

The US is said to have supplied Ukraine with 16 Himars systems as part of its \$9bn (£7,47bn) security assistance package.

What is Himars?

Himars - the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System - is a missile launcher mounted on a five-tonne truck which can fire six guided missiles in quick succession.

Specifications of the Himars missile system

- The missiles supplied to Ukraine have a range of up to 50 miles (80 km), which is over twice the range of the howitzer guns which the US has previously given to Ukraine.

Himars rocket launcher system



Range: 50 miles (80km)*
Crew: 3

Weight: 16.25 tonnes
Speed: 53 mph (85 kmph)

*Range varies widely depending on munitions supplied

Source: BBC research, Getty Images



- Himars can also fire a single Army Tactical Missile System missile, which has a range of 186 miles (300 km). However, the US isn't supplying Ukraine with these.
- The 50-mile range is roughly similar to that of Russian Smerch missiles, but Himars fires GPS-guided missiles which can be more accurately targeted.

- Ukrainian forces say they used Himars missiles to destroy a Russian ammunition depot at Nova Kakhovka in southern Ukraine in July.
- The UK has also provided a missile-launch system called the M270, which is similar to Himars and fires the same missiles. Three of these have been delivered and three more are on their way.
- Himars is very accurate when it is used against fixed targets, when you have the exact co-ordinates,
- But it is not so effective against moving targets such as troops, so it cannot push back an advance.
- I would say that Himars caught the Russians by surprise, but it doesn't change the balance of power.
- Himars missiles can hit targets deep behind enemy lines
- Ukrainian defence secretary Oleksii Reznikov says Ukraine needs 50 more Himars systems to stop Russian forces advancing, and 100 more to launch a successful counter-offensive.
- However, according to Prof O'Brien, the supply of the missiles used by the system is more important.
- "Having 16 or so Himars launchers will be fine," he says, "as long as there is a tonne of ammunition to go with them. But the missile manufacturers are under a lot of pressure to keep up supplies."
- The US-made system has been used to hit dozens of Russian targets such as command posts and ammunition depots.
- It has also been used to target bridges, including those on the approach to Russian-occupied Kherson, which Ukraine is trying to reclaim.