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RUSSIAN SVOD AND TACTICAL C2 INTEGRATION

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According to recent open source news and reports, Russia's SVOD (*Sistema Voyennogo Obmena Dannymi*) system reflects the growing effort of digital integration within the land tactical level units. SVOD is to operate in a protected information environment, linking tactical and operational echelons. SVOD integrates ISR feeds, mapping overlays, and unit status data into a shared digital common operating picture, supported by automated filtering and prioritization tools. Together with growing and dominant connection between sensors and shooters which is reflected in the Ukraine conflict, with the SVOD they are closing the gap regarding effectiveness and efficiency of using unmanned systems in that regard.

Svod aims to:

- Integrate data from unmanned systems, satellites, and other intelligence sources into one shared operational picture.
- Speed up decision-making by giving commanders real-time maps and target information.
- Reduce delays between detecting a target and assigning fire or maneuver units.
- Improve coordination between infantry, artillery, aviation and electronic warfare units.
- Decrease reliance on voice communication and legacy systems.
- Increase accuracy of target designation and reduce the risk of friendly fire.

The intent of SVOD is very much comparable to the Ukrainian DELTA system who have mastered the C2 on tactical unmanned systems and its kill chain efficiency. SVOD is not an overarching C2 system, but a tool for the tactical level to exploit the kill chain possibilities and AI supported decision-making.

Although described as AI-enabled, available reports suggest the system primarily automates data filtering and target prioritization rather than employing advanced autonomous decision-making. With the focus to improve battlefield

effectiveness, SVOD seeks to compress the detect–decide–act cycle by synchronizing effects across the land domain while integrating inputs from other domains and the electromagnetic spectrum. Its purpose is to reduce friction in sensor-saturated, contested environments.

SVOD AND THE CHANGING TEMPO OF RUSSIAN LAND FORCES

The SVOD system represents a logical progression in Russian digital C2 modernization shaped by recent combat experience. This development is further reinforced by the establishment of the Unmanned Systems Forces in November 2025

Reporting from United24Media¹ suggests that Russia intends to expand its unmanned systems branch from approximately 80,000 personnel to as many as 210,000 by 2030. While these figures remain unverified and should be treated cautiously, they indicate institutional prioritization of unmanned capabilities. If realized, such expansion would likely increase demand for integrated digital C2 tools such as SVOD. Large-scale integration across operational units may occur by 2026 however, timelines will depend on production capacity, training throughput, and the resilience of supporting communications infrastructure.

It is important to mention that in general the Russian army does not adopt lessons systematically and effectively across formations, but when they find a solution that brings great benefit, they know how to scale up quickly. Looking in the near future NATO land forces must expect that, when confronted, Russian tactical level units may demonstrate improved early-phase tempo effects, particularly in fires employment and cross-domain synchronization. This may translate into faster allocation of fires, improved internal coordination, and more responsive cross-domain effects in sectors where their networks and/or data connection remains stable.

Tempo difference between NATO and Russian land forces could narrow, but the effectiveness of SVOD will depend on the survivability of its underlying

¹ Kohanets, R. (2025, November 12). *Russia forms unmanned systems forces amid growing drone arms race with Ukraine*. United24 Media.



Photo: The tablet component of the Russian ESU TZ-C2 system | RussianMod

communications infrastructure. If the system relies on centralized servers, commercial satellite links, or high-bandwidth data transmission, it may be vulnerable to jamming, cyber intrusion, bandwidth saturation, and GPS denial. In heavily contested electromagnetic environments, degradation of data flow could rapidly reduce SVOD's operational advantage. This highlights even more the necessity in adding capabilities to counter the benefit of Russian C2 systems like SVOD.

Being able to degrade C2 capabilities constantly via CEMA (Cyberspace and Electromagnetic Activities) is paramount. Moreover Russian forces have demonstrated adaptability in shifting between primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency (PACE) communication methods under pressure.

NATO FORCES CONSEQUENCES

NATO forces must assume that temporary disruption alone will not suffice and should prepare for prolonged contestation of the electromagnetic spectrum. NATO corps-level formations should prioritize on embedding organic electronic warfare and cyber support capabilities at size, capable of persistently degrading adversary data networks. This includes deployable jamming assets, spectrum monitoring teams, cyber support elements, and the ability to conduct coordinated CEMA operations synchronized with maneuver.

NATO land forces need to adapt quickly to maintain battlefield effectiveness and be prepared to counter Russian advantages accelerated by digitalization and AI to be ready in the near future. NATO exercise Hedgehog 2025 (Estonia) is a recent example that played out the consequences if not properly adapted against evolving threats.

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