The Odessa Network

Mapping Facilitators of Russian and Ukrainian Arms Transfers

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by Tom Wallace & Farley Mesko

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tom Wallace is a Senior Analyst at C4ADS. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan in Political Science and Russian Studies, where he was named the National Russian Scholar Laureate, and is a Wolcott Fellow at the George Washington University, where he is currently receiving his master's in Security Policy Studies. Tom's research focuses primarily on government-private collaboration in Russian and Chinese foreign policy. Tom has lived in Russia and China, and speaks Russian and Mandarin.

Farley Mesko is the Chief Operating Officer, and a specialist on illicit maritime networks. He received his undergraduate degree in Natural Resource Policy and Economics from Bowdoin College. He is a consultant for World Bank, a freelance journalist, and sits on the Board of Directors of a Somali NGO. Prior to joining C4ADS, Farley ran a successful small commercial fishing business in Maine. His research focuses primarily on aid, governance, transnational crime, and conflict in Africa. Farley has worked and traveled extensively in East and West Africa, and speaks Arabic.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER
The mention of any individual, company, ship, or other entity in this report **does not** imply the violation of any law or international agreement, and need not be construed as such.

Executive Summary

A network of Ukraine-based individuals and logistics companies—referred to herein as the "Odessa Network" due to its key leadership being located in Odessa, Ukraine—is responsible for transporting weapons out of Russia and Ukraine on behalf of government sellers. Evidence suggests that some of these companies may transport weapons to the Assad regime in Syria, among other notorious violators of human rights.

The Odessa Network is a loose collection of logistics contractors for the governments of Russia and Ukraine, not independent arms dealers. Key companies and figures in Odessa include Kaalbye Group, Phoenix Trans-Servis, and their high-level political connections via key facilitators such as Boris Kogan. The companies work with state weapons export agencies such as Rosoboronexport and Ukrspetsexport. Odessa Network company leaders have personal and financial relationships with cabinet-level officials in the Russian and Ukrainian governments, including a personal advisor to Putin and senior Russian military-industrial figures. The Odessa Network centers on a group of Odessa-based private companies that regularly move large arms shipments. Affiliated EU and Russian shipping firms such as Briese Schiffahrts (and its subsidiary BBC Chartering) and Balchart play an important specialized role in transporting particularly large or sensitive shipments. The network is deeply interconnected. Personnel and equipment frequently cycle between different companies, and many network members are family members, close friends, former classmates, etc.

The vast majority of weapons shipments leave from the Ukrainian port of Oktyabrsk, which was specially built by the USSR to move weapons (for example, this was the point of origin for Cuba-bound missiles in 1963). Despite being located in Ukraine, Oktyabrsk is functionally controlled by Russia—the port manager is a former Russian navy captain, and the port owner is a Kremlin-linked oligarch. Russian state weapons export agencies and Odessa Network firms maintain offices and personnel in Oktyabrsk.

The Ukrainian firms also engage in non-weapons business—freight brokering, crewing, chartering, etc.—and operate in global shipping centers such as Hamburg, Rio de Janeiro, Singapore, and Dubai. To protect their weapons shipments, some of the Ukrainian and Russian firms own or contract with multiple private maritime security companies, who also operate in African conflict zones.

Weapons and non-weapons shipping activities generate large profits for Odessa Network leaders. They put their money in both legitimate ventures and a well-known network of Panamamian shell companies and Latvian banks that have been used for money laundering by other entities, including the Sinaloa Cartel and Hezbollah. They also are active users of US and EU financial institutions.

Understanding and tracking Odessa Network activities is valuable in several ways. Since the Odessa Network consists of the prime transportation contractors for Russian and Ukrainian weapons export agencies, tracking their ship movements is an efficient way of determining weapon destinations. This is particularly helpful because Russia and Ukraine are the main weapons suppliers to countries such as Syria and the DRC. This report identifies over 20 previously undiscovered shipments of unknown cargo by Odessa Network-linked shipping companies from Oktyabrsk to Syria in 2012 and 2013. Finally, our report proposes an alternative hypothesis that examines the high volume of Syrian ships moving unknown cargo between Oktyabrsk and the Eastern Mediterranean in 2012.

The inclusion of any company in this report is not intended to imply participation in illegal activity, and a judgment as such is far beyond the purview of this research. Indeed, most of the activity described herein is perfectly legal. Rather, the goal of the report is simply to bring some measure of transparency to an otherwise opaque industry.

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Glossary of Terms

AIS	Automatic Identification System. Remote tracking system used on ships.
AGL	Automatic grenade launcher
APC	Armored personnel carrier
ASM	Anti-ship missile
ATGM	Anti-tank guided missile
BVI	British Virgin Islands
DWT	Deadweight tonnage. A ship's maximum weight capacity.
EXIF	Exchangeable image file format. Stores metadata about a digital image.
FSB	Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti; Russian domestic intelligence agency
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GOR	Government of Russia
GOU	Government of Ukraine
GRU	Glavnoe Razvedyvatelnoe Upravlenie; Russian military intelligence agency
GT	Gross tonnage. A measure of a ship's cargo volume capacity.
HEAT	High explosive anti-tank round
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IMOID	International Maritime Organization ID. Ship unique identification code.
IRISL	Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines
MMSI	Maritime Mobile Service Identity. Ship unique identification code.
MV	Motor vessel. Appended in front of a ship's name, e.g. MV Victoria.
ROE	Rosoboronexport; main Russian state weapons export agency
RO-RO	Roll on, roll off. Cargo ship with a specialized ramp for wheeled vehicles.
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SAM	Surface to air missile
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SBU	Sluzhba Bezpeky Ukrayiny; Ukrainian state security agency
SDN	Specially designated national
SMG	Somalia Monitoring Group
SPB	St. Petersburg, Russia.
SVR	Sluzhba Vneshney Razvedki; Russian foreign intelligence agency
SZR	Sluzhba Zovishnoi Razvedki; Ukrainian foreign intelligence agency
SWIFT	Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications.
TEU	Twenty-foot equivalent unit. Standard unit of measurement for cargo.
USE	Ukrspetsexport; one of Ukraine's state weapons export agencies

1 Introduction

OVERVIEW

When an arms deal is negotiated between Russian officials and foreign dignitaries, little attention is paid until months later, when newspaper articles announce that the purchaser has received the weapons. Pundits examine the political impact *(why is Putin antagonizing the West?)*, and assess its impact on military capability *(how does the S–300 affect a potential intervention in Syria?)*. The question not asked, and the fundamental goal of this investigation, is how did the arms transfer occur? What logistical, financial, and contractual processes are necessary for moving literally tons of military equipment worth millions or even billions of dollars halfway around the globe? Who performs these tasks?

This report is the culmination of a 10-month investigation into Ukrainian and Russian state arms transfers, with these questions in mind. Key findings include: previously unknown or under-reported arms transfers; specific companies and individuals facilitating these arms transfers; familial, financial, and professional links between key facilitators and the governments of Russia and Ukraine. In short, the report analyzes the web of entities and processes through which an arms transfer is executed. We collectively refer to this web as the **Odessa Network** on account of many of the key personnel and companies being based in Odessa, Ukraine.

The Odessa Network is not a hierarchical, unitary organization. It is better characterized as a "contacts market:" clusters of individuals and firms geographically concentrated in a particular area, and performing a specific sub-task of the weapons-export process. For example, the primary logistics contractors for Russian and Ukrainian weapons exports are shipping companies headquartered in the city of Odessa, while the financial services sometimes used to 'clean' profits are located in Latvia. We have categorized six main clusters, as shown in **Figure 1**. These clusters are both intra– and inter-linked. For example, the various Odessa-based shipping companies share common owners and equipment and coordinate with each other on projects, but also are connected to different clusters: powerful officials in Moscow and Kiev, port authorities at Oktyabrsk, etc.

LOCATION	ENTITY	FUNCTION
Moscow and Kiev	Government Agencies	Ownership of Weapons
Odessa, Ukraine	Shipping Companies	A-Z Logistics Integration
EU and Russia	Shipping Companies	Specialized Shipping Services
Oktyabrsk, Ukraine	Port and Port Authority	Loading of Weapons onto Ships
Africa and Middle East	Private Security Companies	Protection of Sensitive Cargo
Latvia	Banks	Financial Services

Figure 1: *Odessa Network by Location and Function*

INVESTIGATION ROADMAP

The analysis presented herein is centered on several datasets of Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments, which were analyzed for patterns. **Chapter 2** presents this data. Our key assumption is that transporting state-sanctioned arms shipments to sensitive foreign customers such as Syria requires a great deal of trust between contractor and government. As such, these governments are likely to replicate the use of companies, ships, and patterns of behavior found in previous weapons exports. To identify patterns, we researched and assembled a database of Russian and Ukrainian arms shipments spanning 12 years and 22 recipient countries, some licit and documented and others undocumented (i.e. shipments to sanctioned states such as Syria, Myanmar, DPRK, etc.). Each shipment event has up to 12 properties, including ship name, ship owner, ship manager, cargo owner, port of origin, dates, etc.

A cursory analysis of this dataset reveals several key preliminary insights, which are presented in **Section 3**. Importantly, the Russian and Ukrainian governments appear to be the dominant owner and seller of weapons leaving their respective countries. The

popular image of post-Soviet private individuals and criminal groups smuggling major weapons systems[i] is a relic of the 1990s, when state control of strategic assets was considerably weaker. Our data also shows that relatively few shipping companies are responsible for facilitating a high percentage of arms transfers, implying there is a persistent group of trusted contractors upon whom Moscow and Kiev rely. Lastly, our data shows the importance of Oktyabrsk, Ukraine as a port of origin for a high percentage of Russian weapons shipments, again implying some sort of special relationship with the Russian and Ukrainian governments.

Having derived these big-picture insights, **Chapters 4–10** go on to investigate and analyze the weapons export process in greater detail. We identify key individuals, companies, and locations, drawing upon a wide range of open-source data: local media reports in Arabic, Spanish, Russian, and Ukrainian, court cases and contract disputes from Russia, Ukraine, and the United States, incorporation documents made available as exhibits in those cases, and business directories from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and more. These sections make use of the Palantir Gotham analytical platform to perform network and link analysis on key entities. The overarching finding is that there is a persistent, predictable network by which Moscow and Kiev export weapons: a certain group of people own the ships, a certain group of people handle the money, and so on.

There are several applications of this data and analysis. Identifying patterns of weapons shipping should lead to better predictions of weapons flows out of the Former Soviet Union. Put simply, observing a known weapons transporter leaving a known port of origin for weapons, headed for a country known to buy Russian and Ukrainian weapons leads to stronger predictions about the nature of otherwise unknown cargo. **Chapter 11** applies this inductive analytical approach to the issue of Syria. Russian material support for the Assad regime is well known, but exactly how the Kremlin funnels military equipment into Syria is less well understood. The key question for this section is how to identify arms shipments, or at least narrow the field of candidate shipment events, from among the thousands of ships[ii] transiting the Eastern Mediterranean each year. To answer this question, we built a large dataset of Automated Information System (AIS) [iii] logs for all of Russia, Ukraine, and Syria in 2012. This log of 60,000+ port calls and 10,000+ ships very likely contains weapons shipments from Russia or Ukraine to the Assad regime. We use our insights about the detectable signature of weapons transfers to find ships that are operated or covertly controlled by Odessa Network affiliates, and have recently delivered unknown cargo to Assad. The paper concludes in **Chapter 13**, which summarizes the hard facts uncovered about the Odessa Network and presents our definitive and inferential analytical judgments.

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i. There is no doubt private entities still export small arms and ammunition without governmental knowledge, but submarines, tanks, missiles, etc. appear to generally be under state control.

ii. Of course, commercial ships are not the only vehicle for transporting weapons. Military vessels, airplanes, rail, truck, etc. are all viable options. With that said, there are significant drawbacks to these alternate vehicles that make commercial ships the best option in most cases. Planes can only carry cargo of relatively small volume and weight, and are under the jurisdiction of whatever country they happen to overfly, creating the risk of interdiction. For example, Turkish fighter jets interdicted a Syrian Air Airbus carrying weapons from Russia in October 2012. In contrast, specialized cargo ships have massive holds capable of carrying almost any equipment, and ships in international waters are generally under the jurisdiction of whatever country they are flagged in (often weak states like Panama or Liberia unlikely to interfere), meaning they can only be legally interdicted if they enter territorial waters. Rail and truck are similarly limited to relatively small equipment, as they must fit onto a standard rail gauge or highway. They also are vulnerable to interdiction as they pass through intermediary countries. Military vessels are obviously safe from interdiction, but are generally not designed for large cargo, and are highly conspicuous, making them a poor choice for covert arms transfers. For all these reasons, we focused our investigation on commercial vessels.

iii. A ship-based transponder that records port calls at a particular date and time, and the stated destination for all ships on their journey past a series of land-based antennas.

GOALS

This report has two goals. The first is to empower global policymakers. As the 2nd and 10th largest arms exporters in the world, respectively, Russia and Ukraine sell to many countries of interest to the international community. In particular, some of their best customers are states with poor human rights records or active sanctions: Venezuela, Sudan, etc. Russian support (including but not limited to weapons) has kept the Assad regime armed and viable through two years of brutal civil war. Russian anti-ship and anti-air missiles shield Assad from international intervention; Russian bullets and bombs kill Free Syrian Army members, jihadis, and civilians alike. Some weapons shipments from Russia to Syria have been publicly exposed—e.g. the ships *Alaed*, *Professor Katsman*, and *Chariot*, and various Russian warships[1]—but these logically must be simply the tip of the iceberg. The sheer quantity of materiel required to fight a conventional war for over two years dictates there must be far more Russian weapons flowing to Syria than these few ships.[2] Policymakers armed with better information about arms transfers from the former Soviet Union to sanctioned states and conflict zones like Syria will be better able to monitor, shape, deter, or publicize these weapons flows. If limiting access to FSU weapons is a policy priority, the Odessa Network is a useful place to start.

Second, this report demonstrates the utility of combining open-source data, foreign language and regional expertise, and cutting-edge technology in answering complex research questions, and bridging the gap between tactical data and strategic insight. The best policy-level insights are those derived from tactical data that has been traced upwards into abstraction. For example, deep investigation into the weapons export process provides not just names and locations, but also political insights into the workings of Putin's Russia. Abstract themes find detailed expression in the Odessa Network: reassertion of state control over strategic assets, keeping regime stakeholders loyal through sanctioned corruption, "power vertical" relationships, and fusion of public and private entities.

DISCLAIMER

This project was conceived, funded, and carried out independently. It has received no external funding, public or private. All data was obtained open-source or commercially purchased. Although the authors travelled to Ukraine (including Kiev, Odessa, Nikolaev, and Oktyabrsk) for field research, the vast majority of work was done in the US. This paper examines both licit and illicit weapons transfers. We use the term illicit to describe those transfers that could be perceived as contrary to accepted international norms, not to imply violation of any international laws or agreements. We make no claims to determine the legal status of any particular transfer.

2 Weapons Shipment Data

OVERVIEW

This section presents our dataset on Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments, and the ships, companies, and ports used to facilitate them. **Preliminary insights derived from this dataset are presented in Chapter 3.**

Countries and shipments were determined by comparing lists of recipient countries to values of arms transfers from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Arms Transfers and Military Expenditures databases, and searching for international media coverage of shipment events (for those that were of sufficient size or nature to warrant international media coverage), and native-language local media coverage of the arrivals of shipments. This database draws heavily on unconventional open data sources such as photos posted by local Venezuelan military bloggers or Cambodian activists of ships unloading weapons. Ship or owner names were determined from pictures (if visible) or from searching for unique IMOID identifiers (if visible).

A note on terms: *exporting country* refers to the country that owned and sold the weapons (i.e. Russia or Ukraine). *Government control* refers to whether the Russian or Ukrainian government was the owner and broker of the sale; if not explicitly stated in our sources, we assumed this was the case if the arms transfer could be corroborated with known government sales. *Port of origin* refers to the port from which the shipment of weapons originated. This is often different than exporting country; for example, Russian arms sales are often shipped from Ukrainian ports. Similarly, *importing country* refers to the country which purchased the weapons, which often is different than *port of arrival*; for example, landlocked countries (e.g. South Sudan) may use their neighbor's ports (e.g. Mombasa, Kenya) to receive weapons shipments. Lastly, *date* should be treated as only a rough indication of when a weapons shipment took place. Different sources use different dates; some only report when a shipment was loaded, others when it was off-loaded, and still others when it was interdicted by a 3rd party. Given such noisy data, this paper treats *date* as generally indicative of when a shipment took place, not an exact value.

EVENT #1

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine[3]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Iran
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	No (Corrupt Official)
CARGO	Kh–55 (NATO: AS–15 Kent) cruise missiles. US intelligence officials are quoted as saying 6 missiles were shipped,[4] while Ukrainian sources have said 12.[5]
PORT OF ORIGIN	-
PORT OF ARRIVAL	-
DATE	2000 or 2001
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	Kaalbye Shipping[6]
SHIP OPERATOR/BROKER	Kaalbye Shipping
NOTES	*Covert deal brokered by corrupt Ukrainian and Russian officials, including from Ministry of Defense and State Security Service. Used fabricated contract with Russian defense export firm Rosvooruzhenie and series of front companies (including "Progress" and "Far West Ltd.") to export missiles inherited from USSR and held in Ukraine. All parties involved except Igor Urbansky (of Kaalbye Shipping) died under mysterious circumstances: then-head of Ukrspetsexport Valeri Maleev died in a car crash on 6 March 2002, Australian-Iranian Haider Sarfraz died in a car crash in 2004, Oleg Orlov was arrested in the Czech Republic and extradited to Ukraine, where his throat was slit in prison, Sergei Petrov died in a car bombing in Africa in 2004,[7] and Vladimir Filin disappeared.[8]*

EVENT #2

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	China
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	No (corrupt officials)
CARGO	6 Kh–55 cruise missiles.
PORT OF ORIGIN	-
PORT OF ARRIVAL	-
DATE	2000 or 2001
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER/OPERATOR	Kaalbye Shipping
NOTES	*Carried out by same group as Event #1.*

EVENT #3

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia (Rosvooruzhenie)[9]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Angola (some sources report the government acting through state firm Simportex was the purchaser, while others report the rebel group UNITA) [10, 11]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	636 tons of assault rifles, ammunition, grenades, mortar shells, NVGs, and more.[12]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine[13]
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Intended for Luanda, Angola; intercepted in Las Palmas, Spain[14]
DATE	24 February 2001
SHIP	*MV Anastasia*
IMOID	-
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines/Georgia
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER/MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping[15]
NOTES	*Igor Urbansky, founder of Kaalbye, was directly involved. Ship was intercepted in Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, where Spanish officials uncovered weapons and impounded the ship. After an $800,000 bail was paid, the ship continued on to Angola and delivered its cargo. Ship was flying the Georgia flag, but in fact was registered in St. Vincent and Grenadines.*

EVENT #4

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Myanmar
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	-
CARGO	-
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Rangoon, Myanmar[16]
DATE	25 February 2003
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER/MANAGER	-

EVENT #5

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Angola and Yemen?
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes

EVENT #5 CONT.

CARGO	32 T–72 tanks for Yemen and 11 BTR–80 APCs for Angola?
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown
DATE	15 October 2003[17]
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Phoenix Trans-Servis (Odessa, Ukraine) brokered the shipment. Data on this shipment was obtained by locating several pictures on Phoenix's website showing various military equipment—including tanks and APCs—being loaded onto one or more unidentified ships.[18] The tanks and APCs appear to be loaded on the same ship. EXIF data reveals the pictures are from 15 October 2003. We cross-referenced SIPRI arms transfer databases[19] for tanks and APCs delivered from Russia or Ukraine to a foreign customer for whom maritime transport would be necessary (i.e. not a landlocked neighbor like Uzbekistan or Kazakhstan). Based on this dataset, Yemen is the only plausible candidate for the tanks, and Angola the only plausible candidate for the APCs. Nevertheless, it is possible this delivery was not previously detected and hence not included in the SIPRI dataset, in which case we do not know to whom the arms were sold.*

Figures 2 & 3: *Tanks for Yemen*

Figure 4: *APCs for Angola*

EVENT #6

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia (Rosoboronexport)
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Eritrea
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Pechora–2 SAMs

EVENT #6 CONT.

PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Massawa, Eritrea
DATE	Contract was signed 12 May 2004
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Involved parties included Rosoboronexport, Gorizont, and Almaz-Antei. Data gathered from Russian court case[20] that contains a wealth of information on ROE contracting procedures. SIPRI does not contain information for this arms transfer; either it never occurred, or was previously undetected.*

EVENT #7

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine or Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Georgia? Algeria? South Korea?
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	T–72 or T–80 tanks
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown
DATE	7 May 2005[21]
SHIP	*MV Clipper Century*
IMOID	9252826
FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	6714
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	8729
SHIP OWNER	Clipper Project Shipping Ltd.
SHIP MANAGER	Clipper Project Shipping Ltd.[22]
NOTES	*Data was uncovered by locating a picture on Nortrop's website of tanks being loaded onto a ship whose name and IMOID were visible, allowing identification of ship ownership and management.[23] EXIF data revealed the picture's date and time. Querying SIPRI databases for tanks delivered from Ukraine or Russia in 2005 revealed three possible candidates: Algeria (received 21 T–72 tanks from Ukraine in 2005), Georgia (received 90 T–72 tanks from Ukraine between 2005 and 2007), and South Korea (received 10 T–80 tanks from Russia between 2005 and 2006.) It is possible this was a previously undetected shipment to an unknown customer.*

Figure 5:
Tanks being loaded

EVENT #8

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	China[24]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	2 *Kilo*-class attack submarines[25]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Severodvinsk, Russia[26]

EVENT #8 CONT.

PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, China
DATE	Submarines loaded 30 May 2006
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130
FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[27]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

EVENT #9

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine (Ukroboronservis)[28]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Democratic Republic of Congo (Ministry of Defense)
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Significant quantities of ammunition and armored vehicles
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown
DATE	26 July 2006
SHIP	*MV BBC Singapore*
IMOID	*9137727*
FLAG	Gibraltar
GROSS TONNAGE	4078
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	4900
SHIP OWNER	Juister Balje (listed at same address as Briese Schiffahrts)[29]
SHIP MANAGER	Briese Schiffahrts KMBH and Co.
NOTES	-

EVENT #10

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia (Rosoboronexport)[30]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Morocco
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Likely repaired and serviced tanks
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, Morocco
DATE	Late 2006
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	-

EVENT #11

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia (Rosoboronexport)[31]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Algeria and South Korea
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	For South Korea, some portion of the "Red Bear–2" deal that included 2000 AT–13 anti-tank missiles, 37 BMP–3 IFVs, 23 Il–103 aircraft, 7 Ka–32 helicopters, 3 Murena landing craft, and 10 T–80U tanks. For Algeria, unknown.
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown
DATE	Late 2006

EVENT #11 CONT.

SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	-

EVENT #12

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Reported as Iraq, actual purchaser unknown
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes (Confirmed by Ukrainian government)
CARGO	Fagot ATGMs
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Reported as Um Qasr, Iraq, actual destination unknown
DATE	21 July 2007
SHIP	*MV Slavyanin*
IMOID	8300169
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	6327
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	6258
SHIP OWNER	Starway Management Property (listed at same address as AnShip)[32]
SHIP MANAGER	Anship LLC (subsidiary of AnRussTrans, a major Russian transportation company owned by Aleksandr Annenkov, a former Russian Ministry of Transportation deputy minister).[33]
NOTES	-

EVENT #13

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam[34]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	2 *Tarantul*-class missile corvettes, each armed with 16 SS–N–25 anti-ship missiles.[35]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Cam Ranh, Vietnam
DATE	21 December 2007
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130
FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[36]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

EVENT #14

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	South Sudan
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Confirmed as military shipment as part of overall arms transfer (see events #15 and #16), but exact cargo is not known.
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Mombasa, Kenya
DATE	Left port 14 September 2007, arrived 29 October 2007

EVENT #14 CONT.

SHIP	*MV Radomyshl*
IMOID	7415527
FLAG	Ukraine
GROSS TONNAGE	4966
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	5657
SHIP OWNER	Ukrainian Danube Shipping Company[37]
SHIP MANAGER	Ukrainian Danube Shipping Company
NOTES	*Marine Energy Trading Company Ltd. (representing Milltown Corporate Services and Ireland & Overseas Acquisition Company) and Phoenix Trans-Servis involved in chartering and brokering. Use of Latvian proxies (detailed in later chapter.)[38]*

EVENT #15

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	South Sudan
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	42 T–72 tanks, 138 packages of spare parts for them, 15 ZU–23–2 anti-aircraft guns, 90 packages of spare parts for them, 26 packages of RPG–7 weapons and spare parts, 2 BM–21 122 multiple launch rocket launchers on Ural wheelbase, 10,000 AKM assault rifles.
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Mombasa, Kenya
DATE	21 December 2007
SHIP	*MV Beluga Endurance*
IMOID	9312169
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	9611
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	12714
SHIP OWNER	Martin Schiffahrts (listed at same address as Heino Winter)[39]
SHIP MANAGER	Heino Winter GmbH and Co. KG
NOTES	*Operated by Beluga Shipping. Marine Energy Trading Company Ltd. (representing Milltown Corporate Services and Ireland & Overseas Acquisition Company), Phoenix Trans-Servis, and Ace Shipping involved in chartering and brokering. Use of Latvian proxies (detailed in later chapter.)*

EVENT #16

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine[40 41 42]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	South Sudan
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	33 T–72 tanks, 8,926 rounds of VOF–36 high explosive fragmentation 125 mm tank ammunition, 5,000 rounds of VDK–10 HEAT 125 mm tank ammunition, 73 packages of spare parts for tanks, 6 ZPU–4 AA guns, 36 packages of RPG–7V launchers and spare parts, 6 BM–21 122 mm multiple launch rocket launchers on Ural wheelbase.
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Mombasa, Kenya
DATE	Left port 1 September 2008, captured by pirates 25 September 2008, arrived 10 February 2009
SHIP	*MV Faina*
IMOID	7419337
FLAG	Belize
GROSS TONNAGE	10931
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	9019
SHIP OWNER	Waterlux AG
SHIP MANAGER	Almar
NOTES	*Ship is widely reported to actually be owned and operated by Kaalbye Shipping and Tomex Team (closely linked to Ukrainian businessman Vadim Alperin). The crewing*

EVENT #16 CONT.

NOTES CONT.	*agency is Carvel Shipping Ltd. Phoenix Trans-Servis and Ace Shipping Ltd. and Marine Energy Trading Company Ltd. (representing Milltown Corporate Services and Ireland & Overseas Acquisition Company) involved in chartering and brokering. Political connection was Hares Youssef, who acted as the agent of President Yushchenko and contacted Alperin.[43]*

EVENT #17

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine (Ukrinmash)
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Uganda (Ministry of Defense)
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	1000 tons of ammunition
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
DATE	24 June 2008
SHIP	*MV Ann Scan*
IMOID	9145126
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	2528
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	3526
SHIP OWNER	Hasetal Mardex Schiffahrts[44]
SHIP MANAGER	Held Bereederungs GmbH and Co.
NOTES	*Barwil Ukraine involved in shipment. Same ship was later used for cigarette smuggling into Britain.[45]*

Figure 6:
Ammunition for Uganda
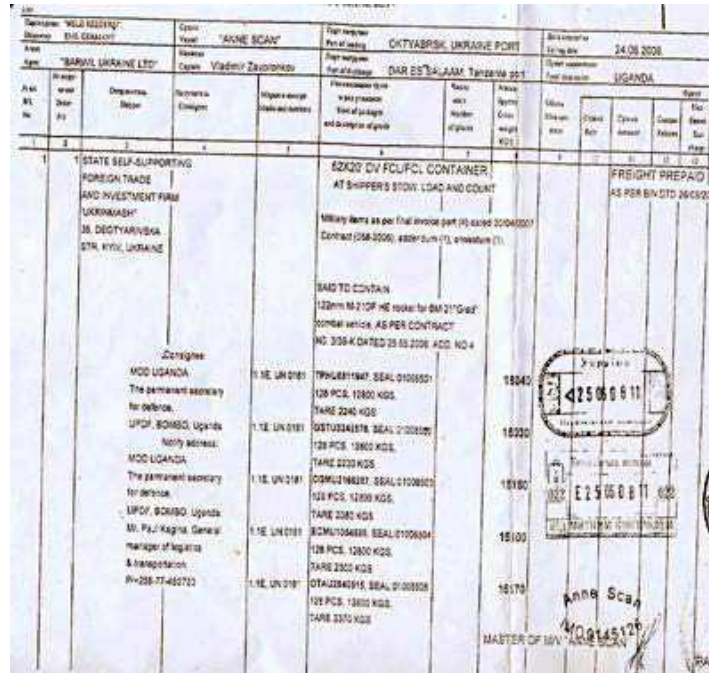
EVENT #18

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Myanmar
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	APC components, AGLs, ATGMs, and tank machine guns.[46]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, Myanmar
DATE	Mid-August 2009
SHIP	*MV Beluga Eternity*

EVENT #18 CONT.

IMOID	9283966
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	9611
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	12806
SHIP OWNER	Beluga Eternity GmbH and Co. (listed at same address as Beluga Shipping)[47]
SHIP MANAGER	Beluga Fleet Management GmbH and Co.
NOTES	-

EVENT #19

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Algeria
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Unknown
CARGO	6.9 tons of ammonium nitrate
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine[48]
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Skidda, Algeria
DATE	18 December 2009
SHIP	*Lady Juliet*
IMOID	8225204
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	12296
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	15896
SHIP OWNER	White Albatross Ltd. (listed at same address as Kaalbye Shipping)[49]
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping
NOTES	*Ship was dead in the water in Dardanelles.[50] Ship previously was victim of attempted pirate hijacking off the coast of Somalia, but ship was defended by armed personnel aboard.[51]*

EVENT #20

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Two *Svetlyak*-class patrol boats[52]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, Vietnam
DATE	2010
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130
FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[53]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

EVENT #21

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine[54]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Democratic Republic of Congo
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	20 T–72 tanks, 100 lorries, 60 anti-aircraft guns, 10,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles, several hundred thousand rounds of ammunition
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Matadi, DRC
DATE	6 March 2010
SHIP	*BBC Romania*
IMOID	9195420

EVENT #21 CONT.

FLAG	Gibraltar
GROSS TONNAGE	3198
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	4304
SHIP OWNER	Briesesee Briese Schiffahrts
SHIP MANAGER	Briese Schiffahrts
NOTES	*Deal reportedly worth $80 million. Other ships likely involved.*

EVENT #22

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Unknown, presumed Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Sudan and Singapore[55]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Unknown
CARGO	Tanks for Sudan, explosives for Singapore[56]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown port in Norway[57]
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Intercepted while docking at Limassol, Cyprus[58]
DATE	11 June 2010
SHIP	*MV Santiago*
IMOID	9145114
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	2528
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	3525
SHIP OWNER	Pewsum Briese Schiffahrts. Listed at same address in Germany as Briese Schiffahrts[59]
SHIP MANAGER	Briese Schiffahrts GmbH and Co.
NOTES	*Crew was 4 Russians and 5 Ukrainians.[60]*

EVENT #23

Figures 7 & 8:
Tanks/APCs for Cambodia

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Czech Republic and Poland, or Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Cambodia[61]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	50 T–55 tanks and 40 PTR–26 APCs[62]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Sikhanoukville, Cambodia
DATE	10 September 2010
SHIP	*MV BBC Pacific*
IMOID	9427081
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	5261
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	6192
SHIP OWNER	Norderloog. Listed at same address in Germany as Briese Schiffahrts
SHIP MANAGER	Briese Schiffahrts GmbH and Co.[63]
NOTES	*Ship identity was ascertained through leaked pictures of it unloading tanks at Sikhanoukville port. Some sources indicate the tanks came from the Czech Republic and the APCs from Poland,[64] while others indicate they all came from Ukraine.[65]*

EVENT #24

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	One *Gepard*-class frigate[66]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Cam Ranh, Vietnam
DATE	5 March 2011
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130
FLAG	Bahamas

EVENT #24 CONT.

GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[67]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

EVENT #25

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Iraq
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	26 BTR–4 APCs, two maintenance and repair vehicles, and two armor trainers[68]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Um Qasr, Iraq
DATE	Left 20 April 2011, arrived 29 May 2011
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	-

Figure 9:

Miscellaneous Arms to Venezuela

EVENT #26

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[69]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	35 T–72 tanks, 16 BMP–3 IFVs, 32 BTR–80A APCs, 4 1B152 armored command vehicles, 13 2c23 Nona-SVK self-propelled 120 mm artillery, 24 2C12 Sani 120 mm artillery, 24 BM–21 truck-mounted rocket launchers, unknown quantity of ZI–23–2 AA guns, and unknown quantity of military automobiles
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	25 May 2011
SHIP	*MV Sluisgracht*
IMOID	9202522
FLAG	Netherlands
GROSS TONNAGE	16639
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	21250
SHIP OWNER	Sluisgracht Rederij (listed at same address as Spliethoff)[70]
SHIP MANAGER	Spliethoff
NOTES	*Use pictures. Spliethoff also is contracted to transport weapons for the US Military Sealift Command; for example, its ship MV Schippersgracht transported military cargo from the United States to Egypt in March 2012.*[71]

EVENT #27

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	One *Gepard*-class frigate
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam[72]
DATE	25 July 2011
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130

EVENT #27 CONT.

FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[73]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

EVENT #28

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Syria
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Between 35 and 60 tons of munitions and explosives[74]
PORT OF ORIGIN	St. Petersburg, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Intended for Al Ladaqiyah, Syria, detained in Cyprus
DATE	Left SPB on 9 December 2011, detained in Limassol, Cyprus on 10 January 2012[75]
SHIP	*MV Chariot*
IMOID	8302882
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	845
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	922
SHIP OWNER	Westberg Management AG (listed at same address as Westberg Ltd.)[76]
SHIP MANAGER	Westberg Ltd.
NOTES	*Shipment chartered by Balchart.*

EVENT #29

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	See notes
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	20 March 2012[77]
SHIP	*MV Ocean Voyager*
IMOID	9111216
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	7249
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	7278
SHIP OWNER	Unicorn Enterprises (listed at same address as Kaalbye)[78]
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine KSU
NOTES	*Part of group shipment consisting of Events #29–30 and #32–34, consisting of S–300 SAMs, Buk-M1–2 SAMs, BM–30 Smerch heavy rocket multiple launcher, and SSC–6 Sennight coastal defense missile system (including the SS-N–25 Switchblade missile.) It is unclear which weapons were on which ship.*

EVENT #30

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	See notes
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	20 March 2012[79]
SHIP	*MV Ocean Fortune*[80]
IMOID	9512434
FLAG	Liberia

EVENT #30 CONT.

GROSS TONNAGE	6479
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	8058
SHIP OWNER	Ocean Fortune Ltd. (listed at same address as Kaalbye)
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine
NOTES	*Part of group shipment consisting of Events #29–30 and #32–34, consisting of S–300 SAMs, Buk-M1–2 SAMs, BM–30 Smerch heavy rocket multiple launcher, and SSC–6 Sennight coastal defense missile system (including the SS-N–25 Switchblade missile.) It is unclear which weapons were on which ship.*

EVENT #31

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	T–72 tanks, after having undergone renovations and modernization at the 103rd Tank Factory in Atamanovka (Zakbaykaylsky Krai)
PORT OF ORIGIN	Kronshtadt, Russia (Near St. Petersburg)
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	27 March 2012
SHIP	*MV Sluisgracht*
IMOID	9202522
FLAG	Netherlands
GROSS TONNAGE	16639
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	21250
SHIP OWNER	Sluisgracht Rederij (listed at same address as Spliethoff)
SHIP MANAGER	Spliethoff
NOTES	-

EVENT #32

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	See notes
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktaybrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	March 2012
SHIP	*MV Stade*
IMOID	9535620
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	8059
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	10872
SHIP OWNER	Stade BV
SHIP MANAGER	Eckhoff[31]
NOTES	*Part of group shipment consisting of Events #29–30 and #32–34, consisting of S–300 SAMs, Buk-M1–2 SAMs, BM–30 Smerch heavy rocket multiple launcher, and SSC–6 Sennight coastal defense missile system (including the SS-N–25 Switchblade missile.) It is unclear which weapons were on which ship.*

EVENT #33

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Unknown weapons
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	13 April 2012

EVENT #33 CONT.

SHIP	*MV Socol 6*[82]
IMOID	9004516
FLAG	Panama
GROSS TONNAGE	6030
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	9597
SHIP OWNER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine[83]
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine
NOTES	*Part of group shipment consisting of Events #29–30 and #32–34.*

EVENT #34

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[84]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Venezuela
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	85 kilogram of Class I explosives (ammunition) and other unknown cargo[85]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Puerto Cabello, Venezuela
DATE	March 2012
SHIP	*MV Socol 3*
IMOID	9004487
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	6030
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	9500
SHIP OWNER	Arcadia Shipping (listed at same address as Kaalbye)
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine[86]
NOTES	*Part of group shipment consisting of Events #29–30 and #32–34. Suffered mechanical failure in the Aegean Sea, had to stop for repairs and continued on to Venezuela. All 23 crewmembers were Ukrainian.[87] Prior to 2001 ship was owned by Rosvooruzhenie, a Russian state weapons export agency. Kaalbye Shipping became the manager in March 2003, at which point Oboronprom (a Russian state defense holding) became the owner.[88] Ownership was transferred to Arcadia Shipping (a Kaalbye shell company) in 2004. Ship was previously known as MV BBC Ukraine; BBC Chartering is a subsidiary of Briese.[89]*

EVENT #35

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[90]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Syria
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Rotor blades for helicopters, some reports of heavy weapons[91]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Kronshtadt (St. Petersburg), Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Tartus, Syria
DATE	Departed Kronshtadt on 6 May 2012, arrived in Tartus on 26 May 2012[92]
SHIP	*MV Professor Katsman*
IMOID	9368261
FLAG	Russia
GROSS TONNAGE	4970
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	5465
SHIP OWNER	Rusich–12 Ltd. (listed at same address as and subsidiary of North-Western Shipping Co.)[93]
SHIP MANAGER	North-Western Shipping Co. (ultimately owned by UCL Holding)
NOTES	*Cargo owner listed as Lira LLC. Formerly managed by INOK NV.[94]*

EVENT #36

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[95]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Unknown

EVENT #36 CONT.

CARGO	Unknown weapons and explosives
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, Vietnam
DATE	Left port on 13 June 2012, crossed the Suez Canal on 19–20 June, stopped in India for repairs on 27 July
SHIP	*MV Socol 6*[96]
IMOID	9004516
FLAG	Panama
GROSS TONNAGE	6030
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	9597
SHIP OWNER	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine[97]
SHIP MANAGER	Kaalbye Shipping
NOTES	*All crewmembers were Ukrainian.*

EVENT #37

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[98]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Syria
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Refurbished Mi–25 attack helicopters and munitions[99]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg, Russia[100]
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Tartus, Syria
DATE	June and July 2012. Ship was originally forced to turn back after senior US officials and international media publicized its journey, and its British insurer revoked its insurance, but made another voyage under the protection of a Russian naval flotilla.[101]
SHIP	*MV Alaed*
IMOID	9574999
FLAG	Russia
GROSS TONNAGE	7579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	9000
SHIP OWNER	FEMCO-West Ltd.[102]
SHIP MANAGER	FEMCO Management
NOTES	*The Alaed also has been used to transport parts for Russian Navy ships under construction between different parts of the country.*[103]

EVENT #38

Figure 10:

Tanks for Ethiopia

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine[104]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Ethiopia
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Two T–72–UA1 tanks
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	-
DATE	25 July 2012
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Part of a contract with Ethiopia for 200 T–72 tanks, worth $100 million, signed in June 2011.*[105] [106]

EVENT #39

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[107]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Vietnam
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	Two *Svetlyak*-class patrol boats
PORT OF ORIGIN	Vladivostok, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, Vietnam
DATE	16 August 2012
SHIP	*MV Eide Transporter*
IMOID	8030130
FLAG	Bahamas
GROSS TONNAGE	19579
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	11434
SHIP OWNER	Eide Marine Services AS[108]
SHIP MANAGER	Eide Marine Services AS
NOTES	-

Figure 11: *Patrol boats for Vietnam*

EVENT #40

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine (Ukrspetsexport and Ukroboronprom)
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Iraq
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	62 BTR—4 APCs[109]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Odessa, Ukraine[110]
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Um Qasr, Iraq
DATE	13 September 2012
SHIP	Unknown
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Part of $550 million dollar deal.*[111]

27

EVENT #41

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Unknown
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Nigeria
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	No
CARGO	14 AK–47 rifles and 3,643 rounds of ammunition, as well as 22 Benelli MR1 rifles with 4,955 rounds of ammunition[112]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Detained in Lagos
DATE	20 October 2012[113]
SHIP	*MV Myre Seadiver*
IMOID	6505662
FLAG	Officially listed as Cook Islands, but witnesses indicate it was flying a Dutch flag at time of seizure[114]
GROSS TONNAGE	541
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	315
SHIP OWNER	Midas Pete Ltd.[115]
SHIP MANAGER	Westberg Ltd.
NOTES	*Operated and used by Moran Security Group, a Russian private security firm.[116] All crew members were Ukrainians and Russians.[117]*

EVENT #42

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Ukraine[118]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Cambodia[119]
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	100 tanks and 40 eight and six wheel APCs[120]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Unknown, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Sikhanoukville, Cambodia
DATE	31 October 2012
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Pictures available, but unable to locate identifying characteristics.*

Figure 12: *Tanks and APCs for Cambodia*

Figure 13: *Tanks and APCs for Cambodia cont.*

EVENT #43

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[121]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Libya
GOVERNMENT CONTROL	Yes
CARGO	AK–47 style assault rifles and Igla MANPADs.
PORT OF ORIGIN	Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, Ukraine
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Tripoli, Libya

EVENT #43 CONT.

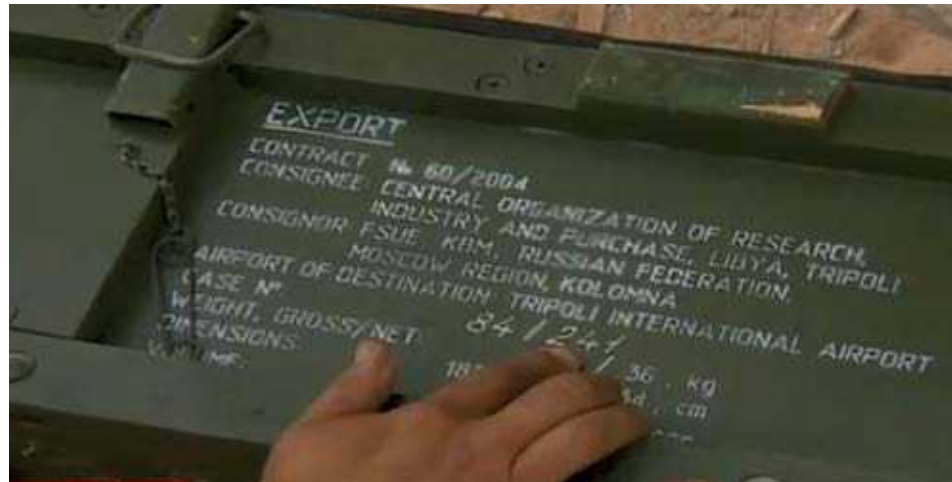|	
DATE	Unknown
SHIP	-
IMOID	-
FLAG	-
GROSS TONNAGE	-
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	-
SHIP OWNER	-
SHIP MANAGER	-
NOTES	*Pictures available, but unable to locate identifying characteristics.*

Figure 14: *Assault Rifles to Libya*

OUT OF SAMPLE DATA

The below events are excluded from our main weapons shipment dataset because they are not weapons sales from Russia or Ukraine to a foreign party. However, these 'out of sample' events are analytically useful, as they show the involvement of known weapons transporters in transporting other interesting cargos. For example, the German shipping company Beluga has carried out several weapons shipments, but also owned and operated the ship on which A.Q. Khan centrifuges were transported to Libya.

EVENT A

EXPORTING COUNTRY	A.Q. Khan network
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Libya
CARGO	Nuclear centrifuges and components thereof
PORT OF ORIGIN	Dubai, UAE
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Intercepted in Taranto, Italy, intending to go to Tripoli, Libya[122]
DATE	4 October 2003
SHIP	*MV BBC China*[123]
IMOID	9219082
FLAG	Antigua and Barbuda
GROSS TONNAGE	5548
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	6500
SHIP OWNER	Beluga Superstition[124]
SHIP MANAGER	Beluga Shipping GmbH
NOTES	*Chartered by BBC Chartering.*[125]

EVENT B

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia[126]
IMPORTING COUNTRY	France
CARGO	182 tons of Uranium

EVENT B CONT.

PORT OF ORIGIN	St. Petersburg, Russia
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Le Havre, France
DATE	3 July 2009
SHIP	*MV Kapitan Lus*
IMOID	9077551
FLAG	Malta
GROSS TONNAGE	4998
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	4618
SHIP OWNER	Shipline Two Ltd. (listed at same address as NB Maritime)
SHIP MANAGER	NB Maritime Management Cyprus
NOTES	*Ship collided with another ship off the coast of Sweden and Denmark. NB Maritime Management Cyprus also was the owner of the MV Monchegorsk, which was interdicted in Cyprus for attempting to ship more than 2,000 tons of Iranian munitions to Syria.*[127]

EVENT C

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Egypt (Ministry of Defense)
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Democratic Republic of Congo (government)
CARGO	Thousands of grenades, 7,000 mortars, four million rounds of ammunition, and 700 rockets[128]
PORT OF ORIGIN	Alexandria, Egypt
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown, DRC
DATE	June 2011
SHIP	*MV Chariot*[129]
IMOID	8302882
FLAG	St. Vincent and Grenadines
GROSS TONNAGE	845
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	922
SHIP OWNER	Westberg Management AG (listed at same address as Westberg Ltd.)[130]
SHIP MANAGER	Westberg Ltd.
NOTES	*Westberg and* Chariot *previously shipped weapons to Syria and the DRC, as described in the main dataset.*

EVENT D

EXPORTING COUNTRY	Russia
IMPORTING COUNTRY	Unknown
CARGO	Likely advanced military equipment
PORT OF ORIGIN	Jakobstad, Finland
PORT OF ARRIVAL	Unknown
DATE	24 July 2009
SHIP	*MV Arctic Sea*
IMOID	8912792
FLAG	Malta
GROSS TONNAGE	3988
DEADWEIGHT TONNAGE	4706
SHIP OWNER	Solchart[131]
SHIP MANAGER	Solchart
NOTES	*The Arctic Sea was ostensibly loaded with timber in Finland bound for Algeria. The ship was hijacked off the coast of Sweden by 10 English-speaking men posing as counter-narcotics officers, who then turned off its AIS transponder and fled for points unknown. Russia dispatched two nuclear submarines and three warships from the Black Sea Fleet to recover it.*[132] *The ship was located off the coast of Cape Verde, at which point it was taken back into Russian custody. This is widely believed to be a case of illicit arms smuggling, with numerous Russian sources and most foreign analysis stating their belief that the Arctic Sea was carrying advanced military equipment (most often named as S–300 SAMs) to Iran.*[133]

3 Preliminary Insights

INSIGHT 1

Our weapons shipment dataset is broadly representative of overall Russian and Ukrainian seaborne weapons exports.

A basic research question is whether the sampled data (**Figure 15**) is representative of the larger population under study. We are interested in Russian and Ukrainian seaborne weapons exports, and while a complete listing of all shipment events (many of which go unreported) is not possible, our sample should be as large and diverse as possible. Our dataset includes 43 separate shipment events, and at least 21 different purchasing countries. Considering that Russia alone regularly exports to at least 57 countries yearly,[134] this would seem to indicate our data is not particularly representative.

A closer examination reveals otherwise. Many of Russia and Ukraine's customers are geographic neighbors or landlocked, making it impractical or impossible to use sea transportation. For example, when Russia exports weapons to neighboring Kazakhstan it does so by plane, rail, or truck. Similarly, even distant customers may be purchasing military equipment that is typically not moved by sea. For example, Russia has a $300 million contract to supply Su–30 MK2 and Su–27 SKM fighters to Indonesia, but these are transported on An–124 transport aircraft, not ships.[135] Similarly, Ukraine has a contract to supply BTR–3E1 APCs to Thailand, but previous shipments have been flown on an Il–76 to U-Tapao Airport, not shipped.[136]

As a heuristic, **Figure 16** compares shipments in our dataset with countries to which Russia or Ukraine would plausibly export by sea (i.e. all known past purchasers of Russian or Ukrainian weapons, minus geographic neighbors and countries only purchasing equipment not typically shipped, such as helicopters or planes). The fact that they nearly match[iv] leads us to believe our dataset is a reasonably representative sample of overall seaborne weapons exports.

Figure 15: *Arms Shipment Count*

DESTINATION	SHIPMENT COUNT
VENEZUELA	7
VIETNAM	6
SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN	4
ANGOLA	3
SYRIA	3
ALGERIA	2
CAMBODIA	2
CHINA	2
DRC	2
IRAQ	2
MYANMAR	2
UNKNOWN	2
ERITREA	1
ETHIOPIA	1
IRAN	1
LIBYA	1
MOROCCO	1
NIGERIA	1
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	1
SINGAPORE	1
UGANDA	1
YEMEN	1

Figure 16: *Countries in our dataset.*

All possible candidate countries.

---

iv. India is the most glaring exception. New Delhi has become the largest purchaser of Russian weapons in recent years, but is absent from our dataset. Other notable omissions include Indonesia, Kuwait, Turkey, and potential customers like Saudi Arabia and Brazil.

INSIGHT 2

The Russian and Ukrainian governments own and sell the vast majority of advanced weapons leaving their countries.

Our dataset indicates government ownership and control of virtually all weapons being shipped abroad. In some cases there is direct evidence. For example, the cargo manifest for the *Ann Scan*, which shipped 1000 tons of ammunition to Uganda in 2008, lists state firm Ukrinmash as the owner; crates of ammunition uncovered in Libya have Rosoboronexport information printed on their side. In other cases, we cross-referenced weapons shipments in our dataset with acknowledged state arms transfers. For example, we did not obtain cargo manifests for the multiple ships carrying weapons to Venezuela in 2012, but extensive media reporting of multi-billion dollar arms sales between the Russian and Venezuelan governments during this time period leave us confident that this was not a private sale.[137] The only instance of advanced weapons systems definitely being sold without governmental knowledge was the chronologically first event in our dataset, the export of Ukrainian X–55 missiles by rogue Russian intelligence officers in collaboration with corrupt Ukrainian officials and Kaalbye Shipping to Iran and China in 2001.

We acknowledge potential selection bias. Heavy weapons—tanks, armored personnel carriers (APCs), artillery, etc.—are larger, easier for governments to keep track of, and presumably less likely to be illicitly sold than small arms and light weapons (SALW). Because heavy weapons are so conspicuous, they also are easier for researchers to track, and make up a high percentage of our shipment dataset. These factors mean it is quite possible that there are private arms dealers moving large quantities of small arms, which we did not detect. We also acknowledge the troublesome ambiguity of 'governmental control,' a term assuming both unity of purpose among state entities and a distinction between the public and private sectors, neither of which are very applicable to the often chaotic and corrupt Russian and (especially) Ukrainian political systems. For example, assessing whether defense-industrial officials who sell state-owned weapons but personally retain profits are acting under government mandate is problematic. Our decision criteria was the involvement of official state weapons export agencies (ROE, USE, etc.); such arms transfers could be categorized as institutional, not personal. We note that this does not preclude non-transparency or corruption, but that such behavior continually occurring under a government roof indicates it is in some sense sanctioned.

Figure 17: *Ukrainian Defense Industrial Agency*

Figure 18: *Ukrainian Defense Industrial Agency*

Under this definition, the weapons in our dataset are overwhelmingly government owned and sold, which has important implications. There is little evidence to support the hypothesis that private actors sell major military hardware to the highest bidder. The chaos and weakening of state control in Russia and Ukraine in the 1990s led many Western analysts to believe FSU organized crime groups would export weapons (nuclear was the most feared, but also conventional).[138] These fears were not unfounded, as arms smugglers like Victor Bout, Leonid Minin, and Arkadiy Gaydamak moved weapons to customers such as the RUF in Sierra Leone and FARC forces in Columbia.[139] [140] [141] But our dataset, which largely coincides with the Putin era, indicates the Russian and Ukrainian governments have fairly good control over their major weapons systems; if they are exported, it is because someone in the government wishes it so.

Moscow and Kiev's dominant role in the weapons export process also indicates the facilitators of weapons shipments are an important foreign policy tool. Most analysts would agree that selling weapons is a Russian foreign policy lever, in particular to bolster states against the perceived threat of American intervention that Russia firmly opposes as hegemonic meddling. If this is so, then the facilitators of arms transfers are of critical importance for Russian foreign policy: they are the vehicle by which Moscow aids allied militaries and favored factions.

Governmental ownership of exported weapons since the early 2000s also confirms a narrative of Russian politics that emphasizes reassertion of state control over national assets (defense plants, oil and gas, industrial concerns, etc.) and profits resulting from sale of these assets being distributed to regime stakeholders via sanctioned corruption in exchange for political loyalty. As the story goes, the chaos of the 1990s and corrupt privatization of formerly Soviet assets meant a few oligarchs and criminals seized control, became incredibly rich and powerful, and ran the country into the ground while the ineffective Yeltsin and Kuchma governments dithered. Putin stabilized the country by marshalling a powerful coalition of military and intelligence officials and political conservatives (*siloviki*), which he used as a club to force oligarchs to return some national assets to the government, toe the United Russia political line, and perform useful services for the government when requested, creating a quasi-feudal system by which state loyalists control vast swathes of industry and government.[v]

The danger in this system is centrifugal forces, i.e. those granted immense power deciding to use it to challenge the state. To mitigate this, officials, *siloviki*, and oligarchs are kept loyal by a mix of stick (e.g. crushing those who buck the system) and carrot (paying them off to make cooperation with the state more profitable than opposition). Thus, continued Putinist rule depends on maintaining the coercive power to punish defectors, the profitability of key industries, and the ability to funnel money from these industries to the regime loyalists in charge of them.[vi] This narrative rings true for the energy industry: corrupt 1990s privatization under Yukos and Sibneft, the refusal of oligarchs Khodorkovsky and Berezovsky to relinquish control to the new Putin government and their subsequent destruction (jailed or exiled), and reassertion of state control via holding companies such as Gazprom and Rosneft, with regime stakeholders—Igor Sechin, Victor Zubkov, etc.—being placed in key positions and profiting handsomely from it.

The same is true for the defense industry, which remains one of Russia's largest export sectors. State control has been restored under holding corporations like Russian Technologies, Russian Aircraft, etc., and the profits from weapons exports are used as a feeding trough for military and intelligence stakeholders. Assuming that the loyalty of these actors is partially dependent on continued access to such rewards, then the facilitators of weapons exports are a critical element of domestic politics. As the logistical bridge linking Russian producers with foreign customers, facilitators allow the generation of profits that can be redistributed to regime stakeholders to ensure the continuation of Putinist rule. Given this, we should expect to find strong connections between high-ranking Russian officials and weapons shipment facilitators, a topic which is explored in depth in **Chapter 5**.

INSIGHT 3
A relatively small number of companies facilitate a high percentage of Russian and Ukrainian weapons exports. Most of these companies are based in Ukraine or the EU.

As shown in the table and chart below, Ukrainian firms (particularly Kaalbye and Phoenix) play a particularly prominent role, as well as EU firms Eide and Briese. Key research questions include: who are these companies, and their key personnel? What qualities do they possess that allow them to carry out so many arms shipments? Are these firms connected? If so, how? Do some firms have a particular specialty (i.e. a certain kind of weapon or customer)?

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v. Stephen Blank terms this the boyar class, after the medieval Russian nobility. See "Russian Democracy Revisited", *International Journal of Security Affairs*, Spring 2007, No. 12.

vi. This implies money laundering is a similarly essential part of the Putin system, a topic which is covered in depth in Chapter 9.
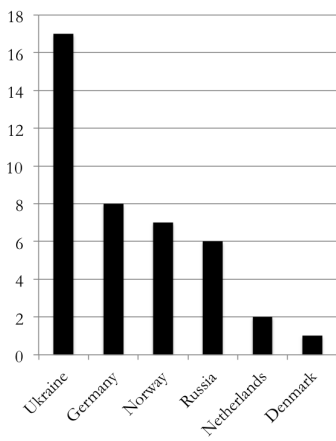
SHIPMENTS BY FACILITATOR NATIONALITY

Figure 19: *Shipment counts*

COMPANY[vii]	COUNTRIES	COUNT
Kaalbye	UKRAINE	10
Eide	NORWAY	7
Phoenix Trans-Servis	UKRAINE	4
Briese	GERMANY	4
Westberg Ltd.	RUSSIA	2
Beluga Shipping	GERMANY	2
Spliethoff	NETHERLANDS	2
Nortrop	UKRAINE	1
Ukrainian Danube Shipping Co.	UKRAINE	1
Barwil Ukraine	UKRAINE	1
FEMCO	RUSSIA	1
North-Western Shipping Company	RUSSIA	1
AnRussTrans	RUSSIA	1
Balchart	RUSSIA	1
Eckhoff	GERMANY	1
Held Bereederungs	GERMANY	1
Clipper Group	DENMARK	1

INSIGHT 4
Most weapons shipments originate at the port of Oktyabrsk, Ukraine. This is true regardless of whether the weapons being exported are Russian or Ukrainian.

Our data on port of origin for weapons shipments is inconsistent. Sometimes sources list a specific port, other times they list only a country (e.g. *shipment left Russia on September 15*), and in some cases they entirely omit information. Regardless, it is unambiguous that Oktyabrsk is the most common port of origin for Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments. Weapons shipments with a known port of origin were over four times as likely to originate in Oktyabrsk as the next most common port (St. Petersburg). For shipments in which at least the country (if not specific port) of origin was known, Ukrainian ports (primarily Oktyabrsk) accounted for nearly five times as many shipments as Russian ports (see **Figure 21** on the next page). This finding raises more questions. What is unique about Oktyabrsk that makes it the preferred port from which to export FSU weapons? If the governments of Ukraine and Russia ship so many weapons from there, what are their mechanisms for controlling and safeguarding this vital port? Since Oktyabrsk is

Figure 20: *Port of Oktyabrsk*

Oktyabrsk lies in Southern Ukraine on the Bug River, which feeds into the Black Sea. It is in the city of Nikolaev, which has its own port. Because the two ports are so close, we often refer to Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev as a single destination.

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vii. This chart lists the number of shipments in which the listed company participated. Because multiple companies can collaborate on a single shipment, the total number of shipments listed here is higher than the actual number of shipments which occurred.

in Ukraine, how does the Kremlin exert influence over a port that lies outside of Russia *de jure*? **Chapter 5** addresses these questions.

One important exception to the general dominance of Oktyabrsk is that none of the publicly known maritime weapons shipments from Russia to Syria (i.e. the ships *Chariot, Professor Katsman,* and *Alaed*) originated at Oktyabrsk, instead departing from the northern Russian ports of St. Petersburg or Kaliningrad. We have two, non-mutually exclusive hypotheses to explain this anomaly. It could be that there are ships transporting Russian weapons from Oktyabrsk to Syria, and they simply have not been publicly exposed. It also could be that St. Petersburg has particular advantages for shipments to Syria: it is located inside Russia, making it relatively immune from foreign political pressures (as opposed to Oktyabrsk, in which case the Ukrainian government may be under significant political pressure from the West to disallow Russia's Syria-bound weapons shipments).

SHIPMENTS BY COUNTRY OF PORT
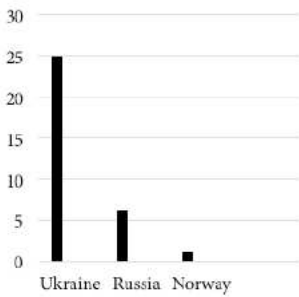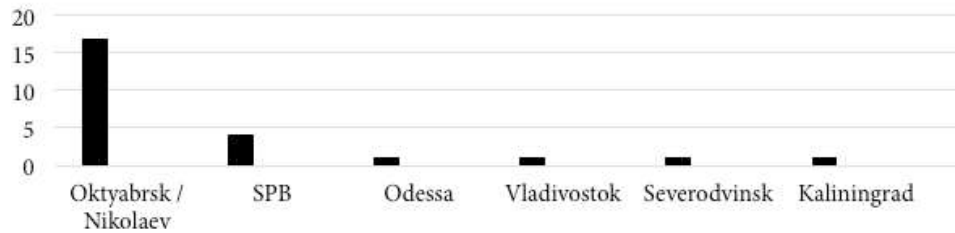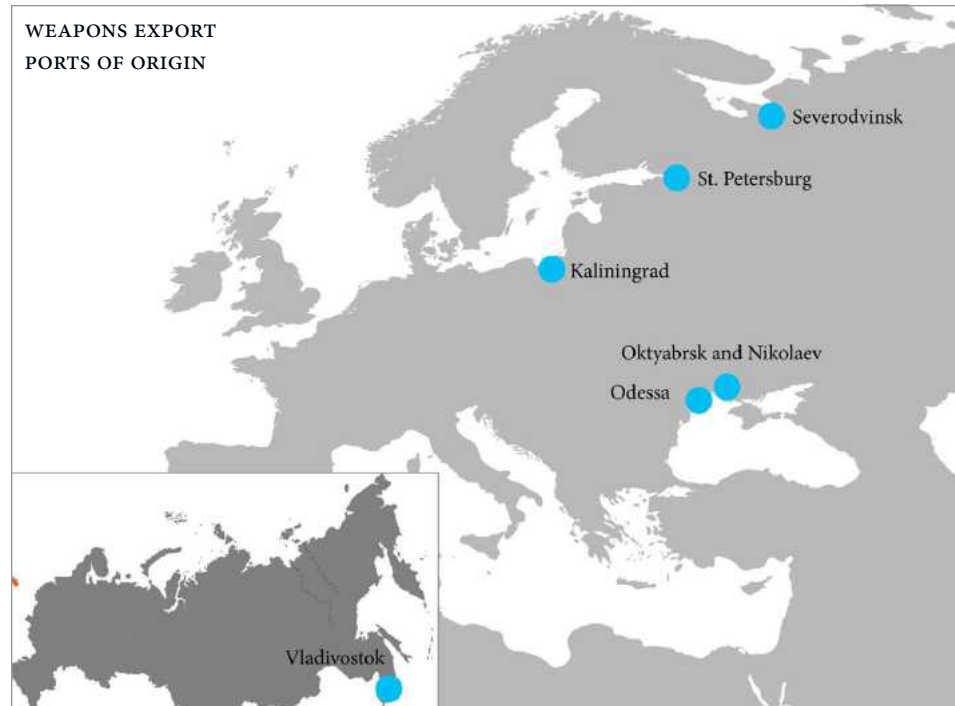
SHIPMENTS BY PORT OF ORIGIN

Figure 21: *Descriptive Statistics*

**WEAPONS EXPORT PORTS OF ORIGIN**

4 End-to-End Logistics Integration: Odessa

The overarching hypothesis of this analysis is that the Odessa, Ukraine-based firms comprise the end-to-end logistics integration backbone behind many Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments, and the key nodes of the network. There is some empirical evidence to motivate this assumption: Odessa-based firms are collectively responsible for the largest share of weapons shipments in our dataset. But to simply count shipments would ignore the Odessa companies' greatest asset: connections. Link and network analysis reveals that the Odessa companies and personnel are the center of a rich network of businesses and individuals who provide all the services necessary for a weapons shipment to occur. This hyper-connectedness includes both other Odessa companies and their partners abroad (e.g. other nodes of the Odessa Network.) We judge that Odessa companies' unique access to everything from heavy-lift vessels to skilled crews to powerful defense-industrial officials helps explain their prominence as weapons export facilitators.

Before identifying and analyzing this network in detail, we must make a few concessions to readability. The Odessa maritime industry is a bewildering sprawl of companies, subsidiaries, joint ventures, personnel (often working at one or more of said companies at the same or different times), shared facilities and equipment, common customers, family relations, and more. To some extent, this is simply how business works, licit, semi-licit, or illicit: companies try different strategies, people hop between different jobs in the industry, etc. However, the Odessa companies are transporting billions of dollars of weapons to embargoed conflict zones and US strategic competitors, and there is reason to believe some of their complex arrangements are to obscure attribution. To reduce this complexity to a manageable level, we have split up the network; this chapter is mostly devoted to introducing the key players of the Odessa Network. Successive chapters explore in detail their connections to government officials, the port of Oktyabrsk, EU shipping companies, etc.

Figure 22: *Geographic and Functional Map of Odessa Network*
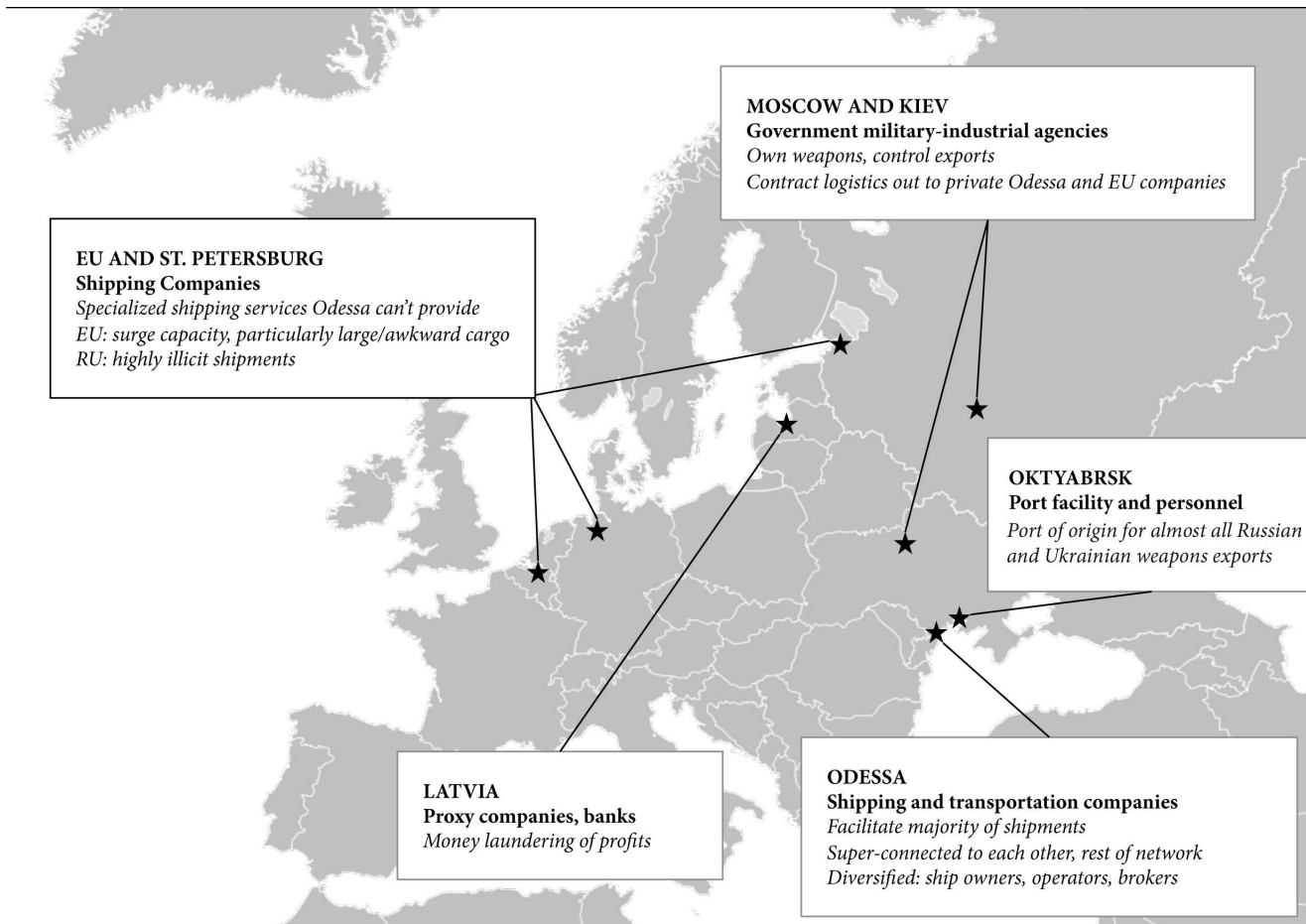
THE KAALBYE GROUP

By far the most important Odessa Network firm is **Kaalbye**. Kaalbye has engaged in at least 10 separate weapons shipments over the course of a decade, and likely more. Founder **Igor Urbansky**, a former captain in the Soviet merchant fleet, created his first company Evas in 1992 before founding Kaalbye Shipping in 1996.[142] It is important to understand this particular time and place, which spawned not just Kaalbye but many of the other entities we mention. The botched post–1991 privatization of formerly Soviet assets, in which a small group of businessmen and organized criminal figures (often working in concert) managed to control vast swathes of the new economy, created lucrative opportunities if one knew how to exploit them. Huge amounts of oil, gas, timber, and steel formerly locked away in Soviet holdings were suddenly on the free market. The overwhelming 1990s FSU business theme was getting one's hands on these newly privatized assets, and moving them out of the country to Western and Asian markets as fast as possible. Odessa has been a center of shipping and trade for centuries: much of the Soviet merchant fleet was based out of there, and multiple oil and gas pipelines terminated at the city. The race was on to grab old Soviet ships, privatize them into new companies, and use them as vehicles to export valuable resources that foreign countries and companies so dearly coveted.

SHIPMENT EVENTS	
#1	Cruise Missiles to Iran
#2	Cruise Missiles to China
#3	Assault Rifles and Grenades to Angola
#16	Tanks, RPGs, and More to South Sudan
#19	Explosives to Algeria
#29	Mega-shipment of SAMs, Rocket Launchers, ASMs, and More to Venezuela
#30	"
#33	"
#34	"
#36	Unknown Weapons to Vietnam

Figure 23: *Kaalbye Shipment Events*

Weak governance, vast stockpiles of Soviet weaponry, and foreign demand meant Odessa also was a hub of international arms shipping in the 1990s. One trafficker, Leonid Minin, was a major broker of arms to Charles Taylor in Liberia, the RUF in Sierra Leone,[143] the Ivory Coast, and even tried to sell an aircraft carrier to Turkey.[144] Another arms dealer, Arkady Gaydamak, funneled over $500 million of Russian weapons to Angola during the same time period in partnership with the son of French President Mitterand.[145] It is important to note that these businessmen were equal opportunists, exporting whatever held value: sometimes weapons, but sometimes not. For example, Minin also dealt in timber, oil, metal, and the like, primarily operating out of Odessa Port in conjunction with organized crime figures like Aleksandr Angert.[146] The situation was such that US intelligence figures singled out Odessa as the epicenter of post-Soviet arms trafficking.[147] Average Odessites and dock-workers interviewed by the authors confirmed that the city still is (or at least is perceived as being) a hub for contraband. Dockworkers maintain that they do not know the contents of the cargo they load or unload, but do know a significant portion of it is illicit. They also allege that one group with multiple front companies controls most contraband moving through the port.[148]

The existence or extent of Kaalbye's involvement in the weapons trade during the 1990s is unknown, but it certainly engaged in the Odessa port trade writ large, with companies like Kaalbye Oil Services, Ukrainian Maritime Agency, and Kaalbye Shipping providing oil services, crewing, and cargo transport, respectively. This business diversification is a major theme of Kaalbye. Kaalbye certainly entered into the weapons trade by the early aughts, and stayed there for the next decade. Kaalbye's entry into the weapons transportation market coincided with the exit of traditional facilitators: Minin was arrested in Italy in 2000,[149] and Gaydamak indicted in France in April 1999 and June 2000.[150] It also coincided with the emergence of Putin, and reassertion of state control over major weapons systems and other national assets. The 2000 sale of Ukrainian X–55 cruise missiles to Iran and China by corrupt officials, which Kaalbye facilitated,[151] is one of the very last instances of the private sale of major FSU weapons systems. Kaalbye clearly adapted to the new state-dominated weapons market, as its long list of subsequent shipments shows.

Figure 24:

Kaalbye subsidiaries, shells, etc.

Kaalbye Shipping
Kaalbye Shipping International
Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine
Kaalbye Shipping Cyprus
Kaalbye Bulk
Kaalbye Heavy Lift
Kaalbye Projects
Kaalbye Logistics
Kaalbye Yachting
Kaalbye Oil Services
Kaalbye Group
Kaalbye Group Holding
Kaalbye Ltd.
Kaalbye Agency Services
Ukrainian Maritime Agency
Deutscheland Prime Transport
New Challenge Ltd.
Olva Shipping Ltd.
Silver Streams Limited
White Albatross Ltd.

DATA: RUSSIAN, UKRAINIAN, BVI, AND
PANAMAMIAN BUSINESS RECORDS

Figure 25:

Kaalbye guards

There are three factors that explain Kaalbye's prominence. The most immediate is its government connections. Founder **Igor Urbansky** was a Deputy Minister of Transportation in Ukraine from 2006-2009, and is linked to senior Ukrainian defense officials. **Boris Kogan**, a co-founder of Kaalbye Shipping, is partner to some of the most powerful defense-industrial figures in Russia, including a deputy director of RosTech (the state defense industry holding firm—see **Chapter 5** for details). These personal connections are of immense importance, as government officials must have great trust in a facilitator's competence and honesty in order to feel comfortable handing over immensely valuable and powerful weapons systems to this private individual. Our weapons shipment dataset empirically shows that the Russian and Ukrainian governments are willing to let Kaalbye carry out even the most sensitive foreign policy maneuvers: the transfer of S–300s to bolster Venezuela against the US is a prominent example. We judge there is a direct correlation between the ties of senior Kaalbye personnel to organs of state power, and the lucrative weapons transportation contracts they receive.

Second is Kaalbye's business diversification. Kaalbye is not so much a company as an interlocking network. Through its subsidiaries, Kaalbye is one of the largest crewing (i.e. providing trained seamen for Ukrainian and foreign companies), chartering and freight forwarding (match-making of cargo owners with transportation companies), container shipping, bulk shipping (grain, coal, etc.), and project and heavy-lift (very large and unusually shaped cargo) firms in Ukraine. It even has a yacht division, which crews and manages luxury ships. This is relatively rare for the international shipping industry, in which many firms pick a specialty; it is even truer for the international *weapons* shipping industry. For example, Norwegian firm **Eide Marine Services** specializes in massive barges that can comfortably fit a warship or submarine. This means Eide is the preferred partner when Russia exports Kilo submarines to China or missile corvettes to Vietnam, but it also means Eide cannot handle any shipments outside of its lane. In contrast, Kaalbye has general cargo ships for crate-able military cargo, heavy-lift vessels for tanks and artillery, and more. This wide range of services lets it handle shipments of diverse military cargo end-to-end. The spread of weapon types and destinations that Kaalbye has shipped over the past decade is remarkable, including everything from advanced missile systems to boxes of rusty bullets, from well-heeled licit customers like Vietnam to third-world conflict zones like South Sudan. No other firm in our dataset has such a wide collection of cargo and destinations. Our assumption is that this ability to perform near end-to-end logistics integration for almost all cargos is a major reason why Moscow and Kiev turn to Kaalbye with such frequency.

The third factor is Kaalbye's external connectedness. If Kaalbye itself cannot perform a particular shipment for customers (either because all its ships are booked, or it does not have the requisite ships or personnel), it almost certainly knows someone either in Odessa or abroad who does. Virtually all of the other Odessa companies we examined are subsidiaries of Kaalbye, have collaborated with Kaalbye in the past, are staffed by Kaalbye alumni, or know Kaalbye personnel from other experiences (school, family, and the like). Kaalbye collaborated with **Tomex Team**, **Waterlux AG**, **Almar**, and **Phoenix Trans-Servis** to transport weapons to South Sudan between 2007 and 2009. Through its subsidiary **Primetransport Ltd.**, Kaalbye partners with German firm Briese, one of the most active shippers of FSU weapons. All these ties and more are examined in great detail in later chapters, but the overarching point is that Kaalbye is one of the only entities in the Odessa Network with plausible pathways for reaching out to all different corner of the network for needed services: Latvian financial services, German heavy-lift ships, Moscow officials, and more.

Kaalbye's offices take up most of a 10–story building called the Maritime Business Center in the heart of Odessa. Though one can enter the ground floor reception area at will, guards armed with AK–47s are posted at the foot of the stairs.

Kaalbye also is a contractor for US Military Sealift command.[152]
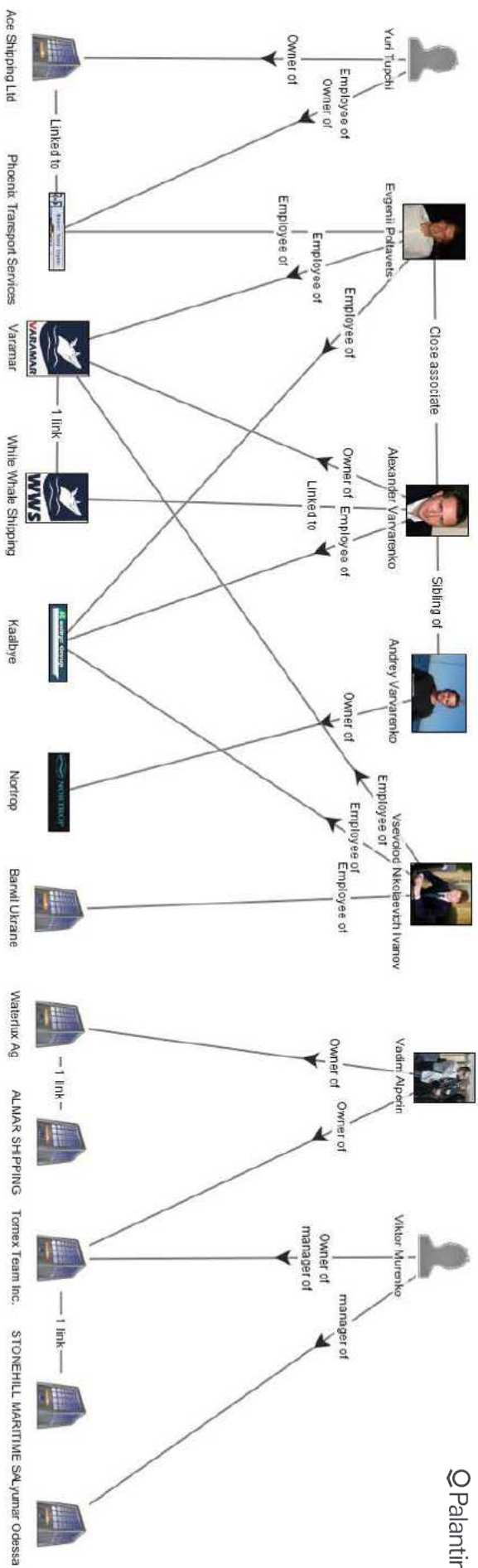
Figure 26: *Dual-listed personnel*

VARAMAR, WHITE WHALE, NORTROP, AND BARWIL

Aleksandr Varvarenko is a key connector in the Odessa Network, although his involvement in weapons transportation appears to be strictly licit, and contracts include Ukrainian, EU, and US arms shipments, not Russian. He was a director of Kaalbye Projects,[153] dating back to 2006 and continuing to at least 2009, although we believe the Projects division was not directly involved in weapons shipments. Aleksandr has been the owner and director of **Varamar/White Whale Shipping** since at least 2009. Varamar does have a track record of operating or chartering the *Alaed*, a ship caught delivering Russian weapons to Syria in 2012 (although Varamar was unaffiliated with that incident).[154] Varamar's office is located in one of the most prestigious and expensive areas of Odessa; its closest neighbors are a large consulate of the People's Republic of China and luxury restaurant.

Aleksandr's brother, **Andrei Varvarenko**, runs another Odessa maritime company, **Nor-**

SHIPPING EVENTS

#7	NORTROP	Tanks to Unknown Customer

Note: Does not include current Varamar contract to deliver APCs to Iraq, organized by US government.

Figure 27:

Varamar/Nortrop Shipment Events

trop, which has shipped weapons in the past.[155] Their father, **Valentin Varvarenko**, is one of the most powerful men in the FSU transportation industry, and worked in Latvia and Belgium for decades before returning to Russia and Ukraine to run several national transportation companies.[156] Aleksandr and Andrei grew up in Latvia and Belgium,[157] and have extensive ties there: Aleksandr started his career after graduating from Odessa National Maritime University at Belgian firm OXL-Flamar, while Andrei's firm Nortrop is part owned by Belgian firm Noord Natie (where Valentin used to be a senior executive).[158]

Figure 28:

Varamar office

Aleksandr's associate **Evgenii Poltavets** has formerly worked at Kaalbye, Beluga (a known German facilitator), Phoenix (another Odessa facilitator), is the commercial director of Varamar, and is a close personal associate of Varvarenko. He is interesting as a connecting figure but appears to be too junior to be involved in brokering major weapons shipments.

Vsevolod Ivanov is a Chartering Manager at Varamar.[159] Previously, he worked at Kaalbye Projects under Varvarenko, and before this was employed at **Barwil Ukraine**,[160] which shipped 1000 tons of ammunition to Uganda while he was employed there. While his direct involvement in this shipment is unknown, he worked out of the Nikolaev/Oktyabrsk office, which is known as a hub of weapons shipping and was the port of origin for the Uganda shipment.

Barwil Ukraine is a Ukrainian joint venture of Norwegian firm Wilh. Wilhelmsen Holding with an unknown FSU partner. Cargo manifests from a 2008 shipment of Ukrainian ammunition to the Ugandan Ministry of Defense show Barwil as the shipping agent.[161] Barwil Ukraine has its main office in Odessa,[162] but also maintains an office and personnel at the port of Oktyabrsk.[163] The general manager of Barwil Ukraine at the time of the Ugandan weapons shipment, Vsevolod Ivanov, now is a chartering manager at Kaalbye and Varamar.[164] Ivanov also is a graduate of Odessa National Maritime University, which he attended at the same time as Andrei Varvarenko.[165]

BARWIL SHIPMENT EVENTS

#17   Ammunition to Uganda

Figure 29: *Barwil shipment events*

PHOENIX SHIPPING

Phoenix is an Odessa-based company specializing in military logistics, and has deep connections to Kaalbye and defense-industrial figures. Phoenix acts primarily as a freight forwarding firm, arranging for the transportation of goods along Ukrainian railways to port, onto ships, and on to their destination. Regular Phoenix customers include Ukrspetsexport, Ukrinmash (a Ukrainian state holding company which controls much of the defense industry), the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, and Israeli defense firm LR Avionics.[166] Phoenix is co-owned by Ukrainian nationals Yuri Tupchi and Igor Kolesov.[167] The three co-founders of Phoenix—Tupchi, Kolesov, and Aleksandr Tarasik—are reported to have served together in military maritime logistics posts in Odessa, with Phoenix continuing to act as a "soft landing" for retiring officers.[168] On this note, Igor Levitin, the Russian Minister of Transportation from 2004–2012 and current personal advisor to Putin, was a senior executive at Phoenix in the 1990s after retiring from the military (see **Chapter 5** "Government Connections" for more information), and may continue to exert influence.

Phoenix both directly collaborates on weapons shipments with Kaalbye and other Odessa maritime companies, and has personnel integrated into their structures. Yuri Tupchi is the founder of Ace Shipping,[169] an Isle of Man-registered company, which helped (along with Phoenix, Kaalbye, Tomex Team, and Almar) transport multiple weapons shipments from Ukraine to South Sudan between 2007 and 2009. A Phoenix spokesperson claims that Ace acts as a tax and accounting vehicle for Phoenix.[170] Sergei Nazarenko and Oksana Popova are listed in 2008 and 2010 as employees of Phoenix,[171][172] and in 2012 as employees at maritime transportation firm Dealex.[173]

Phoenix also has EU connections. It collaborated with German firm Beluga Shipping on arms transfers to Sudan in 2008; Beluga has also moved Ukrainian APCs to Myanmar in 2009. Common personnel may aid this business cooperation. Evgenii Poltavets was a chartering manager at Beluga from at least 2007–2009,[174] and still likely has contacts in the German heavy-lift industry. Being a junior employee he is unlikely to have brokered sensitive weapons deals, but he serves as a further example of how interconnected these companies are through their personnel.

The authors visited Phoenix's reported offices in Odessa, which were closed at 3 PM on a working day, and consisted of a single, unlabeled door in an alleyway far off the main drag. This is somewhat understandable, as brokering companies such as Phoenix make their living through connections (i.e. matching cargo owners with ship owners), and therefore do not possess significant physical assets. With that said, the relative squalor of Phoenix, as well as the presence of so many former military and transportation officials, leads us to believe the company's 'real' business is located elsewhere.

VADIM ALPERIN AND AFFILIATES

Vadim Alperin is a Ukrainian-Israeli businessman prominent in Odessa, and famous for his connection to the *Faina*, a ship carrying Ukrainian weapons for Sudan which was hijacked by Somali pirates in 2008.[175][176] As his stamp and signature below show, Alperin is the director of Waterlux AG, the Panama-registered company which owns the *Faina*,[177] and also controls Tomex Team, another Panama-registered company which operates the *Faina*. **Victor Murenko** is head of Tomex.[178] Together, these two men control a wide range of Panama-registered but Odessa-based maritime companies, including Almar Shipping, Stonehill Maritime, and Lyumar Odessa. Alperin also is a former Party of Regions deputy in the Odessa city council, and owns many other businesses in real estate, transportation, and cargo brokering, including the firms Temp-Progress,[179] Logistic Servis,[180] and Metalloproduct.[181] Alperin also is reported to be business partners with Aleksandr Oiberman, another influential Israeli-Ukrainian Odessa businessman and deputy on the Odessa City Council.[182]

Interestingly, Alperin appears to have ties to Syria. It was widely reported that when the

Figure 31: *Phoenix office*

Figure 33:
Alperin and Ukranian Intelligence
(Mykola Malomuzh, head of SZR)

Figure 34:
Hares Youssef *(second from right), with*
Rinat Akhmetov and Vadim Novinsky to his left

Figure 35:
Vadim Alperin *and* Faina

Ukrainian government wanted to export weapons to South Sudan in 2007, it was **Hares Youssef**, a Syrian businessman living and operating in Ukraine[183] and personal advisor to then-President Victor Yushchenko,[184] who selected Alperin and the *Faina* as the facilitators of the shipment,[185] possibly indicating a pre-existing relationship. Youssef founded the conglomerate Hares Group, and is a business partner of some of FSU's most powerful oligarchs. For example, he co-owns a large steel factory in Moldova along with Alisher Usmanov and Vadim Novinsky, among others.[186] Youssef been the subject of intense Arab and FSU media scrutiny for his alleged ties to the international arms trade, Semen Mogilievich (for whom he is accused of being a representative), smuggling of antiquities, business partnership with Syrian-Slovakian metals trader Akthar Barakat, and ties to Maher al-Assad. Vadim Alperin appears to have additional contacts in Syria beyond Youssef. For example, he recently leased his ship *Etel* to an unnamed Syrian businessman using it for trade with Libya.[187] [188]

Figure 36:
Waterlux official seal and signature

5 Government Connections: Moscow & Kiev

The Odessa Network firms are logistics contractors for the Russian and Ukrainian governments, not independent arms merchants. State agencies such as Rosoboronexport and Ukrspetsexport own the weapons and broker almost all foreign sales. The Odessa Network companies play a critical role in making these arms transfers happen, but they only do so on behalf of powerful customers in Moscow and Kiev.

The key assumption is that there must be persistent links and contractual relationships between the Odessa Network and government officials. The Odessa Network has moved billions of dollars of advanced military hardware, which indicates a high level of government trust in its competency and honesty, implying contact between leaders on both sides. The need to keep track of what weapons are being shipped where and when necessitates contracts between state agencies and the Odessa Network. This hypothesis is supported by Rosoboronexport court cases specifying detailed contractual arrangements with other (i.e. non-Odessa Network) facilitators.[189] The Odessa shipping companies must be compensated for their services, implying exchange of bank account information, payment schedules, etc. Although we lack direct evidence for most of these links, we have uncovered multiple personal relationships between Odessa Network personnel and Russian and Ukrainain officials, including cabinet level ministers and senior defense-industrial personnel. These relationships may be the pathways along which information and trust flows.

IGOR LEVITIN

Phoenix Trans-Servis is an Odessa shipping firm that has brokered multiple weapons shipments, and openly advertises its connections to Russian and Ukrainian defense industrial concerns.[190] One former Phoenix employee is Igor Levitin, who served as the Russian Minister of Transportation from 2004-2012 and currently works as a personal advisor to Vladimir Putin, in addition to stints on the board of directors at Sheremetevo Airport and Aeroflot.[191] Levitin served in the Soviet and then Russian army from 1970 to 1994, primarily as a logistics and transportation specialist, before being cashiered in 1994. Between 1995 and 1996 he worked at Phoenix Trans-Servis, where he served as Vice-President.[192] Levitin is the most high profile, but by no means only military-logistics figure connected to Phoenix. The three co-founders of Phoenix—Yuri Tupchi, Aleksandr Tarasik, and Igor Kolesov—are reported to have served together in military maritime logistics posts in Odessa, with Phoenix continuing to act as a "soft landing" for retiring officers.[193] Although we have no data on whether Levitin continues to have contact with Phoenix, it is interesting that one of the most powerful men in Russia worked at one of the major exporters of FSU weapons.

Figure 37:
Levitin & Putin

IGOR URBANSKY

Igor Urbansky is the founder of Kaalbye, served as Deputy Minister of Transport in Ukraine from 2006 to roughly 2009, and enjoys extensive contacts among the Ukrainian defense establishment and Party of Regions clique.

The son of a Soviet KGB colonel, Urbansky was born in Georgia, where one of his close friends grew up to become former Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze's personal bodyguard.[194] Urbansky was educated at Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).[195] MGIMO is the diplomatic school of the Soviet (and then Russian) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and widely perceived as a training ground for political, intelligence, and economic elites. Urbansky served as a captain in the Soviet cargo fleet before starting his first business, Evas, in Odessa in 1992. Urbansky went on to found Kaalbye Shipping in 1996, followed by a string of subsidiaries and offshores: Kaalbye Oil Service, Kaalbye Shipping Cyprus, Kaalbye Marine Service, and more.[196] It is worth noting that during the 1990s Odessa Port was a hub of weapons trafficking and general smuggling; local mafiosos such as Leonid Minin (whose list of deeds ranges from bullets to the Ivory Coast and Angola to attempting to sell an aircraft carrier to Turkey)[197] [198] used it as a base for operations. It is possible two of the leading figures in Odessa maritime transportation did not know each other, but unlikely. The existence or extent of Urbansky's weapons transportation activities in the 1990s is unknown, but he was certainly involved by the aughts. Urbansky was involved in the sale of Kh–55 cruise missiles to Iran and China in 2000 (in cooperation with corrupt Ukrainian and Russian intelligence officials), and shipping military equipment to Angola in 2001.[199]

Figure 38:
Igor Urbansky

Figure 39:
Ministry of Transportation

Whatever its origins, Urbansky's wealth and power allowed him to become a political figure in Ukraine. From 2006 to 2009 Urbansky served as Deputy Minister of Transportation under two separate Ministers, Nikolai Rudkovsky and Josef Vinsky.[200] Urbansky apparently resigned as general of director at Kaalbye prior to taking this post; the extent of his continued connection to the firm is unknown.[201] Urbansky continues to serve as a deputy in the Verkhovnaya Rada [Ukrainian legislative body] to the present day.[202] Urbansky is closely linked to military and intelligence figures in Ukraine. For example, in 2007 he personally paid for then-Minister of Defense Vasilii Tsushko, who he knew from serving together in the Odessa Socialist Party,[203] to be flown to Germany for medical treatment.[204] The sophistication and quantity of weapons in deals personally attended to by Urbansky—cruise missiles, 636 tons of equipment, etc.—leaves little doubt of his connections to defense officials.

BORIS KOGAN

Boris Kogan is one of the cofounders of Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine and serves as a director and senior manager of the company.[205] He is a close business partner of Kaalbye co-founder Igor Urbansky.[206] Kogan is also on the board of directors of a Russian company, RT-Logistika. RT-Logistika is 51% owned by Russian Technologies, the enormous state holding firm (headed by Putin's former KGB colleague and close ally Sergei Chemezov) which owns a variety of industrial companies, including Rosoboronexport and much of the Russian defense industry. RT-Logistika is deeply involved in transporting weapons. For example, in October 2012 RT-Logistika arranged a cargo plane to transport sensory equipment for Syrian Pantsir SAM complexes from Moscow to Damascus, which the Turkish Air Force intercepted.[207] Kogan is the only RT-Logistika board member who is *not* a senior Russian defense-industrial figure.

The list of government officials affiliated with RT-Logistika includes:[208] V**alerii Yemets**, director of logistics at Rosoboronexport; **Igor Zavyalov**, deputy director of Russian Technologies, board member at Rosoboronexport,[209] and close connection of Sergei Chemezov, a key Putin ally and one of the most powerful men in Russia; **Andrei Shipilov**, **Sergei Kulikov**, and **Vladimir Litvin**, all of whom are senior executives at Russian Technologies; many other senior Russian defense-industrial figures, including **Aleksandr Kuzhekin** (an executive at Vladikinski Factory and Avtovaz),[210] **Yuri Churchen**, A**leksandr Kuznetsov**, **Aleksandr Vetvitskii**, and more.

The significance of this is difficult to overstate: Boris Kogan personally knows and works with some of the most senior defense-industrial figures in the Russian government. The company linking them, RT-Logistika, actively moves Russian weapons to Syria. The other company Kogan is involved with (Kaalbye) is by far the most frequent facilitator of Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments. Taken together, this data indicates a convincing hypothesis about Kaalbye's connections to the Kremlin, and possible role in arming Assad. At the very least, it seems probable that Kogan is a go-between for the Odessa Network and government agencies.

Figure 40: *Kogan Connections*
Igor Zavyalov, Deputy Director at Russian Technologies, and Sergei Kulikov, Executive Director. Kogan knows and works with both.

ROSOBORONEXPORT
State weapons export agency

RUSSIAN HELICOPTERS
Military helicopters

VYSOKOTOCHNYE KOMPLEKSY
Missile targeting systems

KB MASHINOSTROENIYA
Tactical ballistic missiles

ORION
Military satellites and communications

AIRCRAFT ENGINEERING CONCERN
Fighter jets

UNITED ENGINE CORPORATION
High-performance military turbofans

MACHINE ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGIES
Artillery and rocket launchers

IZHMASH
One of world's largest small arms maker

Figure 41: *Russian Technologies Subsidiaries (Non-Exhaustive)*

VIKTOR OLERSKIY

Viktor Olerskiy is the current Russian Deputy Minister of Transportation.[211] Before entering this position in 2009, Olerskiy was a long-time member of the board of directors at North-Western Shipping, a large Russian company which managed the *Professor Katsman* when it delivered weapons to Syria in 2012.[212] Olerskiy confirmed this fact in an interview with a Russian newspaper.[213] This leads us to believe Olerskiy is one of the vectors by which the Russian government can coordinate with private shipping companies such as North-Western to facilitate weapons transfers.

Some sources also report Olerskiy as being a former director of Inok, a Belgian company which was a previous manager of the *Professor Katsman*.[214] The company has strenuously denied any connections to North-Western Shipping, the Kremlin, or weapons shipping. While we have no definitive judgments here, multiple other North-Western Shipping executives currently serve as executives at Inok,[215] and Olerskiy was previously a Belgian citizen (he renounced it when he assumed governmental office),[216] [217] lending credence to the claims that he worked for Inok. These facts would seem to contradict Inok's claims, and indicate relationships to Russia.

North-Western Shipping is owned by UCL,[218] a holding company of oligarch Vladimir Lisin.

Figure 42: *Olerskiy and Levitin*
From left to right: two unidentified Russian military officers, Viktor Olerskiy, Igor Orlov (governor of Archangelsk), and Putin's personal advisor Igor Levitin (previously covered in this section).

ALEKSANDR ANNENKOV

Aleksandr Annenkov is the Chairmen of the Board of Directors at AnRussTrans,[219] the ultimate owner of the *Slavyanin*,[220] which delivered weapons supposedly bound for Iraq to some unknown customer in 2007. Annenkov was a long-time bureaucrat in Russian transportation ministries, rising to the rank of Deputy Minister of Transportation in 1999–2000.[221] Annenkov also owns Morskoi Bank.[222] Annenkov is based out of Sevastopol, which is home of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. Annekov's current connections either to the Russian or Ukrainian governments, or to Odessa Network leaders, are unknown. Despite the paucity of data on him, we believe that using Annenkov as a transporter for weapons confirms our hypothesis about the strong requirement for trust between state weapons agencies and their logisticians; Annenkov's long service as a government transportation specialist likely played some role.

Figure 43: *Aleksandr Annenkov*

CONNECTIONS TO FACILITATORS AND EACH OTHER

As shown on **Figure 44** on the next page, almost all the major Odessa-based facilitators are connected to organs of Russian and Ukrainian state power through the personal connections covered in this section. We believe that the fact that the most active shippers of weapons are also the most politically connected is no coincidence. Such connections are presumably vital to establishing the trust for the state to hand over advanced weapons systems to ostensibly private transporters, to communicating what weapons need to go where, and to verifying that they have done.

Interestingly, the government officials examined in this section not only know and work with the facilitators, but also with each other. For example, as co-founders of Kaalbye and long-time business partners, Igor Urbansky and Boris Kogan indisputably know each other and collaborate on weapons shipments. Victor Olerskiy served as Deputy Minister of Transportation under Igor Levitin for three years; this and photographic evidence in **Figure 42** make it clear they also have a working relationship.
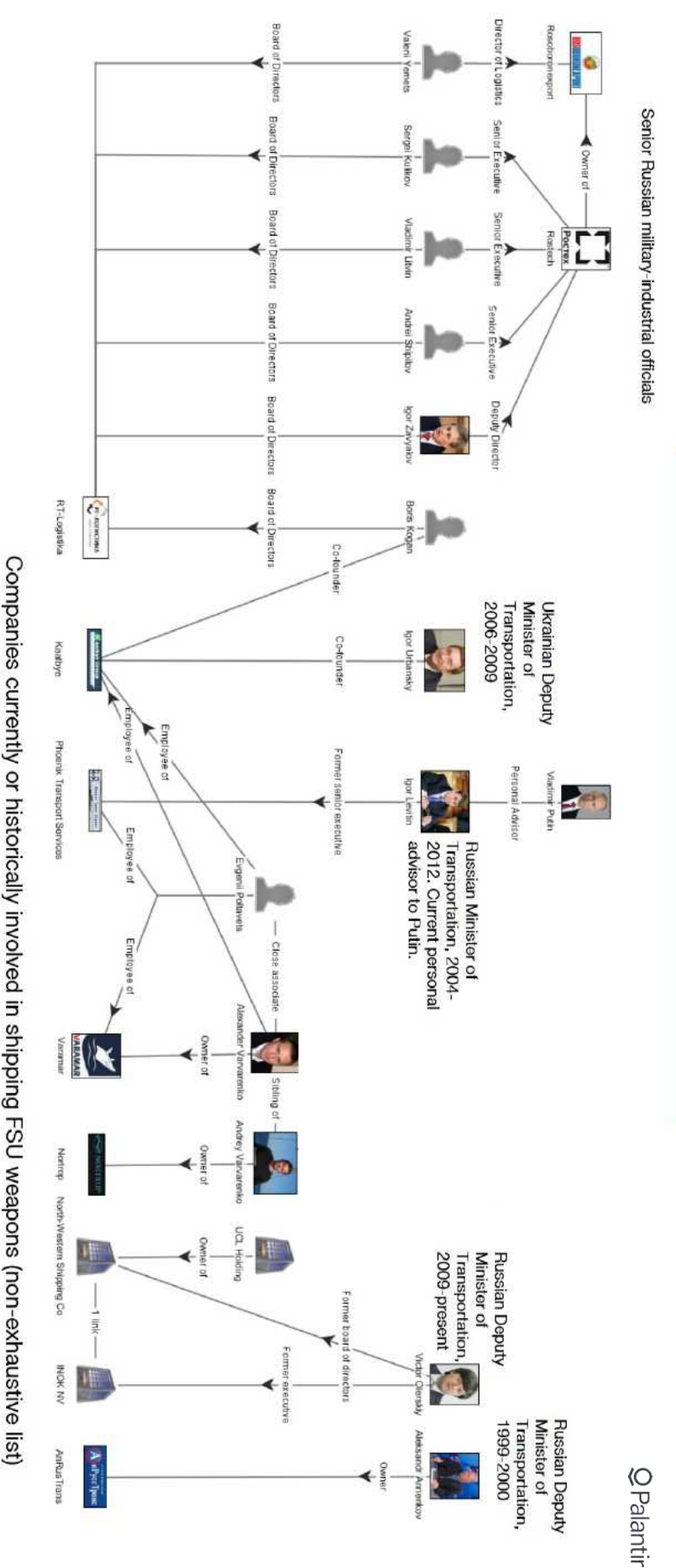
Figure 44: *Political connections of companies in the Odessa Network*

Senior Russian military-industrial officials

Companies currently or historically involved in shipping FSU weapons (non-exhaustive list)

◙ Palantir

Roscoboronexport

Owner of

Rostech

Director of Logistics

Valeri Yonets — Board of Directors

Sergei Kulikov — Senior Executive — Board of Directors

Vladimir Litvin — Senior Executive — Board of Directors

Andrei Shipilov — Senior Executive — Board of Directors

Igor Zavyalov — Deputy Director — Board of Directors

RT-Logistika — Board of Directors

Boris Kogan — Board of Directors

Co-founder

Igor Urbansky — Co-founder

Kasflye

Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Transportation, 2006-2009

Vladimir Putin — Personal Advisor

Igor Levitin — Former senior executive

Russian Minister of Transportation, 2004-2012. Current personal advisor to Putin.

Phoenix Transport Services

Evgenii Poltavets — Employee of

Employee of

Employee of

Employee of

Close associate

Alexander Varvarenko — Owner of — Varamar

Sibling of

Andrey Varvarenko — Owner of — Nortrop

North-Western Shipping Co — 1 link

UCL Holding — Owner of

Victor Olersky — Former board of directors

Former executive — INOK NV

Russian Deputy Minister of Transportation, 2009-present

Aleksandr Averienkov — Owner — AirRus Trans

Russian Deputy Minister of Transportation, 1999-2000

6 Port of Origin: Oktyabrsk

The port of Oktyabrsk is the point of origin for almost all Russian and Ukrainian weapons exports in our dataset. Located in the city of Nikolaev in Ukraine, and specially built by the Soviet Union to ship weapons, Oktyabrsk possesses a number of qualities making it well-suited for arms exports: advantageous geography, specialized equipment, transportation infrastructure to major FSU defense-industrial plants, and more. It is for this reason that many of the previously mentioned Odessa shipping companies (including Kaalbye and Nortrop) and Russian state weapons exports agencies maintain offices and personnel in Oktyabrsk. Our data suggests that Moscow exerts significant control over Oktyabrsk, despite technically being in Ukraine: the port's owner and operators have close ties to the Russian military and Kremlin. The government owns the weapons and facilitators operate the ships, but Oktyabrsk is where a weapons ship's journey physically begins.

Oktyabrsk's geographic position is advantageous for weapons exports. Because Russia and Ukraine are near the top of the Northern Hemisphere, virtually all their customers are located to the south. Ships leaving northern ports like St. Petersburg and Murmansk must traverse great distances to reach destinations in Africa, Asia, and South America, if they can depart at all—winter ice slows or shuts down these ports for part of the year. In contrast, Oktyabrsk's location on the Black Sea, nearly 1000 miles south of busier ports such as St. Petersburg or Kaliningrad, allows ships departing from there to reach typical weapons export destinations much more quickly. After transiting the Bosphorus, they can continue through the Mediterranean or Suez Canal, entering the Indian Ocean and gaining access to sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The economics of maritime transport make the time and distance savings of leaving from Oktyabrsk very significant. From a shipper's perspective, every extra mile and day eats away profit—more fuel costs, more crew costs, and more time spent fulfilling one contract, when profitability often depends on fitting as many voyages into a year as possible.

LOCATION	ALGERIA	SYRIA	INDIA	VIETNAM	Figure 45:
ST. PETERSBURG	19.9 DAYS	28.2 DAYS	36.9 DAYS	44.6 DAYS	*Oktyabrsk versus*
OKTYABRSK	10.8 DAYS	9.7 DAYS	23.6 DAYS	35.4 DAYS	*St. Petersburg transit times*

Oktyabrsk also possesses specialized infrastructure for shipping weapons discreetly and safely, and is widely known as a hub of arms export.[223] The Soviet Union specially built Oktyabrsk to move weapons from the USSR to Communist allies across the world. For example, many of the Soviet missiles sent to Cuba in Operation Anadyr, which triggered the Cuban Missile Crisis, departed from Oktyabrsk.[224] It still is heavily used for weapons exports; a senior Ukrainian government official estimates 40 weapons shipments a year,[225] and the photo gallery on the port's official website contains several shots of military cargo.[226] Oktyabrsk possesses heavy cranes, which are necessary for handling military cargo such as tanks or missiles. There also are special ammunition storage buildings separated by dirt berms, which would absorb the blast of accidentally exploding ammunition and prevent the entire stockpile from going up.

Workers at Oktyabrsk are reputed to earn much higher wages and perform at a much higher level than other ports, perhaps reflecting unusual demands on competency and secrecy.[227] Although Oktyabrsk is no longer a completely closed port, as it was during Soviet times, only trusted personnel work there and the flow of information is controlled.[228] The port was clearly engineered for operational security. Located six kilometers south of Nikolaev amidst empty farmland, there is little traffic near the port. In addition, a thick man-made forest provides a multi-kilometer buffer. Guard towers, armored bunkers, and floodlights are scattered throughout the facility. Armed guards are stationed at a single entrance, and all cars are searched.

The Soviet legacy also means there is excellent rail infrastructure running from Russian defense-industrial centers to Oktyabrsk and Nikolaev. Rosoboronexport court documents regarding arms transfers to Eritrea indicate that light weapons shipments are carried by rail from Russia to Nikolaevskaya rail station, unloaded, and then shipped out of Nikolaev port. Heavy weapons are brought by rail from Russia to Zhovtenaya rail station, unloaded, and shipped out of Oktyabrsk port.[229] This is confirmed by another court case involving the export of heavy weapons to South Korea and Algeria; all goods are listed as being delivered to Zhovtenaya Station in Oktaybrsk before being loaded onto ships.[230] A 2001 Kaalbye shipment of 636 tons of military equipment to Angola was moved by train to Zhovtenaya before embarking.[231] Yet another Rosoboronexport court case refers to weapons being transported directly from Ulyanovsk (home to several major defense plants) to Oktyabrsk for further export to Morocco.[232]
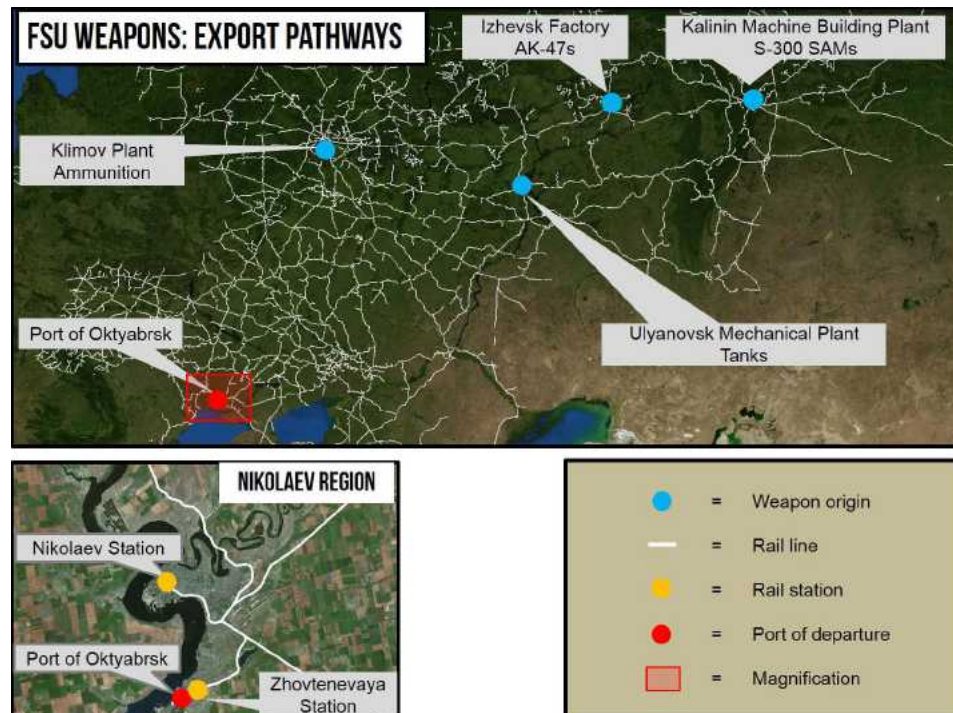

Figure 46: *FSU Weapons Export Pathways*

Figure 47:
Andrei Yegorov

The background of Oktyabrsk's leadership adds to the perception that the Kremlin functionally controls the port. Port manager Andrei Yegorov was born in Sochi (now part of Russia), served as a submarine commander in the Russian Navy Black Sea Fleet until 2000 and achieved the rank of Captain, is a graduate of multiple elite Soviet/Russian military academies, and only received Ukrainian citizenship in 2000.[233] Yegorov is reported to be a tool of the Russian-Ukrainian oligarch Vadim Novinsky, who is reputed to own Oktyabrsk.[234]

Novinsky, whose wealth has been estimated between $1.9 and $4.4 billion,[235] [236] is a co-owner of Smart-Holding, through which he controls a wide range of primarily metallurgical and shipbuilding businesses in Ukraine and Russia. Novinsky is a business partner of and closely linked to Party of Regions figures such as Rinat Akhmetov (with whom he co-owns multiple steel and agricultural holdings),[237] [238] Dmitrii Firtash, and Victor Yanukovich, who in turn are closely tied to organized crime and the Kremlin. Novinsky also co-owns a steel factory in Rybnita, Moldova, along with Hares Youssef, Alisher Usmanov, and Grigori Surkis.[239] Novinsky was born in Russia and only acquired Ukrainian citizenship in 2012, when President Yanukovich personally granted him citizenship for unnamed services.[240] He splits his time between St. Petersburg and Kiev. Although "FSB-spotting" is somewhat of a media sport in Ukraine, Novinsky has come under particular scrutiny for his perceived ties to Russian power ministries: a recent Ukrainian article entitled "Is Murky Businessman Vadim Novinsky a Stooge of Russian Intelligence?" gives some indication of this distrust.[241] [242]

Novinsky's control of Oktyabrsk is particularly interesting with additional context. The Ukrainian government recently privatized or granted private concessions on most of the country's major ports.[243] Because Ukraine has emerged as a transportation hub for Eastern Europe and FSU, control of these ports is highly lucrative. Unsurprisingly, the privatization process has been marred by charges of corruption, with government officials collaborating with oligarchs for sweetheart deals and kickbacks. There has been fierce competition between competing factions for control of the busiest ports. Yet Oktyabrsk, which moves hundreds of thousands of tons of cargo a month[244] and generates enough revenue to be among the top taxpayers in the entire province,[245] has been largely exempt from this competition. No government official or oligarch has made a move on Oktyabrsk or challenged Novinsky's control.[246] [247] No other port has been so exempted. We interpret this as recognition of the Kremlin's special interest in Oktyabrsk, i.e. that the Russian government has communicated to oligarchs that it will not tolerate disruptions or intrigue (ownership change, personnel turnover, etc.) that

Since the Soviet era, weapons shipments to various countries of the world have gone through exactly this port [Oktyabrsk.] The port has preserved this specialty even after Ukrainian independence. How this relates to the unfolding privatization of Ukrainian ports is unclear, especially if a certain fact is taken into consideration: Vadim Novinsky is a citizen of Russia.

Figure 48:
Excerpt from Ukrainian Newspaper Article

Figure 49:
Vadim Novinsky with President of Ukraine

could impede the multi-billion dollar flow of weapons through Oktyabrsk. There are few forces that can tame the chaotic, no-holds-barred competition of post-Soviet big business, but a highly motivated Russian power ministry is one of them.

Virtually all of the Odessa Network-linked shipments uncovered during this investigation departed from Oktyabrsk. The one persistent exception is weapons leaving Russia bound for the Assad regime. On multiple occasions, Russian ships have attempted or succeeded at delivering military equipment to Tartus. We are unaware of any Syria-bound weapons shipments that did not originate in St. Petersburg, and possibly Kaliningrad. As an anomaly, this deserves further examination. The reasons why *not* to use St. Petersburg are clear. Its extreme northern location adds roughly 3,000 nautical miles and 10 days of travel to an average arms shipment, as compared to Oktyabrsk. A ship leaving St. Petersburg must pass through the North Sea, which thanks to the Cold War is ringed by long-time US allies (Germany, UK, Denmark, Netherlands, etc.) and extensive surveillance equipment. These states can and have interfered with Syria-bound shipments; for example, the *Alaed*, which was carrying helicopter parts for Assad, had its insurance revoked by the British underwriter. Lastly, St. Petersburg is one of the busiest ports in the former Soviet Union. Maintaining secrecy or operational security in such an environment would be highly challenging. Lastly, it also is possible that Western governments aware of the Kremlin's use of Oktyabrsk as a weapons port have placed significant pressure on the government of Ukraine (perhaps using its EU membership bid as a bargaining chip) to disallow Syria-bound shipments from transiting Ukrainian ports.

Figure 50:
Oktyabrsk Photographs

7 EU & Russian Shipping: Specialized Services

Although Odessa-based companies carry out the majority of Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments, EU and Russia-based companies are responsible for a significant minority. We believe they play a complementary role to the Odessa-based facilitators by providing specialized services outside of Kaalbye or Phoenix's competency if necessary. Specifically, we judge that they provide specialized heavy-lift ships for unusually large shipments (warships, submarines, etc.), surge capacity during periods of high demand, or, knowingly or unknowingly, illicit shipments. Based in cities like Hamburg, Rotterdam, and St. Petersburg, these companies load weapons at Oktyabrsk and deliver them to locations like Myanmar, Libya, and Sudan. This section profiles the EU and Russian companies known to facilitate weapons transfers, and explains in detail their role in the overall weapons export process, including their connections to Odessa Network leaders.

EIDE MARINE SERVICES (NORWAY)
Warship and Submarine Transportation

The Norwegian firm Eide Marine Services is the second most frequent weapons transporter in our dataset (after Kaalbye). Eide is a perfect example of how EU firms provide specialized ships to handle large or unusual cargo the Odessa firms cannot, such as warships and submarines. If the Russian government has multiple billion-dollar contracts to deliver Kilo attack submarines to Asian customers, it is not immediately obvious how exactly to deliver a 242 foot long, 32 foot wide steel tube from European Russia to the Pacific Rim. Delivering the submarine under its own power is out of the question, given the expensive wear and tear it would inflict on a brand new machine. Most cargo ships—including those owned by trusted logistics contractors in Odessa—are unable to accommodate such huge, irregularly shaped cargo. Cargo ships are typically designed to handle granular cargo such as grain or coal (i.e. bulk carriers), liquids (i.e. tankers), 20–foot long intermodal containers (i.e. container ships), or small wheeled vehicles (i.e. ro-ros and car carriers.) Only a submersible barge, which has a single huge flat cargo bay designed to sink into the water, could handle the Kilo submarine. Eide is one of the few firms which possesses exactly such a ship, the *Eide Transporter*, which has been used multiple times to move unusual Russian military cargo to foreign customers. This includes *Tarantul*-class missile corvettes, *Gepard*-class frigates, and *Svetlyak*-class patrol boats to Vietnam, and *Kilo*-class submarines to China.

Eide's connections to either the Kremlin or Odessa shipping companies are unclear. Given how often Eide has moved Russian

Figure 51: *Eide Ships*
From top to bottom: two Gepard *frigates, two* Kilo *attack submarines, one* Tarantul *missile corvette*

weapons, it clearly has some relationship with Russian weapons export agencies, but details of this are unknown to us. We speculate that Eide interacts with Rosoboronexport directly, and does not go through the Odessa firms. This judgment is motivated in part by the lack of data on Eide-Odessa connections. While our research uncovered personal and financial ties between many EU shipping firms and Odessa, we did not find any for Eide. Thinking more broadly, Eide's specialized role also explains the lack of ties to Odessa: it operates in an entirely different market situation. Any ship can transport boxes of bullets or radar components; the value-add for shipping "typical" exports like guns or tanks is trustworthiness (implying connections with government officials) and general competency. A normal EU shipping company—i.e. one with ro-ros, container ships, etc.—seeking to enter the Russian and Ukrainian weapons market would do well to establish a relationship with Odessa companies such as Kaalbye in order to leverage their unique political connections. But Eide's distinction is functional, not political: its barge ships allow it move large military cargo that few others can. Eide does not need access to Odessa's political connections to find customers: given that Eide has moved military cargo not just for Russia, but also for the Canadian Navy,[248] US Navy,[249] Swedish Navy,[250] it is fair to say that it is a service which sells itself. Thus, our final judgment on Eide is that while it is an important logistics contractor for moving Russian weapons, it is not truly a part of the Odessa Network.

BRIESE, BBC, BELUGA, SPLIETHOFF, ECKHOFF, & CLIPPER (GERMANY AND NETHERLANDS)
Heavy-Lift Transportation

The German firm Briese Schiffahrts GmbH and Co KG is another transporter of Russian and Ukrainian weapons. Based in Leer, Germany, Briese is one of the largest shipping companies in Germany and among the largest heavy-lift shippers in the world, with a fleet of over 140 ships. Heavy lift ships typically carry their own cranes, and so can move large, heavy, and unusually shaped cargo such as tanks, artillery, etc. Bulk carriers and normal cargo ships—such as those owned by Kaalbye Shipping—cannot do so. This ability becomes even more useful if the port of discharge lacks proper infrastructure for handling such bulky cargo, since the ship can use its own crane rather than relying on old or non-existent port equipment. We believe that this gives Briese (and other EU heavy-lift firms discussed later) an important functional role in the Odessa Network: heavy weapons shipments, in particular to poor-infrastructure countries. This judgment is born of empirical data. As **Figure 53** shows, every weapons export event Briese has facilitated involved transporting heavy military equipment to poor-infrastructure states.

Briese ships appear to be heavily staffed with Russian and Ukrainian captains and seamen, reflecting the fact that most of Briese's crewing business comes from Russia and Ukraine.[251] In confirmation of this, there are multiple Briese advertisements on the streets of Odessa soliciting seamen to apply. Briese maintains offices or branches in Odessa,[252] Sevastopol,[253] St. Petersburg,[254] Murmansk, Archangelsk, Petrozavodsk, Astrakhan, Rostov-na-Donu, and Vladivostok.[255]

In addition, Kaalbye Transport is the agent for a BVI-registered and Hamburg-based shipping company,[256] Primetransport Ltd. Primetransport maintains an office and personnel (Leonid Simakov) in Hamburg, but the company appears to be mostly based out of Odessa and staffed entirely with Russians and Ukrainians,[257] the majority of whom are dual-listed in other Kaalbye companies,[258] leading us to believe Primetransport is simply a Kaalbye shell. This perception is strengthened by the fact that Primetransport is even located at the same office building in Odessa as Kaalbye, as **Figure 55** shows. Primetransport lists BBC Chartering (a Briese subsidiary) as one of its clients, and counts *BBC Conan* as part of its fleet.[259] It is clear they have an existing business relationship, in addition to the personal ties described above.

EIDE SHIPMENT EVENTS

#8	Attack submarines to China
#13	Missile corvettes to Vietnam
#20	Patrol boats to Vietnam
#24	Frigate to Vietnam
#27	Frigate to Vietnam
#39	Patrol Boats to Vietnam

Figure 52: *Eide shipment events*

BRIESE SHIPMENT EVENTS

#9	Ammo and military vehicles to DRC
#21	Heavy weapons to DRC
#22	Tanks to Sudan, unknown explosives to Singapore
#23	Tanks and APCs to Cambodia
#A	A.Q.Khan nuclear centrifuges to Libya

Figure 53: *Briese shipment events*

Figure 54: *Briese ad in Odessa*

Figure 55: *Primetransport and Kaalbye Author's photo of portion of business directory at Kaalbye headquarters; Primetransport is listed fourth.*

55

BRIESE CORPORATE STRUCTURE

MANAGEMENT	Ems Offshore Service GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	Briese Schiffahrts GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	Ems-Leda Shipping GmbH & Co. KG *Germany*	Briese Shipping BV *Scheemda, Netherlands*	Briese Research *Leer, Germany*
CHARTERING	BBC Chartering & Logistic GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	BBC Project Chartering GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	Briese Chartering GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	Bremer Reederei E&B GmbH *Bremen, Germany*	Peak Shipping AS *Bergen, Norway*
CONSULTING	OWT – Offshore Wind technologie GmbH *Leer, Germany*	Briese Agency Ltd. Spolka z.o.o. *Szczecin, Poland*	China Supervision *Tianjin, China*	SEC GmbH & Co. KG *Leer, Germany*	
CREWING	Briese Swallow St. Petersburg Ltd. *St. Petersburg, Russia*	Briese Schiffahrt Ukraine *Sevastopol-Odessa, Ukraine*	Heavy Lift Manila Inc. *Manila, Philippines*	Leda Shipping GmbH *Leer, Germany*	
PORT LOGISTICS	EPAS Emden Port Agency Service GmbH & Co. KG *Port of Emden, Germany*	BERA GmbH & Co. KG *Port of Papenburg, Germany*			

Figure 56:
Briese corporate structure

Beluga Shipping is a now-insolvent[260] German shipping company that previously was one of the largest in Germany, and one of Briese's chief competitors. Like Briese, Beluga specialized in heavy-lift shipping and possessed an extensive heavy-lift fleet.[261] This allowed it a similar functional specialty within the Odessa Network in heavy-weapons shipments to low-infrastructure countries (note the countries and cargo in **Figure 57**). Beluga also appeared to specialize in spectacularly controversial cargo and customers: it was responsible for moving A.Q. Khan nuclear centrifuges to Libya, tanks and APCs to Myanmar (which was then under active UN sanction), and tanks, rockets, ammo, and more to South Sudan (also under UN sanctions).

Beluga had multiple connections to the FSU and Odessa Network. Phoenix Trans-Servis chartered the *Beluga Endurance* to deliver a large weapons shipment to Sudan/South Sudan (Event #15). Beluga also established a joint stock venture, Beluga Projects Logistics,[262] with an unnamed Russian transportation company to specialize in the Russian and Eastern European market.[263] Beluga also worked closely with BBC (Briese); for example, the ship that moved centrifuges to Libya was owned by Beluga but chartered by BBC.[264] Beluga and BBC (Briese) even signed a strategic alliance to coordinate business activities.[265] In addition to these documented ties, Beluga employees had ample opportunity to form personal contacts with Odessa Network firms, seeing as they frequently attended the same Russian shipping trade conferences. For example, Beluga representatives Harry Kaegebein, Nikolai Mishkin, Sergey Ovsienko, and Olga Gulyaeva attended the 2010 Heavy Lift Russia Trade Conference, also attended by Odessa companies.[266] Other guests of interests included representatives from BBC Chartering (i.e. Briese), Atomstroyexport (the Russia government's nuclear technology export firm), and a Libyan shipping firm.[267]

Spliethoff (Netherlands) and **Eckhoff** (Germany) provide another interesting example of EU companies' cooperation with the Odessa Network. Between 2005 and 2007, Venezuela signed $4 billion worth of arms deals with Russia (Sukhoi fighter jets, combat helicopters, and small arms) and in 2010 received a $2.2 billion Russia loan to buy S–300 SAMs, T–72 tanks, BMP–3 IFVs, BTR–80 APCs, Grad MRLs,[268] and more,[269] making it the single largest importer of Russian ground weapons in the world. Arms transfers of such magnitude required equally extensive logistical processes to physically move the weapons from Russia to Venezuela. In 2012 alone, four separate Kaalbye ships—*Socol* 3, *Socol* 6, *Ocean Voyager*, and *Ocean Fortune*—delivered Russian weapons to Venezuela. They were not alone: the Spliethoff ship *Sluisgracht* and Eckhoff-managed ship *Stade* accompanied Kaalbye in transporting weapons to Venezuela.[270] Their behavior confirms our hypothesis about EU firms specializing in heavy lift: the *Sluisgracht* was responsible for transporting the T–72 tanks, presumably leaving the lighter cargo for Kaalbye. We lack information on the nature of Spliethoff and Eckhoff's connections to the Russian government or Odessa Network. One source names Spliethoff as a long-time partner of Rosoboronexport. This seems plausible, especially since Spliethoff appears to ship weapons for other countries as well (i.e. military transportation is a consistent business for them). At the same time *Sluisgracht* was in Venezuela in 2012, another Spliefhoff ship, *Schippersgracht*, was delivering arms to Egypt on behalf of US Military Sealift Command.[271] We also believe *Sluisgracht* has some contacts with Kaalbye; the level of coordination required to move such large quantities of weapons in concert would seem to demand it.

Clipper Group is a Denmark-based shipping company that moved Ukrainian tanks in 2005 in cooperation with Nortrop.

BALCHART, WESTBERG, FEMCO, NORTH-WESTERN SHIPPING COMPANY, ANRUSSTRANS (RUSSIA)
Highly Sensitive Shipments

Russian shipping companies play a surprisingly small role in the maritime export of FSU weapons. Our dataset shows only four arms transfers facilitated by Russian companies: three to Syria, and one to an unknown customer of sufficient interest that the US State Department formally complained about the transfer. Russian shipping companies have been linked to a number of other incidents, which while not 'true' FSU arms transfers and hence excluded from our dataset, are also interesting. This includes the transportation of weapons from Iran to Syria in 2009,[viii] weapons of unknown nationality from Egypt to DRC in 2012, and the *Arctic Sea* incident in 2009, in which a Russian-operated ship was hijacked off the coast of Sweden, allegedly by Mossad in order to prevent it from delivering S–300 missiles to Iran.

These events all share two qualities. The first is that the customers and/or intermediary nations make these events highly illicit.[ix] Syria, Iran, and the DRC are all under arms embargos and subject to intense scrutiny from Western governments. Strikingly, we can find no weapons transfers facilitated by a Russian shipping company that were *not* highly illicit (whereas the Ukrainian and EU elements of the Odessa Network have plenty of licit shipments to Vietnam, Venezuela, etc.). Similarly, the second common feature is that the Russian government is deeply involved. For example, Russian arms transfers to Assad during the heat of the Syrian civil war are far more politically motivated than 'typical' weapons sales, and thus imply more direct military, SVR, FSB, and GRU involvement. While the small sample size of shipments means that any analytical judgments are fairly low confidence, these factors lead to two tentative hypotheses. One, Russian shipping companies 'specialize' in illicit shipments, i.e. are more likely to be contracted by state weapons export agencies for this kind of shipment. Two, they have particularly strong connections to the Russian government, including through the Odessa Network. The remainder of this chapter profiles the Russian shipping companies known to facilitate arms transfers, and how they confirm or deny the above two hypotheses.

BALCHART SHIPMENT EVENTS

#28   Munitions to Syria

Figure 59:
Balchart shipment events

Sergei Cherkasov	Aleksei Pestrikov
Igor Evstigneev	Nikolai Potiavin
Evgenii Gunchev	Tatiana Shimskaya
Oleg Katrechko	Andrei Shuklenkov
Aleksandr Lisitsky	Evgenii Sklyarov
Pavel Machalov	Konstantin Volanskis

Figure 60:
Balchart current and former Employees

Balchart is a chartering company specializing in shipments throughout the Baltic region, with offices in Riga, Latvia,[272] Tallinn, Estonia[273] and St. Petersburg, Russia. The company is managed by Russian national Andrei Shuklenkov, and Estonian nationals Evgenii Sklyarov and Aleksei Pestrikov.[x] The list to the right contains all current or former Balchart employees publicly available.[274] As Balchart is primarily a chartering company, not a ship owner or operator, it is fairly difficult to locate open-source records of the companies and ships they work with. The only result we could find was an international shipping registry listing Balchart Estonia as the manager of *Porhov*. [275]

Balchart's connections to the Russian government and Odessa Network leaders are not so hard to find. The company's website lists Rosoboronexport, Izhmash (a Russian Technologies-owned defense firm that is one of the largest small arms producers in the world), and IRISL as clients,[276] and openly states the company's specialty in military logistics. Balchart representatives have attended many of the major trade conventions at which senior

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viii. The MV Monchegorsk incident

ix. To be clear, we use the term 'illicit' to emphasize that the listed states are widely perceived as violating international norms, and sending weapons to them is highly controversial. Judging the exact legality of these arms transfers is beyond our purview.

x. Judging by name, ethnic Russians.

Figure 61:
FEMCO shipment events

Figure 62:
North-Western shipment events

Figure 63:
Westberg Ltd. shipment events

Odessa Network personnel were present, giving them ample opportunity to establish or maintain contact. For example, Balchart representative Igor Yevstigneev attended the 2008 Novo International Shipbrokers and Shipowners Conference in Novorossiysk,[277] also attended by Nikolai Melnikov and Artur Nitsevich (Interlegal), Victor Puyu (Kaalbye), as well as other interesting guests such as IRISL.[278]

FEMCO operated the *Alaed*,[279] which moved weapons to Syria in 2012. According to the company's website, FEMCO provides marine management services for oil and natural gas development. FEMCO appears to be a contractor for Gazprom on the Barents Sea, and for the Sakhalin oil field under development by Rosneft. FEMCO is in fact a spinoff from Rosneft, of which it previously was a subsidiary.[280] It goes without saying that these two companies are the archetype for "power vertical" politics and headed by United Russia apparatchiki such as Igor Sechin and Viktor Zubkov. FEMCO has performed military logistics tasks within Russia, for example shipping the bulkhead of a new Russian navy corvette from the construction yard to Komsomolsk-na-Amur for assembly.[281] In addition to these government ties, FEMCO also has direct business relationships with key Odessa Network firms. Varamar (a Varvarenko company) has operated and/or chartered the *Alaed*, the FEMCO-owned ship, implying a contractual relationship between the two.[282]

Northwestern Shipping Company was the owner and operator of the *Professor Katsman*, which delivered helicopter parts to Syria in 2012. Northwestern is a subsidiary of UCL, the holding company of oligarch Vladimir Lisin. Northwestern personnel have almost certainly met and interacted with other Odessa Network firms at various events attended by high-level personnel. For example, the then-Deputy Director of Northwestern Shipping, Aleksei Morozov, attended a 2009 trade conference in Odessa.[283] Attendees included representatives from Phoenix Trans-Servis. Similarly, in 2011, Northwestern sent representatives Tatiana Morozova and Yulia Gorbunova to that year's conference; other attendees included Phoenix Trans-Servis, ABLV,[xi] and other Odessa Network mainstays.

Westberg Ltd. was the owner and operator of the *Chariot*, which transported AK–47 and rocket launcher ammunition to Syria in January 2012. Registered in the Marshall Islands but operating out of St. Petersburg,[284] Westberg has a complicated ownership structure of multiple subsidiaries and proxy companies, including Trolle Shipping (BVI), Midas Pete Ltd. (Belize), Goldwick Maritime Inc., and Valetta Holding Corp. According to the company's website and confirmed by Russian business records,[285] Westberg is managed by Oleg Aleksandrovich Smolyan. Westberg is the owner of the *Myre Seadiver*, a ship used by Moran Security Group, a private maritime security company linked to the Odessa Network. This is covered in more detail in the following chapter.

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xi. A Latvian bank used by various Odessa Network companies. See Chapter 9.

8 African Private Security Companies

SHIP AND CARGO PROTECTION

Odessa shipping companies appear to own or employ multiple private maritime security companies [PMSCs], including Moran Security Group, Muse Professional Group, Helicon Security, Changsuk Security Group, and Al Mina Security Group. These companies' business model revolves around staffing ships transiting dangerous areas (particularly the Gulf of Aden and Gulf of Guinea) with heavily armed FSU military veterans, who provide protection from pirates.[286] Though hijacking is a threat for any ship-owner, it is particularly troubling when the cargo is sensitive military equipment, as happened with the 2008 *MV Faina* incident in which Somali pirates hijacked a Kaalbye ship carrying Ukrainian weapons to South Sudan.

Figure 64:
Moran Security

We believe the Odessa Network uses PMSCs as protection for its military cargos to avoid a repeat of this kind of event. Although we lack direct evidence of PMSC participation in Odessa Network weapons shipments—e.g. photos of PMSC personnel on a ship definitely carrying weapons—we judge that this is so. Logically, it is fair to assume if a group of companies specializing in weapons shipments has extensive connections with a group of companies specializing in guarding shipments, the guarding of weapons shipments is likely the basis for their cooperation. It seems highly improbable that the Odessa Network would not upgrade their security after the *Faina* incident; having their sensitive military cargo hijacked would demand some kind of security solution.

Moran Maritime Group is registered in Belize[287] but based in Moscow.[288] Moran is staffed primarily with Russian and Ukrainian military veterans, but also includes former intelligence officers. For example, company president Vyacheslav Kalashnikov is a St. Petersburg KGB and FSB veteran. Like many PMSCs, Moran operates its own ships, including both patrol craft and "floating armories" (ships carrying weapons and ammunition for the PMSC's use).[289] This practice has been heavily criticized by groups such as the UN Somalia Monitoring Group for its lack of transparency and safety, since these high-seas ships are not subject to shore-based regulations.[290] One of Moran's ships, *Myre Seadiver*, is owned and managed by Westberg,[291] the Russian company which also owns the *MV Chariot*, which shipped weapons to Syria and the DRC in 2012. Strengthening this hypothesis is a 2011 incident in which the *Chariot* was transiting the Arabian Sea and attacked by Somali pirates, who were repelled by Russian Special Forces veterans acting as guards for the ship.[292] It is impossible to say for certain that the Chariot was carrying weapons at the time, or that the guards aboard were from Moran, but since Westberg is a known weapons shipper and has a business relationship with Moran, it is worthy of further investigation. Interestingly, the Moran-operated *MV Myre Seadiver* was arrested in Nigeria in October 2012 in possession of significant quantities of small arms and ammunition.[293]

Another one of Moran's clients is the German company Hansa Heavy Lift[294] [HHL]. HHL is in fact just a 'reboot'[295] or rebranding[296] of now-bankrupt Beluga Shipping, which previously was one of the most active European nodes of the Odessa Network. Two members of HHL's four managing directors are Beluga veterans,[297] and a high percentage of HHL's fleet is inherited from Beluga.[298] Beluga was responsible for shipments of A.Q. Khan centrifuges to Libya, anti-tank missiles to Myanmar, and tanks to South Sudan. The exact nature of Moran's relationship with HHL, or what kind of cargo they are hired to protect, is unknown.

Muse Professional Group is another major PMSC with clear links to the Odessa Network. Headquartered out of Ukraine,[299] and primarily employing Ukrainian veterans,[300] Muse is run by U.S. citizen Charles Kuneff.[301] Muse reportedly was at one time affiliated with Varamar, but this relationship appears to be since terminated.[302] Muse has multiple affiliates, including Changsuk Security and Al Mina Security.[303] Mr. Kuneff is also reported to own and run Helicon Security.[304] [305]

The fact that private security companies are linked to the Odessa Network is particularly interesting given recent developments in East Africa. Foreign observers,[306] local media, and on-the-ground contacts report a growing number of Russian and Ukrainian private military security companies and arms dealers operating in war zones such as Somalia and

the DRC. FSU entities offer a wide range of services, acting as a one-stop shop for governments and militant groups alike to purchase weapons, mercenary services, trained pilots, and the like. Muse is certainly active in Somalia, where a SMG report lists it as guarding ships entering and leaving Bossaso Port.[307] Muse also works with the Yemeni coast guard to contract its services out to the highest bidder.
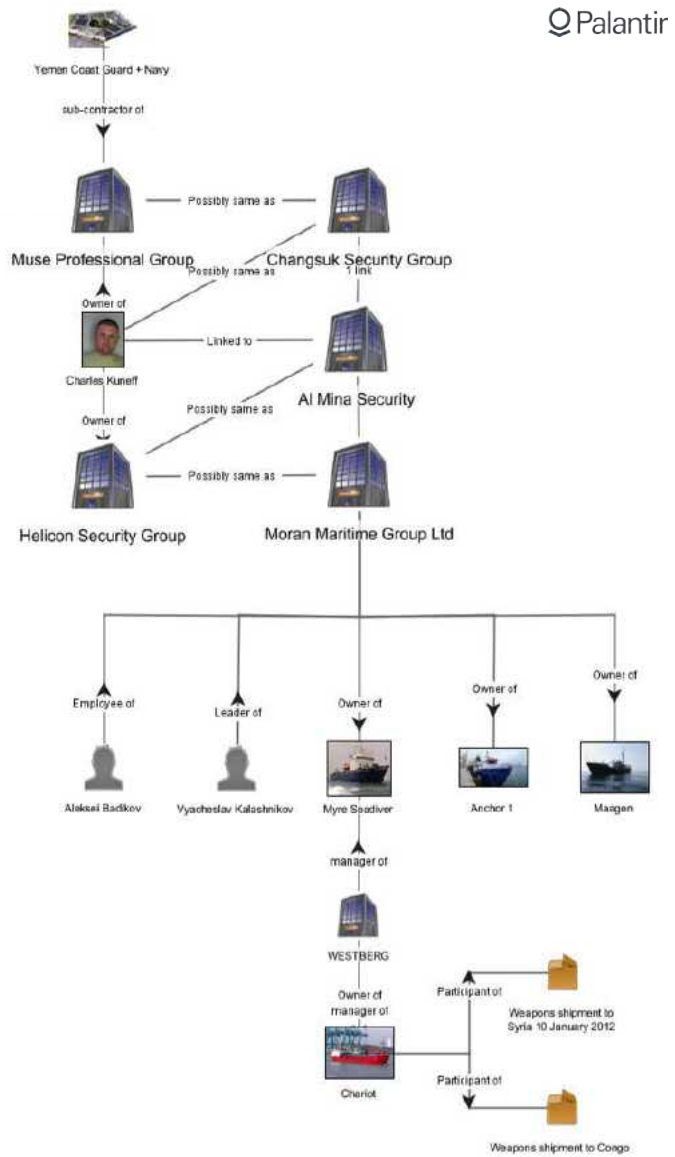

Figure 65:
Private Maritime Security Companies

9 Latvia: Financial Services & Laundering

Russian and Ukrainian weapons are big business, both for the governments who export them and the Odessa Network companies contracted as transporters. Russia exported over $17.6 billion of weapons in 2012 alone,[308] with Ukraine coming in at $1.3 billion.[309] The Odessa Network company leaders facilitating these weapons flows clearly earn significant profits from doing so. They drive Mercedes and BMWs, vacation in the South of France, and have numerous real estate and business investments. For example, Kaalbye co-founder Boris Kogan is reputed to own multiple Odessa nightclubs,[310] while Tomex head Victor Murenko is a VIP customer at Odessa Alfa Bank.[311] There is also evidence that some of these companies employ Latvian banks known or accused of money laundering and a series of Panamamian companies run by Latvian nationals who act as "proxy directors."

The Odessa Network operates in a region of the world where financial crime is endemic, large-scale, and persistent. Precise numbers for the value of money laundering in FSU are of course nonexistent, but in 2001 the UN estimated Russia alone was laundering more than $100 billion of "dirty money" every year.[312] In 2012, the Bank of Russia estimated that a full 4% of Russia's GDP was illicitly siphoned out of the country every year, and that 40% of all capital leaving Russia was in fact laundered.[313] The outgoing head of the Russian central bank, Sergei Ignatiev, recently gave a more conservative estimate of $49–52 billion yearly.[314] Redistribution within Russia is also a problem: experts estimate that the total value of corruption in Russia, which ranks 133rd out of 176 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index [TICPI],[315] is between 5 and 10% of GDP ($94-$190 billion).[316] Ukraine ranks even lower at 144th on the TICPI. It is important to understand that Russian and Ukrainian arms exports occur in this context of massive and systemic financial evasion.[317]

There are also functional reasons why money laundering is useful in arms shipping, particularly in concealing illicit arms transfers. Although some of Russia and Ukraine's weapons exports are perfectly licit (e.g. Vietnam, Venezuela, etc.), some are or were in violation of international sanctions (Sudan, Myanmar, Syria, etc.). The shipping companies and officials involved in such transfers would be wise to conceal their involvement for fear of public identification or legal retribution. Since the "money trail" is one of the most powerful and widely used ways to connect criminals to crimes, obscuring illicitly obtained finances via off-shore shell companies, proxy directors, and the like is a useful strategy for evasion.

Lastly, we argue that money laundering

… official figures from the Central Bank show that in 2011, 250,000 Russian firms paid no taxes and submitted annual reports reporting no business activities. Simultaneously, the Central Bank found that more than 4 trillion rubles ($130 billion) had been processed through the accounts of these inactive companies.

"That is almost half the budget of Russia in 2011," he said. And that is just the official accounting

"Unofficially, we believe that of the 5 million firms registered in Russia, 3 million or even more are phantom companies, which don't conduct any real commercial activities and are aimed only at money laundering."

Figure 66:
Statement of Russian Official on Money Laundering

and corruption are built-in features of the Putin political system, and so we should expect military-industrial exporters to engage in it. As stated in **Chapter 5**, illicit redistribution of national wealth to regime stakeholders is how United Russia and the Party of Regions maintain stability, by making collaboration with the state more profitable than challenging it. By definition, money laundering is essential for such corrupt redistribution. It is the mechanism by which favored officials can steal tax revenue,[318] well-connected generals can sell military property to the highest bidder,[319] and trusted oligarchs can receive sweetheart deals on state assets. Money laundering also plays an important role in Russian foreign policy by bankrolling the Kremlin's ability to manipulate and influence countries of interest. A small but well-documented example would be the SVR funding the election of a pro-Russian candidate in a Latvian city mayoral election;[320] the slush funds for such operations do not come about licitly. An official EU statement on the Magnitsky affair (**Figure 67**) summarizes this argument nicely.[321] If we accept this as true, then money laundering is an indispensable service for the Putinist system, and we should expect weapons export agencies and their contractors to engage in it.

All these factors lead us to hypothesize, even before examining specific data, that both the government owners of exported weapons and some Odessa transporters of exported weapons use financial institutions known or accused of money laundering.

FSU money laundering relies on proxy directors and shell companies. In this scheme, companies or people wishing to remain anonymous recruit people with no business qualifications to lend their names as directors to businesses located in offshore havens like Panama, allowing the "real" owners to conduct business with near total anonymity. One shell company can then be named as the director of yet another new company, creating a daisy chain of shell companies facilitating anonymous financial transactions and obscuring ownership.[322] A group of Latvian nationals (most notably Erik Vanagels and Stan Gorin) are among the most prolific proxy directors.[323] Their identities have been used by Ireland and BVI-based International Offshore Services to set up thousands of companies responsible for a wide range of crimes. A non-exhaustive list of examples includes a Kazakh official laundering $5 billion of money through the UK,[324] a $150 million kickback scheme involving a Ukrainian government contract to procure oil rigs,[325] money laundering for the Sinaloa Cartel and Vietnamese mafia,[326] and procurement of North Korean weapons for Iran.[327]

The Odessa Network also is an active user of Latvian proxies. For example, the companies owning the *MV Faina* which transported weapons to South Sudan are all Vanagels-Gorin shells. The ship's manager Almar Shipping is directed by Williston Line, which is directed by Williston Impex Corp, which is directed by Integri SA, a Gorin-Vanagels Panamamian shell company used to register thousands of other shells. The ship's owners, Tomex Team and Waterlux AG, similarly can be traced back to Cascado AG and Systemo AG, two more of Gorin and Vanagel's preferred shell registrars.[328] Kaalbye Agency Services Ltd., Kaalbye Logistics International, and Kaalbye Yachts all were established by International Offshore Services and/or directed by Vanagels-Gorin affiliates.

Some Odessa Network entities also has strong ties to Latvian banks known or accused of laundering money. A financial hub even during Soviet times, Latvia has multiple advantages which have made it a global hub of money laundering, particularly for FSU countries (above all, Russia). Latvia is neighbors with Russia and has regular flights to FSU cities like Baku and Astana. It has a large ethnic Russian population, and the Russian language (the

"Russia has a huge parallel budget, involving massive black funds used for stabilizing and expanding the elite's power, in Russia and beyond, but especially in the territory of the former Soviet Union… such a parallel budget needs to be fed."

Figure 67:
EU Statement

lingua franca of FSU) is widely spoken. Most importantly, it is a member of the EU, and so money cleaned through Latvia can readily be transferred into safe havens in Zurich or London. Over half of the $25 billion held in Latvian banks is held by foreign depositors; the IMF estimates FSU entities account for 90% of this.[329] The US Treasury blacklisted two Latvian banks in 2005 under the Patriot Act for the role their money laundering services played in terrorist financing.[330] The EU, IMF, [331] and Council of Europe[332] (among others) have all expressed their concern about Latvian money laundering, with the Magnitsky affair only increasing the level of interest. In the following section, we explore several Latvian banks which the Odessa Network companies may use to launder profits from weapons shipments.

ABLV BANK

ABLV Bank is one of Latvia's largest financial institutions, a known money launderer, and closely connected to the Odessa Network. ABLV is the largest Latvian-owned bank by assets,[333] and holds the largest amount of non-resident deposits of any bank.[334] 40% of its clients are Russian.[335] ABLV has been recently linked to two high-profile cases of money laundering. Then known as Aizkraules, ABLV was one of the six banks through which illicit money in the Magnitsky case was laundered (along with Baltic International Bank, Trasta Kommercbank, Rietumu Bank,[xii] Baltic Trust Bank, and PrivatBank).[336] In addition, the anti-corruption group Global Witness accused ABLV in August 2012 of laundering roughly $30 million out of Kyrgyzstan.[337]

ABLV Bank has been a financial supporter of "Maritime Days in Odessa" from its inception,[338] and has sent senior executives to the event multiple times, often as keynote speakers. They have done the same for other conferences heavily attended by the Odessa Network firms. For example, ABLV Head of the Regional Development Department Kazimir Rezvy and Head of the Private Bankers Department Igor Shlivko both made the trip from Riga to Odessa for the 2011 "Practice of Maritime Business 2011" conference in Odessa, attended by representatives from Phoenix Trans-Servis, North-Western Shipping, and others.[339]

We infer that this is evidence for a financial relationship between ABLV and some Odessa Network shipping firms, and a personal relationship between senior ABLV personnel and some Odessa Network leaders. Strengthening this inference is data directly indicating that some of these com-

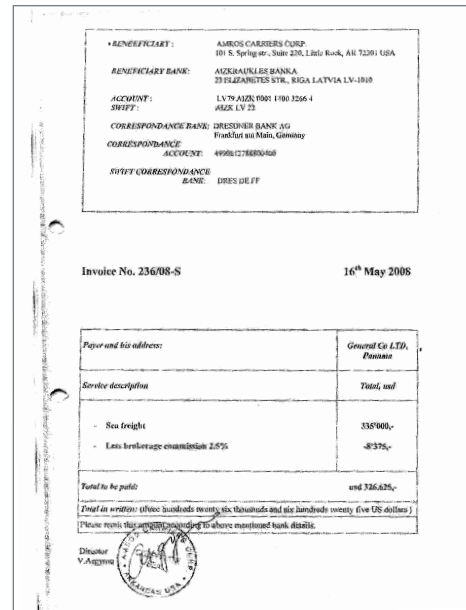Figure 68:
ABLV sponsorship of Odessa event

Figure 69:
Waterlux AG court documents

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xii. Rietumu Bank also attended some of the Odessa Network-sponsored events, similar to ABLV.

panies use ABLV bank. The below document is from a 2009 US court case involving Waterlux AG and Phoenix Trans-Servis (owner and manager of the Faina, and closely tied to Kaalbye) show one of their business partners using "Aizkraukles Bank."[340] This was the previous name of ABLV.[341]

REGIONAL INVESTMENT BANK JSG

Documents from a 2009 court case[342] show that some elements of the Odessa Network use Regional Investment Bank JSG. Again, this Latvian bank has a track record of being used for money laundering; a US Securities and Exchange Commission filing indicates it as the destination for money a $11 million Ponzi scheme.[343] As the below documents show, Waterlux AG and Phoenix Trans-Servis (the owner and manager of the weapons ship *Faina*, and closely linked to Kaalbye) both appear to have regularly used Regional Investment Bank JSG.
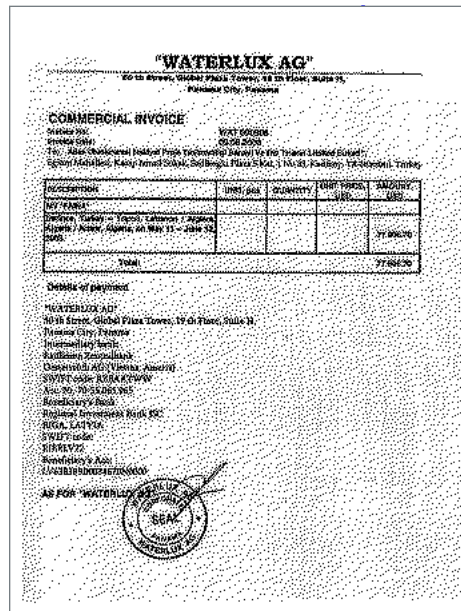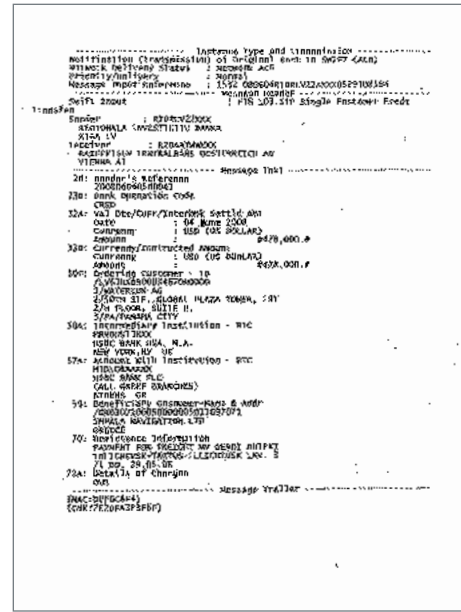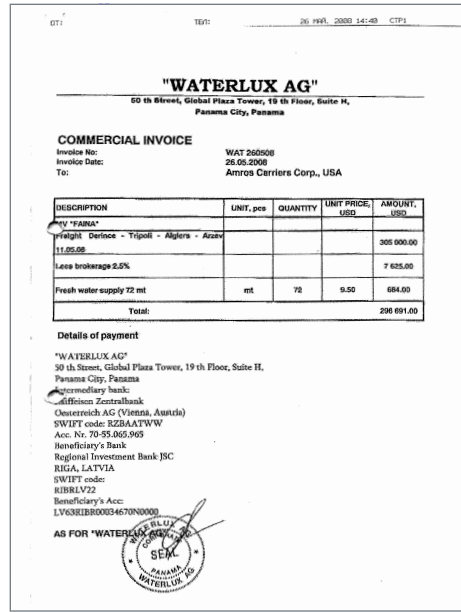

Figure 70:

Waterlux AG court documents continued

10 The Odessa Network: Overview

The quantity and complexity of inter-connected entities in this investigation have thus far compelled us to divide them into location-function clusters (e.g. Odessa—Logistics Integration, Oktyabrsk-Port of Origin, etc.) and examine one by one. Though this allows granular analysis, it risks losing the forest for the trees. In this section, we present a more abstract overview of the network.

One of the preliminary insights from the weapons shipment dataset was that a relatively small amount of facilitators accounted for a high percentage of Russian and Ukrainian arms transfers, with many 'repeat offenders.' Our subsequent analysis discovered that many of these facilitators possess personal and financial ties with each other. Using this information to re-examine our dataset and compare the number of weapons shipments carried out by Odessa Network facilitators versus the number carried out by non-connected facilitators reveals that the Odessa Network as a whole

Figure 71:
Number of weapons shipments by facilitator

is responsible for the majority of Russian and Ukrainian seaborne arms transfers in our dataset. Out of all shipments for which the facilitator is known, all but six are attributable to the Odessa Network. Eide Marine is the only facilitator in our dataset without clear personal and financial ties to other facilitators and Russian or Ukrainian government officials.[xiii]

The fact that such a high percentage of FSU arms transfers are facilitated by the Odessa Network implies that the common equipment, procedures, and locations used by these facilitators serve as a detectable 'signature' of Russian or Ukrainian arms shipments. In more practical terms, if we know that a few linked companies account for the majority of arms transfers, and these companies follow predictable patterns of ships, personnel, ports, and more, we should be able to recognize these patterns and identify possible arms shipments ahead of time.

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xiii. As previously discussed, Eide Marine is a unique case. It is one of the few companies in the world that possesses huge submersible-bay barges capable of transporting warships and military submarines. The fact that it offers such a specialized and rare service means in some sense it does not 'need' connections to get contracts; if a government needs to move a 250 foot long, 30 foot wide submarine between continents, Eide is one of very few options.

11 Case Study: Syria

The main value of this research lies in prediction. We have identified the companies, facilities, and processes through which Russia and Ukraine have exported weapons by sea to foreign customers in the past. Under the assumption that past behavior is indicative of future behavior, we should be able to make better guesses about where FSU weapons are flowing by looking for the patterns of weapons shipments uncovered by our analysis. In practical terms, this means ships owned by companies that have moved weapons in the past, are loading cargo at Oktyabrsk, and are delivering it to a state known to purchase Russian or Ukrainian weapons, are more likely to be transporting Russian or Ukrainian weapons to that state than a ship not matching these criteria.

Syria provides a compelling case study for this approach. There is no doubt that Russia is supplying Assad, but the extent of arms transfers is less well known, at least in the public sphere. Multiple ships—the *Professor Katsman*, *Chariot*, and *Alaed*, among others—have been interdicted carrying Russian weapons to Syria, as have aircraft such as the Syrian Airbus 320 intercepted over Turkey. These few cases where Russia has been publicly "caught" are likely indicative of a larger trade. Assad-controlled Syria cannot domestically produce enough ammunition, military equipment, diesel fuel, etc. to sustain a two-year-long conventional war. Large-scale Russian (and Iranian) support is the only logical explanation for how it has been able to do so. Identifying and closing the avenues by which the Kremlin is arming Assad with everything from tank parts to missiles is a possible tactic for reducing this support and weakening Assad.

By obtaining AIS transponder records for all ports in Syria, Ukraine, and Russia between 1 January 2012 and 30 June 2013, we constructed a near-complete log of commercial maritime traffic entering or exiting ports in these countries over the given timeframe, complete with exact date, time, and location. Using the unique IMOID identifier for each ship, we cross-referenced the port call dataset against ship registry records, allowing us to determine ship owner, manager, tonnage, flag, etc. Given the byzantine financial and organizational arrangements used by the Odessa Network, this entailed significant investigative research into identifying the ownership structure of shell companies; this was accomplished by using Palantir to integrate diverse datasets drawn from sources such as Ukrainian court records, SWIFT transaction receipts, Russian business directories, international shipping registrars, and more. Once this combined database was complete, we searched it for the "signature" of FSU arms shipments discovered through our analysis: ships owned or operated by companies with a track record of transporting Russian and Ukrainian weapons, transiting from Oktyabrsk, St. Petersburg, or Kaliningrad to Syrian ports such as Tartus, Al Ladaqiya, and Baniyas. We added one more possible selection criteria of "AIS discrepancy." Ships can turn off their transponders, broadcast a false name or IMOID or MMSI, or even "spoof" their signals to appear as if they are in an entirely different location or are an entirely different ship than they actually are. Past Russian weapon shipments to Syria such as the *Katsman* have turned their AIS transponders off, and Iranian vessels routinely spoof their signals.[344][345] The International Maritime Organization publishes lists of ships that are detected with these discrepancies, which we included in our database. Putting this all together, we identified shipment events that match patterns of ownership and behavior seen in past Russian weapons shipments.

odessa network and syria
Kaalbye is the single most active shipper of Russian and Ukrainian weapons; it also actively transports unknown cargo between Oktyabrsk, St. Petersburg, and Tartus. The Kaalbye-owned *Ocean Voyager* entered St. Petersburg on 13 January 2012, where it remained for two days. It then left, and arrived in Tartus on 3 February 2012. After completing this shipment, it transited to Oktyabrsk, loaded cargo, and delivered Russian weapons to Venezuela as part of a multi-ship convoy completing a $4 billion arms transfer that included S–300 missiles. *Ocean Voyager* made many other port calls in Oktyabrsk in 2012, including 22 May, 28 May, 13 October, and 14 November. The same is true for all of Kaalbye's other ships; literally their entire fleet transported cargo from Oktyabrsk to points abroad in 2012 and

2013, often multiple times. These ships include *LS Aizenshtat*, *Ocean Fortune*, *Ocean Winner*, *Ocean Force*, *Ocean Energy*, and *Ocean Power*.

Many of Kaalbye's 2013 port calls at Oktyabrsk are followed by long periods with its ships missing from AIS coverage. These ships call in Oktyabrsk, are detected transiting through the Bosphorus into the Mediterranean by Turkish AIS receivers, and then go "off the grid" for weeks or even months. This is not inherently criminal, as AIS coverage is imperfect; ships are often undetectable when on the high seas, far away from land-based AIS receivers, and many under-developed ports lack adequate AIS infrastructure. Yet these areas are relatively few. Virtually all of Europe, North and South America, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, and much of the Middle East and North Africa are covered by commercial AIS services. The fact that so many of Kaalbye's destinations after leaving Oktyabrsk are not detected on AIS means either they are docking at areas with poor AIS coverage, or are deliberately turning off their AIS transponders to avoid detection. Both of these conditions apply to Syria; AIS data is difficult to come by,[xiv] and many of the known Russian and Iranian weapons shipments (such as *Katsman* and *Chariot*) have turned off or spoofed their AIS transponders when approaching Syria to avoid detection.

This pattern of Kaalbye ships docking at Oktyabrsk, entering the Mediterranean, then disappearing from AIS coverage has been most prevalent during periods of heavy Russian military aid to Syria. Russia allegedly surged heavy weapons shipments to Syria in Spring 2013, a period during which the majority of the Kaalbye heavy lift and ro-ro fleet loaded cargo at Oktyabrsk, entered the Mediterranean, and then disappeared for weeks on end. These voyages fall into three categories: innocuous voyages, where the transit times and distances line up, and gaps in coverage coincide with long periods of high seas transit; moderately suspicious voyages, where transit times indicate major delays or diversions, but could be offset by high seas transit; and highly suspicious voyages, where transit times and distances indicate major delays or diversions not sufficiently explainable by high seas transit (i.e. missing AIS records either outbound, inbound, or at destination ports).

Innocuous voyages are explainable as simply taking place on the high seas, away from land-based AIS receivers, within average timeframes for transit: *Ocean Power* loaded at Oktyabrsk 27 May–8 June, passed through the Bosphorus a few days later, and was off the grid until 2 July, when it reappeared in Curacao. The approximate travel time for a ro-ro transiting Istanbul—Curacao at an industry-standard average of 13 knots is 32 days, suggesting Kaalbye's ships may even operate at higher than industry-standard speeds.

Moderately suspicious voyages where the transit time indicates a major diversion or delay and a blackout period possibly explainable by high seas transit include *Ocean Winner*, which loaded at Oktyabrsk 17–24 March, passed through the Bosphorus 27 March, the Aegean 29 March, and disappeared until 10 May, when it reappeared in Wilmington, North Carolina. The approximate travel time for a heavy-lift ship transiting Istanbul—Wilmington at *Ocean Winner*'s average of 8 knots is 28 days, meaning it spent 17 more days at sea than necessary to complete that voyage. However, the ship's final March positions show it heading west from the Aegean, so it is unlikely to have diverted to Syria or the Eastern Mediterranean.

The remaining Kaalbye voyages are highly suspicious. *Ocean Fortune* loaded at Oktyabrsk 1–5 January, broadcast its last position heading southeast out of the Aegean on 9 January, and then reappeared outside the Eastern Mediterranean, reentering through the Suez Canal, on 7 March. Possible final destinations include India, although that trip should only take approximately 13 days at the ship's average speed of 11 knots. The *Ocean Voyager* shows a similar gap, but its last positions were in the Western Mediterranean, meaning it likely did not obscure movements to Syria. Both ships have only one other gap in their AIS records, Spring 2012, when they were in Venezuela delivering heavy weapons.

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xiv. Many of the major commercial AIS vendors lacked information on Syria; we leveraged AIS "Destination" data from smaller EU and FSU AIS providers, who maintain land-based receivers in the Eastern Mediterranean.

xv. Average travel times and speeds calculated using the Transit Time/Distance Calculator at http://www.searates.com/reference/portdistance/.

Kaalbye was not the only Odessa Network company delivering unknown cargo to Syria in 2012 and 2013:

- Almar is a known weapons transporter, having been involved in the 2009 Faina incident, and is tied to Vadim Alperin, who has multiple business contacts in Syria. Almar manages a ship called the *Aviva*. The *Aviva* entered Odessa on 2 May 2012, and left for Tartus on 14 May 2012. It arrived in Syria on 21 May 2012. Aviva also loaded cargo at Novorossiysk, departed on 13 March 2013, and arrived in Tartus on either 22 or 29 March. Again, this corresponds with the surge in Russian weapons deliveries to Syria in Spring 2013.

- Ukrainian Danube Shipping Company, which was the ship owner and operator for a delivery of Ukrainian weapons to South Sudan in 2007, also owns the *Viano do Castelo* and *Tatarbunary*. These ships delivered or loaded some unknown cargo in Tartus on 22 February 2012 and 12 July 2012, respectively. *Viano do Castelo* has made many other port calls in Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev, including 21 May 2012, 28 May 2012, and 24 December 2012.

- The German company Briese is one of the most active European nodes of the Odessa Network. It owns and operates *Martin*, which was previously used to deliver Ukrainian weapons to South Sudan in 2007. The Martin docked in Oktyabrsk on 27 June 2012, left, and arrived in Tartus on 4 July 2012, where it delivered and/or loaded some unknown cargo. Briese also owns *Bonacieux*, which delivered or unloaded unknown cargo in Al Ladaqiyah, Syria on 13 March 2012. Finally, Briese also owns *Wybelsum*, which entered Al Ladaqiyah on 29 December 2012, 6 January 2013, 13 January 2013, and 20 January 2013, respectively.

- Inok NV was involved in shipping Russian weapons to Syria aboard the *Professor Katsman*, which it managed, and it has political connections to Kremlin. This was not Inok's first trip to Syria: it owns and operates the *Pola Atlantic*, which docked in Tartus between 22 April 2012 and 28 April 2012 (before the *Katsman*).

- Eckhoff Reederei was the ship manager for a shipment of Russian weapons to Venezuela in early 2012. Eckhoff Reederei also manages the *OXL Emir*, which docked in Tartus on 2 May 2012 and then arrived in St. Petersburg on 30 May 2012.

- Solchart Archangelsk was the owner and operator of the *Arctic Sea*, widely suspected of attempting to transport S–300s to Iran in 2009. Solchart also is the owner and operator of *Arctic Sky*, which has made multiple trips from Kaliningrad to Syria, the exact path by which known weapons shipments have traversed. *Arctic Sky* left Kaliningrad on 14 April 2012, and arrived in Tartus on 12 May 2012. It returned to Kaliningrad on 8 August 2012, and then again transited to Tartus between 14 and 21 October. *Arctic Sky* also made multiple stops in Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev.

- Dutch firm Spliethoff has been linked to multiple Russian weapons shipments in the past. Spliethoff owns and operates *Artisgracht*, which docked in Al Ladaqiyah on 12 March 2012.

While it is impossible to say using only open source and commercial data exactly what cargo was contained in each of the above shipments, the key takeaway is that in 2012 and 2013 many ships from the Odessa Network left from known ports of origin for Russian weapons shipments and went directly to Syria or embarked on voyages that only make sense if large portions of their movements were obscured. The evidence (i.e. Syrian port calls by Odessa Network-linked ships, AIS discrepancies coinciding with known Russian seaborne arms shipments) presents a strong circumstantial case that these ships and companies are moving weapons or other sensitive cargo to the Assad regime, which is bolstered by the fact that most of the interdicted and publicly reported Russian arms shipments were also carried out by members of this network.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS: SYRIAN SHIPPING COMPANIES
An assumption of this paper has been that when the governments of Russia or Ukraine sell weapons abroad, they (not the purchaser) coordinate the transportation of said weapons, most often through the Odessa Network. While we believe this is the case for the vast majority of arms transfers, it is plausible that in some cases the purchasing country itself

would handle logistics. The two are not mutually exclusive: it could be that both Russia or Ukraine and the purchasing country handle different sub-sections of an overall arms transfer, perhaps with Kremlin-linked FSU facilitators handling the most high-value (in both the military and financial senses) weapons, systems, and 'native' facilitators from the purchasing country handling the lower value weapons.

If we suppose this 'mixed' hypothesis (some FSU facilitators, some purchasing country facilitators) is true, and apply this to Syria, we should expect to find Syrian shipping companies transporting weapons from Oktyabrsk and/or St. Petersburg to Syria. While we have no data confirming the presence of weapons onboard, our AIS records show a steady stream of ships owned by Syrian companies (often relocated to intermediary countries such as Lebanon or Egypt) transiting between Oktyabrsk and Tartus. In some cases these companies are known partners of Odessa Network facilitators. For example, Mamari Shipping, a Syrian company which has conducted business with Kaalbye in the past, owns the *Lady Nour*. This ship left Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev on 21 November 2012, and entered Tartus on 14 December 2012.

The following table shows all ships which docked in both Oktyabrsk/Nikolaev and Syrian ports (Tartus, Al Ladaqiyah, and Baniyas) in 2012, along with the name and nationality of the ship owner and manager. In many cases, the nationality and base of operations reported to registrars is a cover; many of the Egyptian, Lebanese, etc. shipping companies listed below are in fact Syrian. The table is sorted by combined port calls. For example, a ship that docked in Oktyabrsk once and Tartus once would have two total. We use this as an imperfect but useful measure of the overall Oktyabrsk-Tartus (or vice versa) trade facilitated by the ship.

What leaps off the page is that Syrian companies comprised most of the Oktyabrsk-Syria traffic in 2012. Again, we stress that we cannot say with certainty that there were weapons aboard these ships. Russia and Ukraine are major grain exporters,[346] and Syria (whose domestic production has been hit hard by the ongoing conflict) is a net importer.[347] This trade could explain some percentage of the overall Oktyabrsk-Syria traffic.

Interestingly, however, ships owned or operated by companies based in Syria or common intermediary countries (Lebanon and Egypt) made up a higher percentage of traffic at Oktyabrsk in 2012 as compared to other, busier, Ukrainian ports such as Odessa.[xv] The percentage of Syrian traffic at Oktyabrsk is significantly higher even compared to Nikolaev, just a few kilometers up the Bug River. In addition, bulk grain carriers are in fact ideal for shipping large quantities of small arms; for example, court documents from the 2007 US trial of legendary Syrian arms dealer Monzer al-Kassar show he intended to use a grain carrier, *Anastasia*, to move thousands of assault rifles and grenades to the FARC.[348] It is of course possible that there is no correlation between an abnormally high percentage of Syrian ships loading cargo at a port that is the epicenter of Russian arms exports and then travelling to Tartus, and the continued flow of Russian weapons into Syria.

Figure 72:
Syria-Oktyabrsk maritime traffic, 2012

SHIP NAME	IMOID	PORT CALLS IN 2012			SHIP MANAGER	COUNTRY*
		SYRIA	NIK/OKT	COMBINED		
MINO G	7725697	14	12	26	Yass Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
C. R. TANGER	7722621	20	1	21	Melody Shipping Co	Greece, Turkey
JAMIL G	7725673	12	9	21	Yass Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
ABBOUD-G	7821635	8	11	19	Yass Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
ISMAEL MEHIEDDINE	7616171	10	5	15	MTM United Co Sal	Lebanon & Syria
KOPALNIA BORYNIA	8701911	10	4	14	Yass Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
TRUSTWORTHY	7713876	7	6	13	Realistic Stand Shipping SA	Panama, Syria
FAST CHALLENGER	7725130	8	4	12	Levant Shipping and Technical	France, Lebanon, Egypt
HAROUN	7211373	11	1	12	Gate Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria

* Refers to where company is based

xvi. The overall percentage is still quite low (< 11%), but it is higher than that found at other Ukrainian ports (< 4%.) Of course, this could be an artifact of Oktyabrsk being a smaller sample size than, say, Odessa.

SHIP NAME	IMOID	PORT CALLS IN 2012			SHIP MANAGER	COUNTRY
		SYRIA	NIK/OKT	COMBINED		
OCEANIC STAR	7818353	8	4	12	UFC Ship Management Co Ltd	Syria
RASHA B	8113140	7	5	12	Rasha Shipping Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
EAGLE	7521170	8	3	11	Abdul Rahman Othman Ismail Co	Syria
KOPALNIA HALEMBA	8701935	8	3	11	BNY Shipping Ltd	Marshall Islands
LADY RIMA	7908782	3	8	11	Mercator Marine Ltd	Marshall Islands, UK
ANA MARIA D	8418253	8	2	10	GMZ Ship Management Co SA	Lebanon
FINIKIA	9385233	9	1	10	Syrian General Authority	Syria
LADY DINA M	8110411	7	3	10	Hind Maritime Enterprises SA	Greece, Lebanon, Syria
LADY NADA	8029507	4	6	10	Hind Maritime Enterprises SA	Greece, Lebanon, Syria
MARWAN. A	8408648	6	4	10	Ismail Maritime Co	Syria
PALMYRA I	7501819	7	3	10	Rayan Maritime Services	Syria
ABDOUL RAHMAN B	8028682	8	1	9	Buzzard Marine SA	Lebanon, Syria, UK
ADI I	7623100	6	3	9	Sigma Grains Ltd-Leb	Lebanon, Cyprus
LAODICEA	9274343	6	3	9	Syrian General Authority	Syria
PARIS Y	7433426	4	5	9	Eastern Shipping Co Ltd	Lebanon, US, Germany, China
SURAYA-Y	8023319	5	4	9	Indicator Marine Co Ltd	Egypt, Syria
ABDUL B	7920259	6	2	8	Bayazid Shipping Co.	Lebanon, Syria
AHMED JUNIOR 1	8222056	3	5	8	Rayah Maritime Services Group	Lebanon & Syria
CARGO ENTERPRISE	7626396	4	4	8	Midtrade Sal	Lebanon
DREAM TRUE	8126824	4	4	8	Rayah Maritime Services Group	Lebanon & Syria
JINAN	8322844	1	7	8	Al Jinan Operation Co	Syria
KHALDOUN S	8907577	6	2	8	Brave Sea Trading Maritime	Turkey
LADY LEEN	8503840	4	4	8	Transocean Services SRL	Romania
NADA Y	7505190	4	4	8	JLS Marine Co	Jordan, Syria
RAKAN M	7341685	7	1	8	IMS Hellenic Co	Greece
RAND	7713266	4	4	8	Nejem Co Marine Services	Egypt, Syria
RASHA STAR	7516448	7	1	8	MCD Shipping SA	Turkey
M/V MASTER ISMAIL	8202056	3	4	7	MTM United Co SAL	Lebanon
MV PIRIREIS	7916727	2	5	7	Emiroglu Deniz Nakliyati	Turkey
NELSON	8009416	2	5	7	Transit Denizcilik Nakliyat	Turkey
SOURIA	9274331	6	1	7	Syrian General Authority	Syria
ZARA	8206284	4	3	7	Rasha Shipping Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
AMINA H	7505217	4	2	6	Arados Shipping Co SRL	Romania
CAPTAIN ISMAEL	7607742	5	1	6	MTM United Co SAL	Lebanon
GHADA D	7715989	3	3	6	Barhoum Maritime Co	Lebanon & Syria
GHANIA	7424229	5	1	6	Faros Shipping Co SARL	Lebanon
HASSAN D	7610270	3	3	6	Barhoum Maritime Co	Lebanon & Syria
HUZUR 1	7720702	2	4	6	Emiroglu Deniz Nakliyati	Turkey
LADY HIND	9114464	2	4	6	Hind Maritime Enterprises SA	Greece, Lebanon, Syria
M/T TAMGOUT	9120425	2	4	6	NOLIS-SPA	Algeria
M/V ASRA-Y	7433347	2	4	6	Gate Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
RAZAN STAR	7720910	4	2	6	Nejem Co Marine Services	Egypt, Syria
SHEHAB ALMUHIEDDINE	8316364	5	1	6	Judi Group JKM	Lebanon & Syria
VEYSEL VARDAL	9079303	4	2	6	Veysel Vardal Gemicilik	Turkey
AMAR MUHIEDDINE	8413942	3	2	5	Judi Group JKM	Lebanon & Syria
ASCO B	7360734	4	1	5	Yass Marine Co Ltd	Lebanon & Syria
BALTIMAR ORION	8812875	4	1	5	Nereide Marine SA	Greece
CASSINI	7915230	2	3	5	RPTD sold undisclosed interest	
CRYSTAL.MOON	8000305	4	1	5	Gold East Logistics Co	Egypt
FATIH SULTAN MEHMET	8308874	4	1	5	Emiroglu Deniz Nakliyati	Turkey
HIBA.K	8322179	4	1	5	ISM Group Inc.	Lebanon & Syria
LIBRA	8122610	4	1	5	Terra Navis Shipping Ltd	Greece

SHIP NAME	IMOID	PORT CALLS IN 2012			SHIP MANAGER	COUNTRY
		SYRIA	NIK/OKT	COMBINED		
MASHTA AZZAR	8414283	4	1	5	Jomarine Shipping and Trading Co.	Jordan, Syria
OCEAN VOYAGER	9111216	1	4	5	Kaalbye Shipping Ukraine KSU	Ukraine
PRINCESS MARIA	8212087	1	4	5	Arados Shipping Co. SRL	Romania (See Note)
SOMAYA	8116960	3	2	5	Mallah Ship Management Co. Ltd	Greece, UK?
VENUS	7942441	3	1	4	Zahra Maritime Services Co.	Lebanon, Syria
AL YOUSSEF	8005549	1	3	4	Delmar Logistics Ltd.	Lebanon
ARCTIC SKY	9111242	2	2	4	Solchart Ltd. OY	Finland
BOSPHORUS QUEEN	8517384	2	2	4	Kalamis Shipping Industry	Greece
FT QUINTO	9447304	2	2	4	Furtrans Denizcilik	Turkey
HARISSA	7530418	2	2	4	Ismail Maritime Co.	Syria
JUDI ALAMAR	8222018	2	2	4	Judi Group JKM	Lebanon, Syria
M/T EMRE T	9286475	1	3	4	Transpasifik Denizcilik	Turkey
MALMO	8116738	2	2	4	IMS Greece Co.	Turkey
MEGA STAR	7729198	2	2	4	ISM Group Ltd.	Syria
M-T PAZAR	8871003	1	3	4	Granmar Denizcilik	Turkey
NAZLI N	7929619	3	1	4	GMZ Ship Management Co SA	Lebanon
SEA AMORE	8319524	2	2	4	MCD Shipping SA	Turkey, Panama
AK ABBA	8315217	2	1	3	Zeytin Denizcilik Gemi	Turkey
AZIZEH F	7611523	2	1	3	UFC Ship Management Co. Ltd.	Syria
BLACK SEA GLORY	7826491	2	1	3	Arados Shipping Co. SRL (since 8/12)	Romania, Syria
CHARLY	7721952	2	1	3	GMZ Ship Management Co SA	Lebanon
G INEBOLU	7389833	1	2	3	Manta Denizcilik Nakliyat	Turkey
HAMOUDI B	8012231	2	1	3	Bayazid Shipping Co.	Lebanon, Syria
LAILA QUEEN	8311390	2	1	3	Judi Group JKM	Lebanon, Syria
MARIA	8513792	1	2	3	Ademar Shipping Lines SARL	Lebanon, Romania
MEVLANA	7610749	2	1	3	Emiroglu Deniz Nakliyati	Turkey, Malta?
SEA AMAZON	9104263	2	1	3	MCCL	Greece, Liberia
SEA SHARK	8316338	2	1	3	ISM Group SARL (since 3/12)	Lebanon, Syria
SMART SAIL	8315152	2	1	3	Tranglory Shipping Co Ltd	China
STAR PRINCE	7625706	2	1	3	IMS Hellenic Co	Greece
SUSANNE	9002403	2	1	3	Sigma Grains Ltd-Leb (since 5/12)	Lebanon, Cyprus
VIANO DO CASTELO	8918356	1	2	3	Ukrainian Danube Shipping Co	Ukraine
WAVE	9313785	2	1	3	Flinter Shipping BV	Netherlands, Turkey
YAHIA STAR	8306400	1	2	3	El Reedy Shipping Agency	Egypt
AKSOY	8624278	1	1	2	Aksoy Denizcilik Tasimacilik	Turkey
AL HADI	6929193	1	1	2	Rania Marine SARL	Lebanon
ALEKSANDR LEBED	8866826	1	1	2	Kent Shipping & Chartering Ltd.	Turkey
ALTRANY	8129321	1	1	2	Menkent Shipping Co. Ltd.	Bulgaria, Cyprus,
ARADOS H	7501871	1	1	2	Arados Shipping Co. SRL	Ukraine
						Romania, Syria
ARROW S	7392608	1	1	2	Global Management & Trading	Lebanon
AYSE AKANSU	7827328	1	1	2	Asu Denizcilik Nakliyat	Turkey
BELDE	8308903	1	1	2	Meridyen Transit Deniz	Turkey
BLUE IMAGE	9136565	1	1	2	Stavros Roussos Management	Greece
FIRTINA	8834940	1	1	2	Sunar Gemi Acentilik	Turkey
GOLDEN ENDURANCE	9043110	1	1	2	Gothmar Shipmanagement Inc.	Greece
IKARIA ISLAND	9138898	1	1	2	Firodi Shipping Ltd.	Greece
KEREM	9126429	1	1	2	IST Denizcilik Ltd. STI	Turkey
LADY NOUR	8002822	1	1	2	Mamari Shipping Co.	Lebanon, Syria
MARIM	9435844	1	1	2	Roswell Tankers Corp.	Greece
MARINE LEGEND JR.	9381952	1	1	2	Action Maritime SA	Greece
MRC HATICE ANA	9536935	1	1	2	MRC Denizcilik Turizm	Turkey
NIKOLAY MESHKOV	8862507	1	1	2	Sailtrade Ltd	Russia

SHIP NAME	IMOID	PORT CALLS IN 2012			SHIP MANAGER	COUNTRY
		SYRIA	NIK/OKT	COMBINED		
OMAR B	8012243	1	1	2	Bayazid Shipping Co.	Lebanon, Syria
REIS-G	8413186	1	1	2	Negmar Denizcilik Ve Yatirim	Turkey
RIMEO	8324713	1	1	2	Rimenes Shipping and Transport	Turkey
SEBA M	7511199	1	1	2	Rabunion Maritime Agency Sarl	Lebanon
SIDER FAIOCH	8602555	1	1	2	Sider Navi Spa	Italy
ST. VALENTINA	9414735	1	1	2	Unimor Shipping Agency	Ukraine
TATARBUNARY	8918394	1	1	2	Ukrainian Danube Shipping Co	Ukraine
UNION DEMETER	8412558	1	1	2	Tranglory Shipping Co Ltd	China
UNION HELLEN	8307856	1	1	2	Tranglory Shipping Co Ltd	China

12 Conclusion

As stated in the introduction to this paper, abstract post-Soviet themes find detailed expression in the Odessa Network. We have presented an abundance of hard data on weapons shipments, the facilitators enabling them, and senior officials in the Russian and Ukrainian governments. We also have made analytic judgments about this data, specifically how it relates to Russian foreign policy writ large. We conclude this paper by summarizing the definitive facts about Russian and Ukrainian weapons shipments and facilitators, as well as our inferential insights on them.

DEFINITIVE FINDINGS

This report documents over forty weapons shipment events from the official state weapons export agencies of Russia and Ukraine to a wide variety of customers. These shipments include weapons ranging from crates of surplus ammunition to state of the art SAM systems, customers ranging from countries in good international standing to states under active international sanction, and span over a decade of time. Some of these arms transfers are well-known, while others were previously undetected.

These shipments were facilitated by a comparatively small group of Ukrainian and EU companies and individuals with close ties to one another, and to senior Russian and Ukrainian governmental and military-industrial officials. To some extent, the key facilitators in the weapons export process provide similar services: project and heavy-lift cargo, end-to-end logistics, and freight forwarding. However, different companies based in different ports tend to specialize in shipments to different customers.

Ukrainian and EU companies facilitate the vast majority of these weapons shipments, which leave from the port of Oktyabrsk, Ukraine. Oktyabrsk is controlled by a Russian oligarch and managed by a former Russian nuclear submarine captain, and was built by the Soviet Union specifically to ship weapons. The exception to this pattern is Russian companies moving weapons directly to Syria from Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg. However, these Russian companies are still closely linked to the core facilitators in Ukraine and the EU.

In addition, these facilitators utilize support services provided by Latvian money launderers and maritime private security companies staffed by former members of the Russian and Ukrainian security and intelligence services.

INFERENTIAL FINDINGS

The diverse array of customers and weapons in our dataset lead us to believe that it is adequately representative of overall Russian and Ukrainian sea-born arms transfers. Analytic judgments about the entities in our admittedly non-exhaustive dataset are still indicative of some larger truth.

We believe the weapons sales documented in this paper serve three non-mutually exclusive purposes. First, arms exports have significant commercial value to the state, and the weapons industry keeps entire regions employed. Russia alone exported $17.6 billion USD of weapons in 2012;[349] the Black Sea Shipyard in Nikolaev supports an estimated 95,000 pensioners.[350] Second, the proceeds of these sales are used to buy loyalty and stability within the Russian and Ukrainian political patronage systems, which hinge on delivering rewards to a small coalition of regime stakeholders. In particular, allowing Russian military and intelligence sectors to take a cut of profits keeps them loyal and funded. Third, arms transfers are an important foreign policy tool. Russia, consistent with its opposition to perceived American hegemony and interventionism, appears to be arming strategic antagonists of the United States, including Libya, Venezuela, and Syria. Ukraine is more commercially oriented, but still uses arms transfers as a policy tool; for example, the anti-Russian Yushchenko government selling heavily discounted anti-aircraft systems to Georgia under the similarly anti-Russian Saakashvili government.[351] In sum, these factors mean arms transfers are deeply important to the Russian and Ukrainian governments.

That a small and tight-knit group of ostensibly private companies is trusted to move such a high percentage of state weapons exports implies that these facilitators are effectively part of the Russian and Ukrainian foreign policy arsenal. The connections between

weapons shippers such as Kaalbye, Phoenix, and North-Western Shipping, and organs of Russian state power such as Rosoboronexport, the Ministry of Transport, and Putin's personal advisors, fit this pattern. We believe that these connections serve as a means of communication, coordination, and verification. In other words, it is not a coincidence that Boris Kogan has close business and personal ties to the deputy director of Russian Technologies and director of logistics at Rosoboronexport, and that his company, Kaalbye, was trusted to move $4 billion USD of Russian weapons (including the S–300 SAM system) to Venezuela, a US strategic antagonist. The Kremlin's use of financial rewards, personal connections, and implied coercion to induce private companies to carry out useful tasks matches a larger "power vertical" narrative.

To some extent, the shipping business as a whole relies on degrees of separation between owners and operators of assets in order to minimize liability, and the Odessa Network is no exception. However, the opacity and complexity of the financial and social network surrounding these core facilitators provides a vehicle for wide distribution of profits and additional space to conduct sensitive foreign policy without interference. Offshore shell companies, proxy directors, personnel dual-listed between different companies, leveraging social ties to enlist the services of other firms, and Latvian banks maximize the ability to convert public money into private profit for key stakeholders (maximizing domestic political benefit), and provide the operational security necessary to successfully carry out arms transfers (maximizing foreign policy benefit).

The value of this data for policymakers is that it provides a "road-map" for piercing this complexity. The specific companies, individuals, and locations analyzed in this paper comprise a detectable signature of FSU arms transfers. If identifying such arms transfers is a policy priority, understanding the network of facilitators carrying out those transfers is a useful place to start.

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