the General Staff issues orders on the disposal of surplus SALW on the basis of these GOMU assessments.¹¹

A comparable system of determining surplus SALW exists at the MoI. The ministry is responsible for both SALW stocks in its own formations and the combat weapons used for service purposes by other federal bodies: the Ministry of Emergencies, the Federal Postal Service etc.¹² Appropriate MoI bodies also determine the amount of weaponry required for the staff and reserves for mobilisation deployment. Currently, the MoI does not have a great surplus of SALW, as during the past few years the ministry's staff has been steadily growing. Therefore mainly old arms unfit for further use have been declared surplus.¹³

Quantities of SALW and ammunition categorised as surplus

According to current estimates, the Russian Armed Forces are planning to decommission one million pieces of small arms between 2002 to 2005.¹⁴ In addition, there are 140 million cartridges for foreign-made small arms¹⁵ in Army stocks assigned for disposal.

The amount of SALW deemed surplus by other Russian militarised services is not known, but it is probably insignificant, because unlike the Armed Forces the other militarised formations do not have big stocks of SALW. Besides, far from being radically cut back, their personnel is in most cases being increased.

Reasons for surplus

Government procurement of SALW and other weaponry has dwindled to almost nothing in Russia. Therefore there are no modern arms coming into the stockpile and replacing older models. Under these conditions, when SALW are declared surplus, it is for the following reasons:

- As a result of cut-backs in personnel. From 1992 to August 2003 the personnel of the Russian Armed Forces was cut down from 2.75 million to 1.16 million persons. Current plans would further reduce that number to 1 million by 2005.¹⁶
- As a result of changes in mobilisation plans, stemming primarily from the population decline and the resulting decline in the number of conscripts. While at the time of

¹⁰ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002; Interview with an official from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russia, 24 December 2002.

¹¹ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

¹² Interview with an official from the MoI of Russia, 23 December 2002.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Egorov, I, Mikhailov, V, 'Prodaite patrony', Gazeta, 30 May 2002.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ 'Aktualnye zadachi razvitiya Vooruzhennykh Sil Rossiyskoy Federatzii', Krasnaya Zvezda, 11 October 2003.

disintegration of the USSR in 1991, Russia had a population of about 148 million, in 2001 it had contracted to 144.8 million.¹⁷ Today, the share of conscripts in the Armed Forces is 80–85 percent of enlisted personnel. Between 2005 and 2011, the number of potential conscripts is expected to plummet by 40 percent, reducing the share of conscripts in the Armed Forces to 50 percent.¹⁸ The changes in mobilisation plans and the reduction of conscription may also be related to changes in military doctrine. The declining probability of a global war and the appearance of new threats that do not require the deployment of massive armies are changing Russia's military posture.

- Through attrition. Weapons wear out, break down or are degraded by age (as in the case of explosives). Ammunition that is nearing or past its expiry date may be boosting the surplus.

In an overwhelming majority of cases, the types of SALW that are currently defined by the General Staff as surplus are obsolete arms dating back to the First and Second World Wars, and have already been decommissioned by the Russian Armed Forces. Nonetheless, many must still be in good working order, and these could be used for legitimate or illegitimate purposes if sold or given away.

Policies

Export of SALW and ammunition

Russian legislation does not have separate export procedures for SALW. The general legislation on arms and military hardware exports also applies to SALW. It comprises the following legal acts:

- The 1995 federal law On Government Regulation of Foreign Trade Activities;
- The 1996 federal law On Arms;
- The 1998 federal law On the Russian Federation's Military-Technical Co-operation with Foreign States;
- The 1999 federal law On Export Control;
- The 2000 presidential decree no 1953 Issues of the Military-Technical Co-operation of the Russian Federation with Foreign States;
- The statute On the Transit of Armaments, Military Hardware and Military Property across the Territory of the Russian Federation approved by a Government resolution in 2000.

The 1998 federal law On the Russian Federation's Military-Technical Co-operation with Foreign States is the legal foundation for all Russian arms exports. Under this law, Government authorisation is required for all transfers of armaments and military hardware. This control is implemented by a system of permits. When the Government approves an intended transaction, it issues a licence for the right to engage in foreign trade with military-purpose goods or for the importation and exportation of such products. Only state-controlled designers and manufacturers of military-purpose goods and Government mediators have the right to deliver such goods to foreign countries.

The Government mediators are in fact specialised federal companies fully owned by the state and established by presidential decree. After the latest reform in military-technical co-operation (MTC)¹⁹ of November 2000, there is only one Government agent for the arms trade – *Rosoboronexport*. Designers and manufacturers of arms and military hardware have the right to foreign trade operations if no less than 51 percent of their shares are federal property, and Russian legal entities or individuals own the rest. Russian private individuals are not allowed to engage in MTC.

¹⁷ Demographic Yearbook. Moscow, Goskomstat of Russia, 2002.

¹⁸ Statement by GOMU Chief General-Colonel Vladislav Putilin, 18 April 2002. Cited in *Nezavisimoe voennoe bozrenie*, 26 April 2002.

¹⁹ The Russian *voennoe-tehnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo (VTS)*, denotes sales and transfers of technology, arms and expertise.

Under law the official arms export policy is formulated by the president. He also defines lists of armaments permitted for exportation and the geography of their deliveries in the form of two lists:

- A list of military-purpose goods permitted for transfer to foreign customers (list no 1);
- A list of states to which the transfer of military-purpose goods named in the first list is permitted (list no 2).

The president also has the right to limit or expand by decree both lists with due respect for UN restrictions and Russia's other international commitments.

The Cabinet carries out the official policy by issuing, within the limits of its powers, regulatory acts on designing, manufacturing and exporting military-purpose goods, and setting the domestic and foreign trade prices of such goods.

The Russian Federation Committee for Military-Technical Co-operation with Foreign States (CMTC) was set up to implement the decisions of the President and Government and also to regulate and control arms exports. The purpose was to make the committee the central co-ordinating agency in arms exports, a link between the President, federal executive bodies and parties to MTC. The CMTC:

- Submits proposals to the President on whether to give to the relevant parties the right to independent foreign trade operations or whether to strip them of this right;
- Issues licences for exports/imports of military-purpose goods;
- Controls the operations of *Rosoboronexport* and other Russian arms exporters;
- Accepts official orders for arms deliveries from foreign customers and distributes them among Russian companies.

Formally, the committee is subordinate to the MoD, and its chairman holds the post of Deputy Defence Minister. However, under Statute the President oversees the CMTC's operations, while the Cabinet co-ordinates them. The Defence Minister commands the CMTC only in a very limited number of cases.

To export their goods, designers and manufacturers of arms and military hardware have to obtain a permit for foreign trade operations concerning military-purpose goods. The procedure is determined by a respective statute issued with the presidential decree Issues of the Military-Technical Co-operation of the Russian Federation with Foreign States. After the Government decides to give a company such a permit, CMTC includes the company in the register of enterprises with permission for foreign trade operations with military-purpose goods.

Currently only two SALW designers and manufacturers have the right to independent foreign trade transactions with military-purpose goods. These are the Tula-based Instrument Building Design Bureau, which manufactures portable anti-tank systems (permit issued on 19 January 2000 for 5 years)²⁰, and the Kolomna Machine-Building Design Bureau, which makes man-portable air-defence weapons, MANPADs (permit issued on 28 December 1999).²¹ All other manufacturers export their output through *Rosoboronexport*, which is responsible for about 90 percent of all Russian arms exports.

Deliveries of armaments and military hardware to foreign customers are regulated by the following legal documents, approved in keeping with Presidential Decree no 1953:

- The statute on the procedure for military-technical co-operation with foreign states;
- The rules for the licensing of imports and exports of military-purpose goods that require such a licence;
- The rules for handling official applications from foreign customers and co-ordinating draft decisions on deliveries of military-purpose goods.

²⁰ INFO-TASS electronic database, 'Vega' base, 19 January 2000.

²¹ INFO-TASS electronic database, 'Vega' base, 28 December 1999.

Military-purpose goods are exported under licences issued by CMTC. The committee is authorised to decide on arms exports if these comply with List nos 1 (eligible products) and 2 (eligible countries). In all other cases, exports of military-purpose goods require two decisions: one by the president and one by the Government. The Government specifies how to implement the presidential decision. If these two bodies decide to authorise the transfer, the CMTC will issue an export licence. However, a licence for SALW exports is not issued if the importer fails to produce the following documents:

- A permit (licence) for the specific deal issued by an authorised Government agency of the country where the company ordering Russian SALW is registered;
- The original end user certificate issued by an authorised Government agency and containing the commitment of the recipient country to use the imported SALW only for its own needs and to prevent their re-exportation or transfer to a third country without Russia's consent.

All arms exports must also be reviewed by federal executive bodies, namely:

- The MFA;
- The Ministry of Defence (MoD);
- The General Staff;
- The Ministry of Finance (if deliveries involve federal budget money);
- The Ministry for Property Relations (if deliveries are made from the stocks of federal executive bodies).

If the exportation of military goods requires a presidential decision, the list of federal agencies must also be reviewed by:

- The Foreign Intelligence Service;
- The Federal Security Service;
- The State Technical Commission under the president;
- The Ministry of Justice (if the transfer involves results of military-purpose research and development).

These agencies do have a veto, but once a decision on arms exports reaches the CMTC or the President, it means that the company has managed to settle all disagreements with the reviewing bodies.

Export licences are issued for a period that the Government considers adequate for the fulfilment of contractual obligations.

An analysis of the pattern of decision-making on Russian arms exports shows that the Government exercises total control over the operations of arms exporters through a large number of controlling bodies and barriers. The reform of the Russian arms export system at the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001 was an attempt to establish presidential control. When the CMTC was formed and given broad powers, the MoD lost most of its control over arms exports.

On the one hand, such strict export controls reduce the risk of unauthorised arms exports and enable the Government to observe international non-proliferation commitments effectively. It also helps to prevent the loss of Government revenue from sources such as state-owned weapons sales or taxes on arms exports. About 30 percent of the returns from such sales are supposed to go to federal and regional coffers in the form of taxes.

On the other hand, as all decision-making on arms exports is concentrated at the presidential administration, public control is limited in this domain. Under the current system of MTC, the Russian parliament has been left out of all control mechanisms. All key legal acts determining the Russian arms export system are in fact presidential decrees signed without consulting the parliament. In Russia, all existing arms export companies are 100 percent state owned. Arms exporters are not accountable for their operations to the parliament or public, neither in the form of

Government reports nor company reports. There are no legal provisions that oblige the state to report on their arms trade to its own citizens.

Furthermore, the large number of controlling agencies and the vagueness of criteria for decision-making named in the legislation on MTC stand in the way of transparency and accountability. This can result in corruption.

Storage of SALW and ammunition

Russia has no uniform procedure for the storage, transport, management or disposal of Government stocks of SALW. Under the federal law 'On Arms', the Government determines the procedure for handling SALW stocks. In 1997, the Government adopted the Rules of Circulation of Combat Small Arms and Other Weapons, Ammunition and Cartridges for Them as well as Side Arms at Government Militarised Organisations.²² However, the rules are more a general interpretation of the law than detailed practical instructions. Under them the procedure of storing, managing, transporting and disposing of small arms is determined by regulatory legal acts of Government militarised institutions. The rules contain only a general framework for composing such legal acts. Hence every Government institution possessing small arms has its own arms storage, accounting, transportation and disposal instructions.

Structures and practices

Russia does not have a centralised system for the disposal of surplus SALW. Each Government agency that is legally entitled to use SALW for service purposes disposes of the surplus itself. The MoI scraps the surplus SALW of the federal agencies that borrow arms from the ministry, that is to say the Ministry of Emergencies, the Federal Postal Service etc.

In the Armed Forces, the Chief Rocket and Artillery Department of the MoD is responsible for the disposal of surplus SALW. For all practical purposes, this means the destruction of redundant SALW and their ammunition. There was no purposeful destruction of such surpluses in the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union or Russia until 1994. Disposal as a separate process began in 1994, but no funds were assigned for this purpose from the national budget. Apparently it was believed that the expenses of SALW disposal should be covered by proceeds from the sale of recycled materials.

Since 2002 spending on arms disposal including SALW has been included in the Government defence order. In 2002, 32 million rubles (about US\$1 million) were assigned from state coffers to SALW disposal. In 2003, 28 million rubles (about \$900,000) are to be spent from the budget and also 3 million rubles (about \$100,000) from non-budget sources (returns from sales of disposal products).²³ Related products and spare parts such as ammunition magazines, gun sights, as well as repair and maintenance kits are usually not sold, but destroyed together with the weapons.

It is a general practice of the MoD to hold tenders for conventional arms disposal contracts. A disposal contract may go to a private company having a Government licence for such operations or to a Government-owned facility. However, this procedure does not apply to SALW for the following reasons:

- SALW disposal is unprofitable, therefore private companies are not interested in it. In the 1990s, futile attempts were made to apply a package principle when orders for the disposal of SALW were put up in a tender together with the disposal of other, more profitable types of armaments²⁴.

²² Adopted by the Russian Government Decision no 1314 on 15 December 1997.

²³ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

²⁴ Ibid.

- The MoD fears that involving private companies in the disposal of SALW will lead to a loss of control, and result in SALW assigned for disposal to continue to be trafficked illegally.

Hence surplus SALW from the stocks of the Armed Forces are scrapped at military arsenals or industrial facilities belonging to the MoD. First, all wooden and plastic parts are separated from the weapon. The remains are melted until the metal becomes soft and are then pressed into a metal bar.

SALW exports

In general the Russian MoD can either export its surplus weaponry either through the Government arms mediator (*Rosoboronexport*) or sell the surplus small arms in Russia on condition that they are modified for either civilian or service use. However, the success of such programmes is hindered by the fact that most of the small arms classified as surplus are obsolete First and Second World War models such as *Mosin* rifles, *Shpagin* sub-machine-guns, and *Maxim* and *Degtyaryov* machine-guns.

This explains why there is no demand in the international market for the surplus SALW of the Russian Armed Forces. Since the beginning of the planned disposal of surplus SALW, there have been no recorded cases of their being sold to foreign buyers.²⁵ On the other hand, *Rosoboronexport*, like one of its predecessors, *Promexport*,²⁶ is exporting arms from the stocks of the Armed Forces, including SALW. Here we can name the delivery in October–November 2001 of up to 100 *Malyutka* (AT-Sager) and *Fagot* (AT-4 Spigot) anti-tank missile systems to the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan²⁷ and the 2002 contract with Malaysia for the delivery of *Igla-9K39* (SA-18) MANPADs worth US\$48 million.²⁸ However, such weaponry is still in use in the Russian Armed Forces and belongs rather to stocks than surplus. Returns from such export deals are channelled to the MoD budget after the payment of due taxes and commission fees to the state intermediary.

The past few years have seen several transfers of small arms from the stocks of the Armed Forces on the domestic market. At the beginning of the second military campaign in Chechnya in 1999, the MoD transferred 4,000 SKS combat carbines from its stocks to militia units in Dagestan.²⁹ Since the mid-1990s the MoD has also been transferring a certain amount of SKS carbines from its stocks to Vyatskiye Polyany Molot machine-building factory to be converted into OP-SKS hunting carbines and later sold on the domestic market. The conversion involves the removal of the bayonet, the varnishing of the wooden parts and the addition of a protective layer to the metal parts of the weapon.³⁰ However, the sales of these arms on the domestic market are insignificant because the market is saturated with other Russian-made state-of-the-art hunting weapons.³¹ The profits are divided between the ministry and the factory.

SALW destruction

There are various figures available on the amount of surplus SALW destroyed in the Russian Armed Forces in the last years. **Table 1** shows the amount of scrapped SALW reported by Government officials during the study.

²⁵ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

²⁶ *Rosoboronexport* was created in November 2000 by merging two Russian state arms trade intermediary companies, *Rosvoorouzhenie* and *Promexport*.

²⁷ 'Lend-lease of Sergeya Ivanova', *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 4 December 2001.

²⁸ *Interfax-AVN*, 10 April 2002.

²⁹ Sukhov, I, 'Brigadnyi podryad', *Vremya novostey*, 7 August 2000.

³⁰ Ponomarev, Y, 'SKS obratzsa 2000 goda', *Kalashnikov. Oruzhie, boepripasy, snaryazheniy Monthly*, no 4, 2000.

³¹ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

Table 1: Disposal of surplus SALW in the Russian Armed Forces

Years	Number of arms destroyed, pieces ³²
1994–1999	450,000 SALW
2000	No disposal of SALW
2001	No disposal of SALW
2002 (planned)	560,000 SALW, as well as 115 million SALW rounds and hand grenades

However, the information Russia reported on surplus SALW disposal at the UN Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in 2001 differs from the figures in the table. The Russian speaker at the conference said that between 1998 and 2001 the Russian MoD had disposed of 421,021 pieces of small arms from its surplus arsenals, including 44,000 pieces in 2000–2001.³³

Comparing the data from these two sources we can see that the figures for 1994–2001 generally coincide. The main question concerns the disposal of surplus SALW in 2000–2001. Such differences in the data can be explained by the absence of unified statistics within the Government.

SALW storage

There is no accurate information about the amount of surplus SALW remaining at warehouses of the Armed Forces. It is known that of the one million surplus SALW assigned for disposal, 560,000 were to be destroyed in 2002. It is not known whether this has been done. If so, then 440,000 pieces remain in storage. Of course there may be other surplus stocks of SALW which have not been assigned for destruction.

The amount of surplus SALW belonging to the MoI is probably insignificant and stored for a shorter time because the ministry revises its stocks and disposes of surplus arms more often than the Armed Forces, ie once a year.

Confiscated or seized weapons

Surplus service arms belonging to the MoI and assigned for disposal, and surplus SALW of other Government agencies, are accumulated at city and district branches of the MoI. The MoI and local authorities also scrap SALW collected or confiscated from civilians. These are stored at police departments until the completion of formalities. Once it is established that they are not required as evidence in legal prosecutions, the arms are taken to city or district warehouses belonging to the MoI for future disposal³⁴. Confiscated weapons that constitute legal evidence are stored at police precincts until the closure of the respective criminal cases. The future of the arms is determined in the court ruling on each respective case. After that, confiscated weapons assigned for destruction are also sent to Interior Department warehouses.³⁵

Surplus arms at MoI warehouses, including collected and confiscated weapons, are destroyed on the order of the MoI once a year.³⁶ Unlike the Armed Forces, the MoI uses smelting furnaces to dispose of surplus arms. The identification numbers of the SALW are entered in the MoI database. The ministry does not get any separate funds from state coffers for surplus arms disposal and covers the expenses by selling recycled materials.

In 2000–2001, the Russian MoI recovered 2,482 pieces of SALW from illegal traffic, and of those 1,142 pieces were destroyed.³⁷

³² Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002; Interview with an official from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russia, 24 December 2002.

³³ Statement by S A Ordzhonokidze, the Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation, at the UN Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9–20 July 2001, <www.un.org>

³⁴ Interview with an official from the MoI of Russia, 23 December 2002.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Statement by S A Ordzhonokidze, the Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation, at the UN Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, New York, 9–20 July 2001, <www.un.org>

There are several other options for arms confiscated by the MoI:³⁸

- Return to the lawful owner (Government institutions or private individuals). According to the ministry, in 2001 the wanted list included 27,000 pieces of small arms from MoD stocks and units and 7,000 pieces stolen from MoI units.³⁹ If a confiscated or collected weapon is found to have belonged to a Government militarised agency, it is returned to the unit from which it was stolen or where it was lost.
- Transfer to MoI units for service use.
- Presentation to a museum, if the weapon is of any artistic or historic value (after expert examination).

Reviewing surplus holdings

In 1998 the Chief of the General Staff signed the latest plan on the disposal of surplus arms of the Armed Forces, including SALW. The plan did not have a strict timeframe, and the surplus will be reviewed next after the current plan is implemented.⁴⁰ The MoI checks its stocks of SALW annually and destroys any surpluses.

In the 1990s, the Russian Government tried to standardise the process of arms disposal by adopting five-year federal programmes for the industrial destruction of arms and military hardware. Under these programmes the MoD was supposed to act as the single Government agency ordering arms disposal. Disposal funds were supposed to be earmarked from the national budget, the operations of all interested agencies co-ordinated and legal acts regulating arms disposal operations worked out.

The first programme was devised in 1994 by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the MoD and the State Committee for the Defence Industry, and covered the period 1995–2000. The next programme, running until 2005, was drafted in 1999–2000 and submitted to the Government, but never adopted. There are intentions now to work out a new federal arms disposal programme by 2010.⁴¹

International assistance

The Russian Federation currently receives foreign aid in arms disposal only for scrapping weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles (the Nunn-Lugar programme). There are no foreign aid programmes for the disposal of conventional armaments, including SALW. The MFA has plans to attract foreign assistance for the disposal of surplus SALW, yet so far they have not taken any concrete shape.⁴²

Reforms

In keeping with its commitments made in the framework of the OSCE Document on SALW on 26 July 2001, the Russian Government has passed resolution no 556 on the procedure of reporting information in keeping with the OSCE Document. Under the resolution the Russian MFA should submit to the OSCE Secretariat information collected from:

- The MoD – on the national system of marking light weapons and small arms, on the national SALW disposal techniques and procedures, on the national procedure of managing stocks of light weapons and small arms and guaranteeing their safety as well as annual reports on quantities of light weapons and small arms disposed in Russian territory the previous year.

³⁸ Interview with an official from the MoI of Russia, 23 December 2002.

³⁹ ITAR-TASS, 4 September 2001.

⁴⁰ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

⁴¹ Interview with an official from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russia, 24 December 2002.

⁴² Interview with an official from the Russian MFA, 2 December 2002.

- The MoI – annual reports on quantities of SALW withdrawn from illegal turnover in Russian territory the previous year.
- The Russian Agency for Conventional Armaments and the CMTC on national control procedures for the manufacturing of SALW.
- Russian arms exporters (via CMTC) – annual reports on exports of light weapons and small arms to other OSCE countries and on SALW imports for the previous year.⁴³

The first report with information about national legislation and SALW trade regulation practices, as well as marking and disposal procedures, was submitted to the OSCE Secretariat in June 2001. In 2002 the Russian MFA was supposed to supply the Secretariat with information about Russian SALW exports to other OSCE countries and imports from them.

Resolution no 556 was an important step towards transparency in Russia's SALW exports. Unfortunately, however, this information will remain classified in Russia even after being reported to the OSCE. The Russian public can learn about SALW exports and turnover only from sporadic press reports on individual deliveries and contracts.

The Russian Government policy of managing and disposing SALW stocks and surplus has evidently been changing during the past few years, primarily under pressure from the international community. On the whole it is becoming more deliberate, more consistent and better organised. The following changes could be singled out as the most important:

- After the disintegration of the USSR and the division of the military property of the Soviet Armed Forces, the Russian MoD made an inventory of SALW stocks.⁴⁴ Through the Government, the MFA is trying to exert pressure on the MoD to declassify some figures on SALW stocks.⁴⁵
- For the first time, the disposal of surplus SALW from MoD stocks has become a regular, annual process marked by steadily growing volumes. In 2002, the Government for the first time assigned funds to the MoD for the destruction of surplus SALW. The related budget items were listed as a separate item in the Government defence order. Spending on destruction was also included in the Government defence order for 2003,⁴⁶ approved by the Government on 16 January 2002.
- The MoD has suggested developing a single system of managing and disposing of the surplus SALW of all militarised agencies, to be located at its own facilities, as was the case in Soviet times. However, the ministry's representatives say that so far this proposal has not found much understanding among the leaders of other Government agencies possessing SALW, who prefer to dispose of their surplus arms independently.⁴⁷
- In May 2002 the Defence Committee of the State Duma submitted a draft law 'On Decommissioned Military Property' to the State Duma Council.⁴⁸ Its architects regarded it as a fundamental legislative document prescribing standard rules for the decommissioning and further use of redundant military property, including SALW, and guaranteeing a standard approach to arms disposal matters. The draft law also implies civil, administrative and criminal responsibility for failing to observe or violating laws and other regulatory acts on decommissioned military property disposal. The draft law is meant to make Government spending on surplus arms disposal more efficient, regulate the distribution of sales returns and foreign aid assigned for arms disposal. The bill is still being considered by the State Duma.

⁴³ 'Polozhenye o predstavlenii Rossiiskoi Federatsiyei informatsii, predusmotrennoi ramochnym dokumentom OBSE O lyogkom i strelkovom oruzhyi,' Russian government press centre report. 30 July 2001, <<http://government.gov.ru>>

⁴⁴ Interview with an official from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Russia, 24 December 2002.

⁴⁵ Interview with an official from the Russian MFA, 2 December 2002.

⁴⁶ Interview with an official from the Russian MoD, 16 December 2002.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Egorov, I, Mikhailov, V, 'Prodaite patrony', Gazeta, 30 May 2002.

Concluding remarks

The study of the disposal of surplus SALW in Russia shows that in the last few years the state policy on this issue has become clearer, more highly structured, and more meaningful. The destruction of surplus SALW is turning into a regular and state-controlled process. Both the Russian political and military leadership and society as a whole understand the need for a planned and motivated destruction of weapons surplus, including SALW. As the state domestic defence order has consistently grown in the past few years, it will hopefully include the future financing of SALW surplus disposal on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, the process of SALW disposal is still not centralised in Russia: various militarised agencies of the state operate independently in this respect. However, only the MoD receives financing for SALW disposal from the state budget. Furthermore, there are no national statistics on quantities of SALW destroyed by different agencies, nor are there uniform rules in this domain.

This chapter is part of a wider research study entitled *Disposal of surplus small arms* which examines the policies and practices of ten Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) countries concerning surplus small arms. The report's ten case studies focus on stocks and determination of surpluses, as well as policies on exports, stockpile management and destruction. The report was initiated and co-ordinated by the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) and carried out in close co-operation with the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), Saferworld and the Small Arms Survey.

To obtain a copy of the complete report contact bicc@bicc.de, basicuk@basicint.org, general@saferworld.org.uk or smallarm@hei.unige.ch

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