

# INFORMATION REPORT

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### Camp Administration

- The abbreviation Gulag - Glavnoye Upravleniye Lagerei, or Chief Directorate of Camps - is used to name the organization which is responsible for administration of all prison work camps in the Soviet Union. Gulag is a division of the MVD administrative headquarters and is located in Moscow, probably at Kuznetski most Number 32. The chief (nachalnik) of Gulag is usually an MVD general or colonel. All chiefs of camp systems are responsible to him, as are all division chiefs, including the following: the personnel division (otdel kadrov), the registry division (URC, uchëtno-raspredelitelnyy otdel), the sanitary division (sanotdel), the finance division (finotdel), the transport division, (transportnyy otdel), and the purchasing division (otdel snabzheni). Special sections for railroad construction, canal digging, power station construction, agriculture, and timbering also are subordinate to the chief of Gulag.
- The term camp as used in the Soviet Union means a camp system which includes several individual camps, or camp points. Thus, names such as Kargopolag, Vorkutlag and Pechorlag do not signify individual camps but rather are terms for groups of camps. Camps ordinarily are named because of their geographical location. Kargopol is a city near Arkhangel; Pechora and Vorkuta are rivers; and Sazlag means Sredno-Aziatskiy lager, or Central Asiatic camp. Camps also are named because of the specific purpose of the individual camp. The name Sevzheldorlag is an abbreviation of the term severnny zhelezno-dorozhnyy lager, the northern railroad camp.
- The number of individual camps included in a camp system cannot be stated definitely. Large camp systems (both in terms of prisoners and geographical extensiveness) may be divided into sub-groups, or otdeleniye, each of which includes several individual camps. The examples given below do not contain any exact figures but can serve as points of reference in questions of judging size of larger camps. For example, Pechorlag has about ten sub-groups, each of which includes about twenty individual camps. Such individual camps usually contain from six hundred to a thousand prisoners; thus, Pechorlag can be assumed to contain about 200,000 prisoners.

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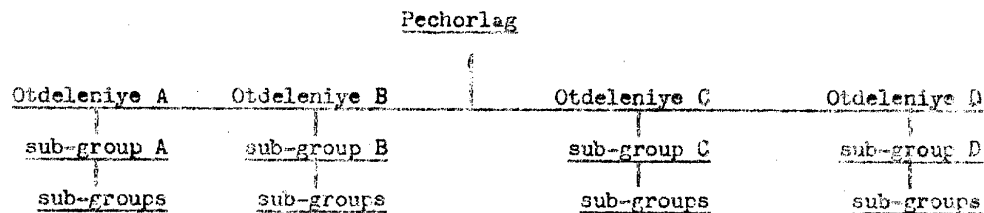
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5. Every camp system is under the command of a nachalnik, or chief, usually a high MVD officer. Until 1946, for example, the chief of the Pechorlag system was a Colonel Barabanov, while MVD General Mikhail Maltsev headed the Vorkutlag system. Directly under the chief come the directors for the various administrative sections of the camps - in Russian the glavnoye upravleniye lagera. Camp systems are organized on the same principle as the Gulag and include personnel, registry, sanitation, finance, and other sections. The administration of sub-sections, the upravleniye otdelenii, and individual camps is organized on the same principle. In camps themselves the word otdel has been replaced by the term chast.

## Division of the Pechorlag system:



6. Thus, in order to know the location of the individual prisoner in this scheme it is necessary to know the camp system name (Pechorlag), the name of the sub-group, which is given either geographically or by number, and finally the name of the specific camp. With the help of this plan it is possible to obtain some idea of the inner organization of a camp system.
7. When a prisoner has been **sentenced**, Gulag **arranges** that he be sent to a certain camp system; within the camp system the chief administrative section is free to dispose of prisoners within its jurisdiction. However, no camp system can send prisoners to another camp system without permission of Gulag. Each camp system has a transient camp (peresilny, or in abbreviated form per-point) where prisoners who are assigned to the camp system are processed. Prisoners are sent from the transient camp to other camps on the basis of local labor needs or of the health or special work qualifications of the individual prisoner.

Guards

8. It is impossible to give any exact figures on the number of guards in the Soviet prison camp system. Generally speaking, guard personnel can be divided into two classes, the "inner" and the "outer" guards. The inner guards, the so-called nadzirately, make up a guard system which is responsible for the internal security of a camp. Such guards are usually relieved every eight hours. Every single camp point has eight of these nadziratel guards plus an officer - nine men in all. The figure seems to be fixed and does not vary according to the number of prisoners in various camps. The "outer" guard, the vokhra, an abbreviation for the term voyennaya okhrana, or MVD guard personnel, is chiefly responsible for seeing that prisoners do not escape from work or from camp areas. The chief of vokhra is a very important post in any camp organization and is fairly independent of the camp chief. Each smaller camp area is guarded by four vokhra soldiers day and night who are stationed in towers at each corner of the camp area. Such soldiers are relieved every eight hours. Thus, counting men on leave, about sixteen men are employed in this particular guard function. Every work brigade is guarded by a soldier. Consequently, a normal camp which works six hundred prisoners will **generally** have forty guards over work brigades of fifteen men each. It is possible to assume that the ratio of guards to prisoners is about 1:10. Thus, if there are ten million prisoners in the Soviet Union, there would be about a million MVD guards over them.

Camp Systems

9. As had previously been stated, the smallest unit of a camp system is the individual camp. It should be pointed out, however, that the individual camp can include several sub-camps or podkommandirovki. Such sub-points are responsible to the commanding officer of a camp, but each has its own commanding officer. Podkommandirovki are not constructed on any special principle, but are set up when need arises and then dissolved after the specific job has been completed. For example, before 1946 the transient camp

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of the Kotlaslag system included a sub-camp which was located about thirty kilometers from the main camp at Kotlas. About one hundred prisoners were sent to this camp during the summer to collect wheat needed in the transient camp during the coming winter. Each camp encompasses a special camp area. The size of this area and number of prisoners can vary greatly; there were one hundred prisoners in the above-mentioned camp while the area at Vladimir once contained seven thousand men. These two camps illustrate the differences in size of temporary camps.

9. Permanent camps are engaged in production of goods such as wood, coal, or agricultural produce. There is a tendency in such camp systems to organize individual camps of from six to eight hundred prisoners. Such camps usually contain four to six barracks, each of which is able to house one hundred and fifty to two hundred men. Such barracks are usually made of wood, are very primitive, and are divided into two large rooms. In addition to the barracks, the camp will contain kitchens, a dispensary, club-rooms, special detention houses, baths, and buildings for camp personnel. The camp is surrounded by a thick wooden fence from three to five meters high which is topped with barbed wire. An area of from two to five meters wide is set off inside this large fence and a smaller barbed wire fence marks this forbidden zone. During summers the area between the two fences is dug up twice daily, and at the beginning of a guard period the new guard must check to see that no footmarks are found in the fresh earth. Snow serves the same purpose during winters. Each corner of the camp area is guarded by a tower and searchlight. Most camps are equipped with portable generators located just outside the camp boundary.

Description of Certain Camps

Kargopolag

10. Kargopolag is a camp system which takes its name from the city of Kargopol (61-31N, 38-56E), where administrative headquarters of the system were located. These headquarters later were shifted to Yertsevo, since the latter city was on the Moscow-Arkhangelsk railroad. Administratively, the city belongs to the Arkhangelsk oblast. This camp system was set up to cut wood in the swamps of this area. In 1940 it comprised eight otdeleniye, or sub-groups, and probably included from fifty to eighty thousand prisoners, the majority of whom worked at lumbering. Most camps are found in the neighborhood of the Onega River, and a portion of the lumber from the camp is transported on the river to the White Sea, or taken by railroad to the interior of Russia. Some of the wood is cut for mine props and is probably intended for the Don Basin. The camp has three modern saw-mills. Chief transient camp in this system is at Nyandoma (61-40N, 40-10E); chief administrative center for the system is at Yertsevo (60-48N, 40-05E). About one hundred prisoners are employed on administrative work in this camp aiding MVD personnel. Additional railroad spurs connect lumbering camps with the Moscow-Arkhangelsk railroad. Camp sites are changed when distance from camp to working ground is more than eight kilometers. Alekseyevka II is one of the individual camps in the Kargopolag system. In 1940 this camp had about eight hundred prisoners, quartered in four barracks. The camp was about 80 x 100 meters in size.

Vladimir

11. Vladimir (50-08N, 40-25E) is a city of between eighty and one hundred thousand inhabitants, and was once administratively part of the Ivanovskaya oblast and the seat of the pre-revolutionary Governor. The city has subsequently been separated from the oblast and is now part of the Vladimirskaia oblast. It is important for its cotton textile industry. The Moscow-Gorki railroad runs through the southern edge of the city. The Vladimir camp, a temporary one, was begun only to provide a labor force for construction of an electric power system on the Klyazma River. This power system was intended to have a capacity of ten thousand kilowatt hours, and was constructed for the industries in the Ivanovo area. Another such power plant was constructed by prisoners at the city of Kovrov, eighty kilometers northwest of Vladimir on the Klyazma River. In June 1941 the camps in this area contained about seven thousand prisoners. Work was discontinued at the beginning of the war, and subsequent developments are not known. In 1941 the prison camp employed four digging machines and fifteen trucks.

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Bogolyubovo (56-11N, 40-31E)

12. The camp in this area was located eight kilometers from the Moscow-Gorki railroad and the little city of Bogolyubovo. The camp was temporary, constructed in 1940-41 in order to build military airfields in the area. Machinery for making landing strips of cement was available but was not used, since the strips were constructed of wood.

Sazlag

13. Only very general information is available concerning this camp system; these data have come from a former prisoner in the camp, during 1941. The name Sazlag is an abbreviation of the term Sredno-Aziatski lager - the Central Asiatic camp. The chief administrative center of the camp seems to be located at Tashkent (41-20N, 69-18E), the capital of the Uzbek SSR. Prisoners are employed chiefly in local cotton fields, in irrigation projects, railroad construction, and in the construction of electric systems.

Vorkutlag

14. The camp group Vorkutlag is located in the Vorkuta River district. This river is a subsidiary of the Usa River, which in turn is a subsidiary of the Pechora. The administrative center of the camp system is located at Vorkuta (67-30N, 64-00E) in the Komi ASSR. This permanent camp system has about one hundred thousand prisoners engaged in coal production. In 1946 the camp produced five million tons of coal, and the latest Five Year Plan calls for doubling of this production by 1950. This coal is chiefly used by metal industries in the Urals, and is said to be especially good for use in smelting furnaces. The arctic fleet is also an important user of this coal. In 1946 the fleet was supplied at the port of Kholmeryu (approximately 68-00N, 64-50E). Use of this coal by the fleet is one of the most important reasons for the existence of the camp. Coal production is mechanized, though no information is available concerning the degree of mechanization. Vorkuta has fairly modern mechanical shops and a power plant which can produce between twenty and twenty-five thousand kilowatts. This plant is operated on coal. For four or five months of the year it is possible to use the Vorkuta-Usa-Pechora River system to take local produce from Vorkuta to the Barents Sea. The camp uses the Kotlas-Vorkuta-Kholmeryu railroad, and has connections at Vologda with the Moscow-Arkhangel railroad, and at Kirov with the Leningrad-Molotov-Sverdlovsk railroad. The coal mining area at Vorkuta is of great strategic importance to the Soviet Union, especially since the area is difficult to approach.

Molotovsk

15. The Molotovsk camp (65-40N, 39-50E) is vital chiefly as a labor source for construction of a new naval base in the area and has employed at least ten thousand prisoners at this work.

Lena

16. There are two large camp groups in the area near the Lena River in Eastern Siberia. One camp is located in the Yakutsk area and works at timber cutting and gold mining, while the other camp chiefly is engaged in lumbering and fishing.

Novaya Zemlya

17. There are completely isolated camps in the Barents Sea on the island of Novaya-Zemlya. No information is available on these camps, but it can be assumed that the prisoners mine copper and other non-ferrous metals. It is even said that coal is mined on the island.

Sevzheldorlag

18. The name of this camp system is an abbreviation of the words severny zheleznodorozhny lager, the northern railroad camp system. The camp system was originally founded to provide workers for the Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad, but now that this work has been completed the camp is nevertheless maintained and works on lumbering, production of prefabricated

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houses, and agriculture. With the completion of the railroad the number of prisoners was decreased and the camp now contains between fifty and one hundred thousand prisoners. Administrative center of the group is at Knyazhpogost (62-36N, 52-52E), a small city situated on the Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad and the Vym River. This river connects with the Vychegda and Severnaya Dvina waterways, giving an outlet to Arkhangel and the White Sea.

#### Sevdvinlag

- 19 (North Dvina Camp) This camp system is located in the lower portion of the Severnaya Dvina area. Chief administrative center of the camp system is located at Velsk (61-05N, 42-08E) on the railroad line which connects the Vologda-Arkhangel and Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad lines. This line was constructed by inmates of the prison system. Velsk and other camps in this system are connected with Arkhangel by this route. Work in the camp is now similar to that carried out by the Sevzheldorlag camp system, and the two camps have about the same number of prisoners.

#### Opoklag

- 20 Conditions in this camp were very severe during the war. The camp is not shown on any map, but it is probably one to two hundred kilometers from Kotlas and situated on a river; prisoners are engaged in construction of a dam.

#### Ukhta-Pechora

- 21 Ukhta-Pechora is the term used to cover the area lying between the Ukhta and Pechora Rivers along the Izhma River. This area is rich in natural resources such as oil, coal, and metals. Aside from the natural wealth, the area is similar to all of northwestern Russia in the region near the polar circle. The chief reason for this camp group lies in employment of its prisoners in production of oil. Chief administrative center of the camp group is at Izhma. Between 1940 and 1946 this camp had no railroad connections, but now a spur of the Kotlas-Vorkuta line is near enough as it runs between the cities of Chibyu (63-34N, 53-40E) and Kozhva (65-08N, 57-00E) so the goods can be floated up the Izhma to Chibyu or up the Pechora to Kozhva and then shipped by rail. Oil products have been seen moving on the Kotlas-Vorkuta line on various occasions. No exact figures on oil production are available, but there are indications that production is not especially noteworthy. The Fourth Five Year Plan called for increased oil production from this camp group. The number of prisoners in the area is estimated to be about 50,000.

#### Kotlaslag

- 22 Kotlas is an important city of about 30,000 inhabitants, located in the north-west section of European Russia (61-14N, 46-40E). The city belongs to the Arkhangel administrative area and is vital as a railroad center. The camp group located here was earlier called selskokhozyaistvenny Kotlaslag - the Kotlas Agricultural Camp Group. Until 1945 Kotlas was an independent camp system operating directly under Gulag, but in this year it was united as a sub-group in the Pechora camp system. Kotlaslag (properly Kotlaskoye Otdeleniye Pechorlaga) is chiefly important as an agricultural supply center; it is made up of three camps of the Kotlas area and four other camps north and south of Kotlas on the Severnaya Dvina River, extending over an area of from seventy to one hundred fifty kilometers. During the summer the camp has about 10,000 prisoners, but winter finds only about 5,000 prisoners here. The Kotlas group also includes sub-camps, L/P N1 for women and children, and L/P N2, a camp which includes a machine shop. Each of these camps contains about six hundred prisoners. The address of the transient camp is "Kotlas, Arkh obl. p/y 207/D". P/y means pochtovy yashchik, or mail-box. A sketch of the Kotlas transient camp is included in this report. This camp is located on the Severnaya Dvina River. Barracks for the working brigades will house about five hundred prisoners, but many times this camp has been forced to house up to three thousand persons when an especially big shipment of prisoners arrives. Usually the camp is not used for any special work and only functions as a transient point and hospital camp. The camp must reship and supply prisoners who arrive from the south. Kotlas is a large food supply point and has storage space for large amounts of potatoes and other supplies. Warehouses are built along the Severnaya Dvina River. Produce is shipped here from the agricultural camps. At one time the camp

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was called Pitatelny lag, or provisioning camp. The camp hospital is equipped with a modern operating room. There are no available figures on agricultural production from the camps in this system.

#### Pechorlag

23. The Pechorlag system comprises the largest number of individual camps in North European Russia, with individual camps extending along the Kotlas-Vorkuta-Khalmeryu railroad. The camp group includes the camps at Kotlas, Chibyu, Kozhva, and Khalmeryu. The distance between Kotlas and Khalmeryu is 1,400 kilometers. It should be remembered that this area also includes such camp groups as the Sevzheldorlag, Ust-Vymtag, and Vorkutlag. In 1946 the administrative center of this system was located at Abez (66-30N, 61-45E) at the point where the Usa River crosses the polar circle. The central transient camp is located at Kozhva. In 1946 it was decided that Kozhva should become administrative center for the system. Chief of the camp system, which includes more than a million prisoners, was in 1946 an MVD colonel named Barabanov. It is estimated that this camp's chief economic purpose between 1946-1950 was the construction of a double railroad track on the Moscow-Vorkuta railroad, replacement of all temporary bridges on the line with permanent structures, construction of stations, depots, and repair shops on the line, and erection of schools, hospitals, and homes for civilian workers in the area, especially in Kozhva, which will replace Syktyvkar (61-40N, 50-50E) as capital of the Komi Republic. The new capital will be called Krasnopechorsk. In order to meet this program the camp system was divided into various working groups. Best data on the character of this camp is found in A. Ekart's "Direkt fran Ryssland", page 201. In 1946 the prisoners at the camp constructed a railroad line from Vorkuta to the Kara Sea, a distance of 250 kilometers. A harbor for the arctic fleet will be constructed at the northern terminus of the line.

#### Unzhlag

24. Unzhlag is a camp group in the neighborhood of the Unzha River, a subsidiary of the Volga. Chief administrative center of the camp system is at Sukhobezvodnoye (57-03N, 44-55E), in the Gorki district. This camp is used for cutting timber and has connections with the Leningrad-Vologda-Kirov-Ural-Asia railroad in the Vologda-Kirov region. There are between fifty and one hundred thousand prisoners in the camp group.

#### Temnikovskoye

25. This camp system lies on the border between the Moscow oblast and the Mordovskaya ASSR. Temnikov (54-38N, 43-12E) is a city on the Loksha River, a subsidiary of the Oka. The prisoners work in the forests, produce furniture, and engage in agriculture. Communications are maintained on the Volga River system, the Moscow-Gorki and Moscow-Kuibyshev railroad lines.

#### Volgastroi

26. There are camp systems in the neighborhood of the cities of Rybinsk (58-03N, 38-50E) and Kuibyshev (53-10N, 50-06E). These camps are working on a system of controls for the Volga River, including dams, canals, and power works. The camp near Rybinsk also works at lumbering.

#### Soroklag

27. This camp system is located in the Soroka region (59-34N, 38-46E) in the district near the Finnish-Russian border. Exact site of the camp is not known, but it probably works at lumbering and railroad construction.

#### Volokorskoi, Svielag and Vitegralag

28. These camps are located in the Leningrad area and work on waterways in the region, including construction of dams, canals, and power stations.

#### Vyatkalag

29. This camp system is located in the Kirov district in the region around the Volosnltza (sic) River. The prisoners work at lumbering and agriculture.

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Severulag

30. The camp system Severo-Uralski lag (northern Ural camp group) has its chief administrative centers at Solikamsk (59-40N, 56-45E) and Berezniki (59-25N, 56-40E). The camp labor is used on railroad construction and agriculture.
31. It is not possible to estimate the size of a single camp system, since each individual camp system is located in an area which is simultaneously occupied by civilian population and which is under normal civilian administration and authorities. Camp systems are, as has been said, made up of individual camps, usually in a geographical area of about 10,000 square kilometers. All camps are organized on the system herein described. Camps usually rely on prisoners for all labor rather than depend on machinery, and most have only basic and primitive tools. Especially important construction jobs will be carried out with good equipment. Most camps have electricity. The productive capacity of the camps is kept very secret; and, rather than actual production figures, statistics are in terms of relative productivity.

Communications

32. Since geographical conditions of northwest Russia - that is to say in the area north of the sixty-first meridian - are unsatisfactory for construction of normal roads, and since the population is so small that goods cannot be transported on already existing roads, it is necessary to build temporary roads along railroad lines while the lines are under construction. Such roads are called logroads, and are made of logs laid directly on the ground, usually at the side of a railroad.
33. The three most important bridges on the Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad are located at Kotlas, Kozhva, and Abez, leading over the Severnaya Pechora and Usa Rivers. The bridges at Kotlas and Kozhva are between 600 and 1,000 meters long; that at Abez is about 300 meters long. The iron work on the bridges was constructed by the Mostozavod camp at Kotlas.

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Paragraph 4. MVD Maj. Gen. Mikhail Litrofanovich Ialtsev was transferred from Vorkuta to the position of Director General of Wismut A.G., Germany, in 1946.

Paragraph 14. Khalmeryu (approximately 68-00N, 64-50E) is on the Silova Yakha River, a considerable distance from the arctic coast. It is highly unlikely that the fleet refueled this far inland.

Paragraph 25. On its western border the Lerdovskaya ASSR abuts against the Ryazan and Ivanov oblasts, not the Moscow oblast.

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