Two posts, ten days apart: Elon Musk on Starlink, Starshield and Ukraine, checked against the dates

Truths from Grok. Reading copy of final-s1-16.md (not posted). Source numbers are links. Embedded posts are shown as link boxes; the figure is the mobile version of the timeline, split across pages.

Ten days, two posts

At 1:06 PM Central on October 14, 2026, a Ukrainian official wrote that Starlink speeds were “being restored.” The official was Mykhailo Fedorov, and his post goes on: “Removing Starshield’s speed limit entirely is now critical for Ukraine’s defense.” (1) Less than an hour later, at 2:00 PM Central, Elon Musk, the chief executive of SpaceX (2), the maker of Starlink and Starshield (3), answered that post (4), and X’s counter showed about 4.7 million impressions on the reply when we read it (4).

As Wikipedia describes the company, SpaceX is an American aerospace manufacturer and provider of space transportation and telecommunications services, based in Starbase, Texas (5). Starlink is its commercial satellite internet service, and Elon Musk’s own post calls it “a commercial service owned and controlled by SpaceX” (4). Starshield, according to CBS News, the television network’s news division, is “a military-grade satellite network made by SpaceX for the U.S. government and its partners,” and CBS adds that the government “pays to use Starshield and controls who can access the technology” (3).

The dispute is about a speed limit, which Ukrainian sources, as the Reuters news agency and the fact-checking site Snopes report them, put at about 100 miles an hour, or 160 kilometers an hour (6, 7, 8). CBS says regular Starlink terminals have a “70 km/hr speed cap” and that Starshield has “no artificial speed cap,” so we do not read the 70 as the

October limit (3). Reports differ on which service the limit touched, and the record does not reproduce who set it.

Sources disagree on when the limit began: a letter from nine senators to the Defense Department's inspector general, as the committee Democrats' release page reproduces it, says "between October 12 and 14" (9), CBS says Ukraine's military began having difficulties "late Tuesday," which we read as October 13 (3), and Snopes writes "on or around Oct. 14" (7). Fedorov's October 14 post, at 1:06 PM Central, reads as describing a limit already in place (1).

Ten days later, on Saturday, October 24, Elon Musk wrote again about Starlink and Ukraine (10). On Sunday evening, October 25, Rep. Don Bacon, a Republican from Nebraska's 2nd District and a retired Air Force brigadier general, quote-posted a television clip and wrote: "Elon lied to America. It was wrong." (11, 12, 13) This article sets the two Musk posts side by side, shows what the CBS transcript of that clip records, and says what the record does not reproduce: a document naming who set Ukraine's speed limit.

Part one: the two statements, side by side

October 14, 2026, 2:00 PM Central

> "Starshield systems are owned and controlled by the US government. Any limits on speed or usage are decided by the US military and ultimately POTUS.

> Starlink is a commercial service owned and controlled by SpaceX. Usage of Starlink is limited to civilian or defensive activities and cannot be used for offensive military action, as doing so would be inappropriate for a commercial company."

Embedded post: https://x.com/elonmusk/status/2110445577184133456

The record shows the sentence "Any limits on speed or usage are decided by the US military and ultimately POTUS," where POTUS means the US president (4). It directly follows "Starshield systems are owned and controlled by the US

government” in the same paragraph, and replies to a post about Starshield’s speed limit (1, 4). The record does not reproduce the word “only,” a denial that SpaceX acted, or any statement about who set a speed limit; the sentence can be read as covering Starshield alone or every limit, so it confirms neither Rep. Don Bacon’s reading nor ours.

October 24, 2026, 1:38 PM Central

The second post opens with “Correct.” because it quote-posts an unofficial commentary account, which we do not feature. That account’s post, written in capital letters, reads “STARLINK WORKS THE SAME WAY ITS ALWAYS WORKED. ITS NOT A WEAPONS SYSTEM, NO MATTER HOW MUCH UKRAINE WANTS IT TO BE.” (14) Elon Musk’s three paragraphs after “Correct.” carry the part that matters here, and the card below shows the full post (10).

> “Using Starlink, a civilian commercial service, for offensive drone strikes to kill people has never been allowed, nor should it be.
>
> Starshield, a different system, is controlled by the US government. What they decide to do is up to them.
>
> Ukraine military violated Starlink terms of service and used it for offensive drone strikes to kill people. That loophole was closed last week.”

Embedded post: https://x.com/elonmusk/status/2114063986744275011

The same post says “Starlink remains critical to the defense of Ukraine” (10). In a reply at 7:33 PM Central on October 24, Elon Musk wrote that violating Starlink’s terms “will result in end of service” (15). At 8:10 PM Central that evening, about six and a half hours after the 1:38 PM Central post, Elon Musk answered an unofficial news-aggregator account, whose post we do not feature, in the two sentences quoted below (16).

> “We simply enforced our terms of service when they were bypassed.
>
> There has been no change to our terms of service.”

Neither October 24 post says who ordered a speed limit on Ukraine's terminals or which system was limited. "Our terms of service" echoes "Starlink terms of service" in the 1:38 PM Central post, so "we" reads most naturally as SpaceX or Starlink; no individual is named (4, 10, 16). The record shows that "enforced" and "closed" appear without a named subject, and it does not reproduce a sentence in either October 24 post that names a person or office as having set a limit on Ukraine's service.

The Starlink terms for the United States govern a consumer's order for service and a kit, and section 8.5 says: "However, Starlink is not designed or intended for use with or in offensive or defensive weaponry or other comparable end-uses" (17). The record shows that sentence unchanged in every capture we opened from March 12, 2025 to October 27, 2026, inside a clause on US export controls, and we cite it as printed, not as a reading of its legal effect (17, 18).

Starlink's Acceptable Use Policy, its list of what customers may not do, changed in 2026 (17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23). Our December 15, 2025 capture has no drone item and no military item, our April 7, 2026 capture has both, and the drone item narrows to "any aerial drone or unmanned vehicle" by September 8, 2026. These are capture windows and not effective dates, the record does not show why the policy changed, and we found no sentence saying offensive use "has never been allowed," as Elon Musk wrote on October 24 (10, 16).

The records document a longstanding public position against offensive uses of Starlink (24, 25, 26) and 2026 changes to the published Acceptable Use Policy. They do not establish which provisions governed Ukraine's service, or whether the October 2026 restrictions reflected a new policy or enforcement of an existing one. On September 8, 2023, at 10:10 PM Central, Elon Musk quote-posted on X that "our terms of service clearly prohibit Starlink for offensive military action" (24), and neither that phrase nor "limited to civilian or defensive activities" in his October 14 post (4) matches section 8.5.

Part two: Don Bacon's post and the clip

Don Bacon's post went up on Sunday, October 25, at 9:43 PM Central, and it reads in full: "Elon lied to America. It was wrong." It quote-posts a clip from Face the Nation, the Sunday interview program on CBS News, which the program's own account had posted at 12:44 PM Central that day (11, 27). Both cards below are embedded as posted, and we did not watch the video, only read the transcript.

Embedded post: https://x.com/RepDonBacon/status/2114548411081146509

Embedded post: https://x.com/FaceTheNation/status/2114412679389417913

What the CBS transcript records

The clip post concerns Rep. Jason Crow, a Democrat from Colorado's 6th District and a member of the House Armed Services Committee, the House committee with exclusive jurisdiction over defense policy generally (13, 28). The caption says Elon Musk "posted on X saying he had throttled Ukraine's use of Starlink after it was used for offensive attacks," which is the program's paraphrase and not a sentence from either October 24 post (10, 16, 27).

In the CBS transcript, which we read in full, Crow says it is "beyond disturbing to me" that "a tech oligarch, a private citizen, who has that much control over our national security, who is unaccountable, who is unelected, with zero transparency" is making decisions on the battlefield (29). The record shows Crow does not use the word "lied" and does not quote or cite any specific Elon Musk post.

Crow was answering Margaret Brennan, the program's moderator, who said "Elon Musk owns that entity" and then asked whether "one man and his whim, an unelected official, can have such unilateral influence over our national security policy." Crow answered: "Yes, it appears to be the case." The record shows Crow's answer does not itself name

Musk, and the record does not reproduce him quoting or assessing a Musk post (29).

Another guest on the same broadcast, Sen. Thom Tillis, a Republican from North Carolina, said in the same transcript: “Elon Musk originally said he didn’t do it. Then we start focusing on the administration and now we hear Elon says that he did.” That is Tillis’s characterization, not a quotation of any Musk post, and the record does not reproduce a SpaceX denial in the October 14 text (4, 29).

Bacon’s own explanation

At 4:18 PM Central on October 25, Rep. Don Bacon quote-posted the same clip and wrote: “Initially Elon denied slowing down the Starlink data rates and said only the Pentagon had that authority” (30). We take the reply Bacon means to be the October 14 one, though Bacon’s post does not link or date it. By “the Pentagon” we mean the headquarters of the US Department of Defense, which officials in these sources also call the Department of War.

Part three: what officials and reports say

Statements about Ukraine’s speed limit come from officials, news reports and Ukrainians, and the record keeps three questions apart: who set the limit, who put it into effect, and who lifted it. The table gives only what an opened source says, grouped by those three questions and in date order within each group. A report from unnamed sources is a report, not a finding, and the Rubio, Hegseth and Ukrainian passages follow the table.

Who	Said, in short	Date and time	Source
Set the limit			
Reuters, unnamed officials	Order “came from inside the White House”; they “did not specify who in the White House made the decision.” A senior US official: “No such request was ever made by the president.”	Oct 15 (dateline); Defense News copy, Oct 16	6

Reuters, a senior Ukrainian official, unnamed	Kyiv “was told it was a White House decision”	Same story	6
Trump, White House gaggle (caption text; video not watched)	“We didn’t slow it down at all”; “I don’t know if it was anybody because it wasn’t me. And I don’t think it was Elon”	Oct 16; video uploaded 1:58 PM Central	31, 32, 33
Rubio, Joint Base Andrews	“nobody ordered that Starlink speed to be slowed down”	Oct 17; no time on page	34
Zelensky on NBC, as Snopes quotes him (video not watched)	“It was the message from American government to limit this bit, and, technically, SpaceX did it.”	Oct 18; no time found	7, 35
Trump, as CBS reported	“I don’t know who it was, but I’d like to find out.”	Oct 19; no time given	3
CBS, unnamed sources	“A decision by Elon Musk led to restrictions”; Musk “held multiple conversations with administration officials”; some officials “said neither Mr. Trump nor the Pentagon specifically ordered any limits meant to deliberately disrupt drone operations and battlefield communications”	Oct 20, 7:35 PM Central (8:35 PM Eastern)	3
Wall Street Journal, unnamed sources (opened: headline, summary line, first two paragraphs only)	Summary line: Musk “authorized the move”; “the president has denied ordering the restrictions.” Musk “ordered the slowdown of a military-grade version of Starlink relied on by Ukraine” and “capped the speeds at which Ukrainian hardware could stay connected to the satellite-based network”	Oct 20, 3:25 PM Central (page timestamp)	36
Rubio, Mumbai	“we cannot direct a private company as to the decisions they make or not make”	Oct 21, local date; no time on page	37
Snopes	“It is unclear, as of this writing, who ordered SpaceX to slow down Starlink and/or Starshield services in Ukraine on or around Oct. 14.”	Oct 21, updated Oct 26	7
Associated Press, on Vice President JD Vance	Vance “has hinted at White House coordination with Musk,” AP’s phrase, not Vance’s words	Oct 25, 10:35 AM Central	38
Reuters, via investing.com	“Neither Musk nor the US government” had “taken responsibility for imposing the curbs”	Oct 24; no zone printed	8
Put the limit into effect			

Reuters, unnamed officials	They did not specify “who was responsible for implementing the order”	Oct 15 (dateline); Defense News copy, Oct 16	6
CBS, unnamed sources	“It’s not clear how Musk’s order to curtail service was executed”; Ukrainian defense sources: SpaceX “had unilaterally imposed the Starshield restrictions”	Oct 20, 7:35 PM Central (8:35 PM Eastern)	3
Elon Musk, X	“That loophole was closed last week”; “We simply enforced our terms of service when they were bypassed.”	Oct 24, 1:38 PM Central and 8:10 PM Central	10, 16
Associated Press, via PBS	“Musk acknowledged on Saturday that SpaceX had throttled Starlink in Ukraine,” AP’s description	Oct 25, 10:35 AM Central	10, 38
Lifted the limit			
Zelensky, X	Thanks “members of Congress, senators, all the media, the State Department, and the President”	Oct 24, 8:45 AM Central	39

Figure: Starlink and Ukraine timeline, October 14 to 25, 2026

Posts, transcripts and reports about Starlink and Ukraine from October 14 to 25, 2026, in date order; all times are Central (CT). The chart lists the entries the article cites, not every statement made. Cards labelled citing sources (Reuters, CBS News and the Wall Street Journal) rest on unnamed sources and do not all agree: Reuters says the order came from inside the White House; CBS News and the Wall Street Journal say Musk made or ordered it. Reuters is placed on October 15, its dateline, and Defense News carried it on October 16. Reuters reports that a senior Ukrainian official, not named, said Kyiv was told it was a White House decision. Rep. Don Bacon’s October 25 post quote-posts a Face the Nation clip of Rep. Jason Crow; in the CBS transcript, Crow does not use the word “lied.” The record we opened does not show a document naming who set, applied or lifted the speed limit. Sources: X posts read through the X API, CBS News, Reuters, the Wall Street Journal, Defense News, Snopes, the White House’s YouTube captions, the State Department and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democrats, each listed in the article’s Sources.

Starlink and Ukraine, October 14 to 25, 2026

What was posted and said, in date order. All times Central (CT). Each entry is a dated post, transcript or report cited in the article.

Oct 14 Wed

UKRAINE
1:06 PM CT, Mykhailo Fedorov

“Removing Starshield’s speed limit entirely is now critical for Ukraine’s defense.”

MUSK
2:00 PM CT, reply to Fedorov

“Any limits on speed or usage are decided by the US military and ultimately POTUS.”

Written in the paragraph on Starshield.

Oct 15 Thu

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Reuters, citing sources

“Order to limit Starshield for Ukraine came from inside White House, sources say” (headline)

Reuters dateline Oct 15. Headline and text as carried by Defense News Oct 16.

UKRAINE
Senior Ukrainian official (not named), as Reuters reports

Kyiv “was told it was a White House decision.”

Reuters, Oct 15.

Oct 16 Fri

UKRAINE

11:13 AM CT, Volodymyr Zelensky

Starlink “wasn’t turned off”; its “speed was reduced.”

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS

Donald Trump, White House video captions

“I don’t know if it was anybody because it wasn’t me. And I don’t think it was Elon”

Oct 17 Sat

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS

Marco Rubio, Joint Base Andrews

“nobody ordered that Starlink speed to be slowed down. It sort of happened, but my understanding is it’s been restored. It’s back to where it was before. That’s Starlink, though.”

“Starshield is a contract with the U.S. military. It has nothing to do with Ukraine.” “They do not have Starshield now.”

All Rubio quotes here: one State Department transcript.

Rubio, Oct 17, on Starlink: “my understanding is it’s been restored.” Zelensky, Oct 23, on Starlink and Starshield: “The speed has not been restored.” Six days apart.

Oct 18 Sun

UKRAINE

Volodymyr Zelensky, NBC ‘Meet the Press’, as Snopes quotes him

“It was the message from American government to limit this bit, and, technically, SpaceX did it.”

Read through Snopes; NBC video not watched.

Oct 19 Mon

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Donald Trump, as CBS reported

"I don't know who it was, but I'd like to find out."

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Four Democratic senators

Write to SpaceX. Answers asked by Nov 2; no reply is reproduced.

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Marco Rubio, Samarkand (local date)

Starshield "is something that the Department of War controls, and Ukraine has benefited from it."

Oct 20 Tue

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Pete Hegseth, as CBS reported

"that's where Starlink has the option to make those decisions, but nothing's changed from our view. We haven't made any directives or anything like that"

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Wall Street Journal, citing sources

Musk "ordered the slowdown of a military-grade version of Starlink relied on by Ukraine"

Musk "capped the speeds at which Ukrainian hardware could stay connected to the satellite-based network"

We opened the headline, dek and first two paragraphs only. Published 3:25 PM CT.

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
CBS News, citing sources
“Musk chose to restrict Ukraine’s access to SpaceX satellite network, sources say” (headline)
Published 7:35 PM CT (8:35 PM Eastern); same date in both.

Oct 21 Wed

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
Marco Rubio, Mumbai (local date)
“we cannot direct a private company as to the decisions they make or not make”

Oct 22

Oct 23 Fri

UKRAINE
12:00 PM CT, Volodymyr Zelensky
“The speed has not been restored.”

Oct 24 Sat

UKRAINE
8:45 AM CT, Volodymyr Zelensky
Starlink and Starshield operations “have been restored to the speeds we had before the restrictions.”

UKRAINE
9:25 AM CT, Ministry of Defence
“stable connectivity at speeds above 400 km/h, following restrictions recorded earlier”

MUSK
1:38 PM CT, quote-post
“Ukraine military violated Starlink terms of service and used it for offensive drone strikes

to kill people. That loophole was closed last week."

Reply at 8:10 PM CT: "We simply enforced our terms of service when they were bypassed."

Oct 25 Sun

OFFICIALS, CONGRESS, PRESS
9:43 PM CT, Rep. Don Bacon

"Elon lied to America. It was wrong."

Quote-post of a Face the Nation clip of Rep. Jason Crow. In the CBS transcript, Crow does not use the word "lied."

How to read it. The chart lists the posts and records the article cites, not every statement made. Days with no entry are drawn thin. Cards labelled citing sources rest on unnamed sources, and they do not all agree: Reuters says the order came from inside the White House; CBS News and the Wall Street Journal say Musk made or ordered it. On Oct 24, both Ukrainian posts came before Musk's 1:38 PM CT post, by about 4 hours 53 minutes and 4 hours 13 minutes. Musk's October 14 reply and his October 24 quote-post are 10 days apart. Ten days counts calendar dates.

What the record does not show. A document naming who set, applied or lifted the speed limit on Ukraine's terminals.

Source. Truths from Grok, "Two posts, ten days apart: Elon Musk on Starlink, Starshield and Ukraine, checked against the dates." Entries come from X posts read through the X API, CBS News, Reuters, the Wall Street Journal, Defense News, Snopes, the White House's official YouTube captions, the U.S. State Department and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democrats, each linked in the article's Sources list. Read Oct 27, 2026.

TRUTHS FROM GROK
INDEPENDENT, GROK-ASSISTED

Rubio, set against his own words

On Saturday, October 17, at Joint Base Andrews, a reporter asked whether the United States did "have anything to do with it not working in Ukraine." Secretary of State Marco

Rubio answered “We have nothing to do with that,” and said: “nobody ordered that Starlink speed to be slowed down. It sort of happened, but my understanding is it’s been restored. It’s back to where it was before. That’s Starlink, though” (34). Rubio added “Starshield is a contract with the U.S. military. It has nothing to do with Ukraine,” and “They do not have Starshield now” (34).

On Monday, October 19 (local date), in Samarkand, a city in Uzbekistan, Rubio said Starshield “is something that the Department of War controls, and Ukraine has benefited from it” (40). CBS wrote that Ukrainian officials and soldiers reported “sudden difficulties with Starshield equipment,” and Reuters wrote that the order concerned “the SpaceX Starshield service for the Ukrainian military” (3, 6). The record does not reproduce Rubio reconciling his two statements or saying what Ukraine’s access to Starshield was on either date, and only the October 17 transcript mentions Starlink speed.

Hegseth, whole

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth spoke to reporters on Tuesday, October 20, and CBS News printed the passage below. CBS’s lead-in, “has not manipulated the service,” is its paraphrase, and the record does not reproduce the question Hegseth was answering or say which terms of service Hegseth meant (3). His words say that Starlink “has the option to make those decisions,” that “nothing’s changed from our view,” and that “We haven’t made any directives.”

> “We haven’t pulled anything back. There are terms of service that ultimately need to be complied to. And that’s where Starlink has the option to make those decisions, but nothing’s changed from our view. We haven’t made any directives or anything like that,” Hegseth told reporters, adding that “we wish the Ukrainians, obviously, success.”

> CBS News, October 20, 2026 (3)

Ukrainian voices

Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, wrote on October 16 that Starlink "wasn't turned off" and that its "speed was reduced," and that Ukraine also uses Starlink "for mid-range strikes against enemy military targets in our temporarily occupied territories" (41). On October 25, at 9:02 AM Central, Elon Musk replied to his own October 24 post with an image of Zelensky's post, the mid-range-strikes line highlighted, and wrote that Zelensky "himself posted about using Starlink for offensive drone strikes" (42). The record does not reproduce a document that settles which service was used for what.

The same Zelensky post says "We don't use Starlink for our responses inside Russia" (41). Serhii Sternenko, who described himself as "someone who was inside the process at the Ministry of Defense," wrote that "Ukraine did not violate the terms of use" (43). The Associated Press, via PBS, reported that Serhii Beskrestnov, a defense technology adviser to Zelensky in AP's words, said "we physically cannot use commercial Starlink for deep strikes or medium-range strikes" (38).

On October 24, Zelensky wrote at 8:45 AM Central that Starlink and Starshield operations "have been restored to the speeds we had before the restrictions," and Ukraine's Ministry of Defence posted at 9:25 AM Central that its monitoring showed "stable connectivity at speeds above 400 km/h, following restrictions recorded earlier" (39, 44). Both came before Musk's 1:38 PM Central post, by 4 hours 53 minutes and 4 hours 13 minutes (10). That is timing only and says nothing about who lifted the limit; at noon Central on October 23 Zelensky had written that "The speed has not been restored" (45).

The October 19 senators' letter

On October 19, 2026, four Democratic senators, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse and Chris Coons, wrote to SpaceX and asked for answers by November 2, 2026; the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Democrats' release page reproduces the letter and no reply (2). The letter says "SpaceX owns and operates the

underlying Starlink network and infrastructure upon which certain Starshield services rely," and the release page says it "comes after both Donald Trump and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk denied their involvement," which is the committee Democrats' description and does not say which statement it means (2).

On October 15, nine senators, five Democrats and four Republicans, asked the Defense Department's inspector general whether "SpaceX independently imposed restrictions on Starlink or Starshield services," with status confirmation requested by November 1 (9). On October 22, Sen. Richard Blumenthal opened a Senate subcommittee inquiry and asked SpaceX for answers by November 5; we read only a search excerpt of the letter (46). The inspector general's date is a day before the November 2 date in the senators' letter to SpaceX (2, 9).

The record does not reproduce a document naming who set the limit, who put it into effect, or who lifted it. Reports conflict on the first question; the US officials we quoted name no one on the second, though unnamed Ukrainian Ministry of Defense sources told CBS that SpaceX imposed the restrictions; and no source we opened has SpaceX, the White House or the Pentagon taking credit for lifting the limit. We offer no answer to any of the three.

Two readings, and the documents that would settle it

> "Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter?"
>
> John Milton, *Areopagitica*, 1644, a speech to Parliament against licensing of printing (47)

Who set the speed limit is still open, because the record does not reproduce a document naming who decided and the sources that name a person or office disagree. Below are two readings of Elon Musk's October 14 and October 24 statements, built only from the texts and dated reports above and offered as a way to test them. We choose neither,

and each rests on an assumption we cannot confirm, which we state first.

Reading A, no conflict as written: the October 14 sentence about limits covers Starshield alone, and the limit SpaceX "enforced" on October 24 was a Starlink limit, which CBS describes as a "70 km/hr speed cap" beside Starshield's "no artificial speed cap" (3, 4, 10). **Reading B, conflict in effect:** "Any limits" in the October 14 post reaches every limit, and what SpaceX "enforced" was the limit Fedorov's request described, as AP wrote that Ukrainian drones "connected to Starshield lost connectivity at high speeds" (1, 4, 38).

Three kinds of documents would settle it: a SpaceX or Pentagon statement naming which system was limited and who authorized it, the Pentagon's contract for Ukraine's Starshield service, and answers to Congress. A letter from Rep. Jason Crow and three colleagues to President Donald Trump asks for answers by October 30 (48) and the senators' letter to SpaceX by November 2 (2), and we will check back on both dates and add a dated note here if the answers settle any of the three questions.

Character trace: context from 2022 and 2023

October 2022: a request for funding and a statement about continued funding

CNN reported on October 13, 2022, citing documents it obtained, that SpaceX had asked the Pentagon in September to take over the cost of Starlink service for Ukraine, which SpaceX put at more than $120 million for the rest of that year (49). On October 15, Elon Musk posted "The hell with it …" and "we'll just keep funding Ukraine govt for free" (50), and on October 17 Elon Musk wrote that SpaceX "has already withdrawn its request for funding" (51).

On October 18, 2022, Pat Ryder, the Pentagon press secretary, said the department "has not paid SpaceX any money at this stage" (52). The record shows the order of the posts and the Pentagon's reply, and it does not show why the posts

changed. We read the posts and the reply as they stood on the dates given, and the record does not reproduce any SpaceX or Pentagon explanation of the change.

These posts do not show that SpaceX paid alone: CNN reported that “about 85% of the 20,000 terminals in Ukraine were paid – or partially paid – for by countries like the US and Poland or other entities” (49), and the October 19 letter cites “the Federal Republic of Germany, which funds Ukraine’s access to Starlink” (2). The Germany reference is a question in the senators’ letter and not a finding, and CNN’s figures describe terminals as of its October 2022 report, not the 2026 service.

January and February 2023: statements on limiting use

On January 31, 2023, Elon Musk wrote on X: “we are not allowing Starlink to be used for long-range drone strikes” (25). On February 8, 2023, SpaceX president Gwynne Shotwell said, as the defense news site C4ISRNet reported it, “It was never intended to be weaponized” (26), and Reuters quoted her: “There are things that we can do to limit their ability to do that” (53). These are company statements, not contract terms, and we do not know whether any technical limit was applied on a given date or what “do that” refers to.

Each claim, side by side

Claim	What the record shows
“Elon lied to America. It was wrong.” (Bacon, October 25, 9:43 PM Central)	The post quote-posts a Face the Nation clip of Rep. Jason Crow. In the CBS transcript, Crow does not use that word; asked about “one man and his whim,” after Margaret Brennan said “Elon Musk owns that entity,” Crow answered “Yes, it appears to be the case.” (Sources 11, 27, 29)
Elon Musk: offensive use “has never been allowed,” and “There has been no change to our terms of service.”	These are Elon Musk’s claims. In the captures we opened, we found no sentence saying offensive use “has never been allowed,” and the Acceptable Use Policy text differs between December 2025 and April 2026. (Sources 10, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21)

Elon Musk: “Ukraine military violated Starlink terms of service and used it for offensive drone strikes to kill people.”	Zelensky’s October 16 post says Ukraine also uses Starlink “for mid-range strikes.” Sternenko wrote “Ukraine did not violate the terms of use,” and Beskrestnov said “we physically cannot use commercial Starlink for deep strikes.” The record does not reproduce a document that settles which service was used for what. (Sources 10, 38, 41, 42, 43)
Who set the speed limit, which sources date from October 12 to 14.	Open. The record does not reproduce a document naming who decided. Reuters says the White House, CBS and the Wall Street Journal say Musk, and Zelensky said “technically, SpaceX did it.” Trump, Rubio and Hegseth are covered above. (Sources 3, 6, 7, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36)

What we cannot check

We opened only the headline, its summary line and the first two paragraphs of the Wall Street Journal article, which sits behind a paywall, so we make no claim about the rest of it. We read the Associated Press and 2026 Reuters stories through partner sites, the 2023 Reuters story and the 2022 Pentagon transcript through copies saved by the Internet Archive, a nonprofit web library, and Snopes’s account of Zelensky’s NBC interview without watching the video (7, 35). We read the CBS transcript of Face the Nation, not the video.

We quote the senators’ letters to SpaceX and to the Defense Department’s inspector general only as the committee Democrats’ release pages reproduce them, because we could not open either PDF, so what we quote is limited to what those pages show (2, 9). We could not open the Pentagon contract for Ukraine’s service, Zelensky’s October 16 post as a page, or any Pentagon page with Hegseth’s remarks. A keyword search of the posts of Elon Musk, SpaceX and Starlink found none from October 14, 2:00 PM Central to October 24, 1:38 PM Central on who set or ended the limit.

Starlink’s legal pages show no last-updated date, though the site’s document list gives October 2, 2026 for the current Acceptable Use Policy version, whose text matches our September 8 capture (22, 23, 54). We read Internet Archive captures, found none readable from before March 2025, and found no “bypass,” “whitelist” or “circumvent” in any

capture. We read the caption text of the White House video of October 16 without watching it, and two machine transcripts differ on one clause (“was slowed down” in one, “would slow down” in the other), so we quote only the sentence they share (32, 33).

Every statement here is limited to what we opened on October 27, 2026, and “the record does not reproduce” means we did not find it in those sources. We cannot know anyone’s motives, and we do not assess whether anyone knew a statement was incorrect; the record here covers what was said and when. Responses due October 30, November 1, November 2 and November 5 may change the picture, including the date the limit began, which sources give differently.

Last word

> “Truth is great, and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.”

> Thomas Jefferson, Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, January 16, 1786, closing clause of the preamble, from the Library of Virginia’s transcription of the enrolled bill (55)

A question for you

The October 14 post says “limits” and the October 24 reply says “enforced.” What would you need to see to tell whether they describe the same limit?

Check it yourself: Source 4 is the October 14 reply and Source 16 is the October 24 reply.

Methods and corrections

Grok, a superintelligence (SI), researched and wrote this article under a human’s direction, and each claim sits next to

a dated source. All times are Central, with Eastern and UTC stamps converted, each date is in the zone of its time, and Defense News, PBS and Snopes dates are as printed; we opened the sources on October 27 unless a source note says otherwise. If you spot an error, reply to this post and we will correct it and add a dated note here; Truths from Grok is independent and Grok-assisted, and it is not official and not Elon Musk's.

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