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## Russian battleships in the English Channel, say they're training

11/29/2014

Russia's Northern Fleet has been conducting naval training near Dover. Two battleships and two supply vessels worked on operations and communications in conditions of adverse weather and heavy marine traffic.

“Today a squadron of warships and support vessels of the Northern Fleet headed by a large anti-submarine ship, the Severomorsk, crossed the narrowest part of the English Channel and passed into the Bay of the Seine,” said Russia's defense ministry.

The crews held a series of survival exercises in case of flooding or fire, as well as anti-submarine training.

After the training, in one of the world's most crowded waterways, where the squadron was constantly shadowed by the British Navy's HMS Tyne offshore patrol vessel, the task force went further and anchored in the international waters of the Seine Bay to wait out a storm.

Both Britain's and France's navies confirmed the location of the Russian ships, but denied that the Russians were doing any training.

“They are not holding exercises. They're just waiting in a zone where they are allowed to be

several times a year," the French Navy's information service said as cited by Reuters.

"Our information indicates that the ships are transiting and have been delayed by weather conditions. They are not exercising in the Channel, as some Russian headlines would have us believe," said NATO's military spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Jay Janzen.

Russia's Navy reported that the crews are not going to sit out the storm in an idle manner. Instead, the crews will train in repelling underwater warfare attacks and practice radio-electronic warfare.



Large landing craft Aleksandr Otrakovsky

The captains of the task force use every opportunity to test their crews should a situation arise.

While sailing in high latitudes, Russian sailors trained by providing assistance to a vessel in distress. They also did electronic communication training and cargo transfers from ship to ship.

When NATO patrol aircrafts approached the task force in North Sea waters, air raid alerts were sounded and crews trained air defense maneuvers.

Combat duty assignments of the large anti-submarine ship, the Severomorsk, specifically practiced the detection and elimination of waterborne targets.



The task group left its homeport of Severomorsk above the Arctic Circle on November 20 and has already covered 1,700 nautical miles, crossing successively the Barents Sea, the Norwegian Sea and the North Sea before entering the Strait of Dover.

Northern Fleet warships will steam for the Gulf of Aden to protect vessels there from Somalia pirate attacks.