

Deceive the enemy and save the defenders. How Rinat Akhmetov's Metinvest manufactures fake artillery and "lancet catchers"

"We've run out of mock-ups. We need another 50 units" — such requests from the military are increasingly coming to Metinvest and are very pleased with its employees who make copies of artillery systems. After all, this means that they did a good job: the invaders spend expensive drones and missiles to hit fake targets, and the real equipment and the Ukrainian military are safe.



For more than a year and a half, Metinvest's craftsmen have been making copies of radar stations and artillery pieces from plastic, plywood, foam and metal. The Ukrainian D-20 howitzer, the American M777, air defense radars and many other "equipment" have replenished a considerable package of support for the army from the company.

"We want the Russians to spend money using equipment to destroy our models. Drones and missiles are expensive. Our models are much cheaper," explains a company representative.

Three top managers of Metinvest came up with the idea of producing such a psychological weapon at the beginning of the war. The proposal was personally supported by Rinat Akhmetov.

A team of specialists has been honing their skills for more than a year. Nowadays, the models completely reproduce the look of real equipment. The company's specialists investigated the physical parameters of real military equipment and created detailed sketch designs.

"The enemy is not stupid. We have to work on being realistic. We evaluate ourselves as follows: If a new model that we sent to the front was destroyed, then we did everything right," says one of the company's employees.

Metinvest has already handed over more than 250 such models to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. These models have repeatedly become targets for the enemy, saving real equipment and the lives of Ukrainian soldiers. The latest developments of the company's specialists have added even more realism to the products: models can radiate heat, so they look convincing not only during the day, but also at night, under the sight of a thermal imager.

Another type of steel savior of armored vehicles of the Armed Forces of Ukraine is called "lancet catchers" in Metinvest. The mobile shelter is 10 meters long, five meters wide and five meters high and weighs about a ton. It consists of a steel frame and a camouflaged metal mesh stretched over it. The company can produce up to five "lancet catchers" per week.

The structures are versatile: they can be used to camouflage and protect most models of equipment in combat positions — self-propelled artillery, tanks, vehicles for transporting people. The first samples of "lancet catchers" at the front line proved to be a reliable tool that stops enemy drones and protects equipment.

Mobile lancet catchers require minimal effort to be installed — no additional equipment is required. And after fulfilling its purpose, the structure can be easily restored. Metinvest handed over 32 shelters to the hottest areas of the front line.

It is just as easy to deliver models of equipment to the front line. Their deployment to the position does not take

much time. For example, an artillery cannon can be assembled in as little as 20 minutes.

"Metinvest's steel saves and protects. This is the main idea that we rely on in our work, launching into production one or another model of products that help the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Since the beginning of the war, these have been bulletproof vests, then steel shelters, additional armor, models of military equipment, and now steel "lancet catchers" for machinery. Everyone knows that our enemy is insidious, so Metinvest has set itself the task of helping to neutralize its trump cards," says Oleksandr Myronenko, Chief Operating Officer of Metinvest.

The company's specialists are improving the models of equipment every time, adding new types of weapons to their arsenal of copies. Their skill is proven on the battlefield. And the best gratitude for the work is the fragments of Shaheds and lancets caught in steel nets.

"We do not count the number of models produced, but the number of destroyed ones. This is the main thing for us. The sooner our models are destroyed, the better for us," adds the Metinvest employee. In the meantime, his colleagues are already working on the next batch of replica artillery pieces to meet the demand of the Ukrainian army.

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