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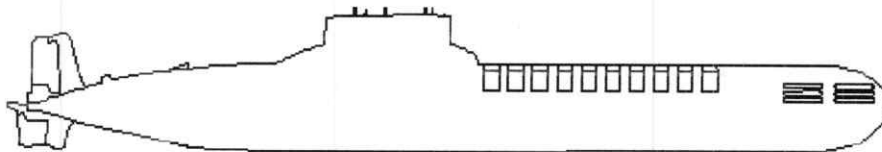
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The Russian Northern Fleet - updated: 19.02.97

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Two Typhoon subs taken out of service



According to the Russian navy magazine "Morskoy Sbornik", two strategic nuclear-powered submarines of Typhoon class were prematurely taken out of service recently. Lack of proper maintenance and finances to upgrade the submarines were named among the main reasons.

In 1980 - 1981 delivery of the principal submarines of the then new third generation was behind the Soviet government appointed schedule. For this reason no proper testing of these submarines was performed. Thus, all the technical faults of the first implementation were carried on to the rest of the submarines within the new classes. The restricted time limits were in particular due to the fact that Brezhnev had declared to the whole world that USSR was acquiring a new marine strategic system - the Typhoon class submarines - to confront the newly developed US Trident system.

Construction of the first class of the third generation nuclear submarines, Project 941 - Typhoon class, began in 1977, and the first of these vessels was put into service in 1981. By 1989, six Typhoon class submarines had been built. The vessels in this class are definitively the world's largest submarines, carrying 200 nuclear warheads each. A seventh Typhoon class submarine was under construction at the Severodvinsk shipyard, but the work was halted, allegedly due to the political changes in the Soviet Union towards the end of the 1980s. A more probable reason would be the technical problems the Typhoons revealed during operation.

All submarines of Typhoon class have their home port in Zapadnaya Litsa (Nerpichya bay) on the Kola Peninsular. Currently only two submarines of this class are serviceable. The rest are under repair, being modernised or just moored at the piers in Nerpichya.

"During the last years the actual level of Naval vessels' reliability has significantly decreased; this tendency is becoming threatening. The intensity of technical malfunctions onboard vessels have increased by 1,5-2 times", according to a "confidential" Naval report quoted by Russian weekly "Ogoneyk". "Keeping the vessels - including the strategic submarines - operational, is becoming more and more difficult... the indicated factors can lead not only to a degradation of military readiness, but to the development of serious accidental situations", concludes the report.

According to the original plans, the submarines of Typhoon class were not due to leave service until the beginning of the next century; to be replaced by the forth generation strategic submarines of "Borey" class, which currently are under construction. The hastened condemnation of the two Typhoon class

submarines may be caused by fear of possible accidents.

Presently the Russian Navy has pulled out of service 23 strategic nuclear-powered submarines, including the two Typhoons. In the Northern Fleet most of these strategic submarines are laid-up in Severodvinsk, Archangelsk County.



Foto, 42 kb.

Read more in the Northern Fleet Report:

- [Project 941 \(Akula\) - Typhoon Class](#)
- [4.3.3 Nerpichya](#)
- [5.6 The Severodvinsk naval yards](#)

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Last updated 1997-06-20

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