



**Defence Academy**  
of the United Kingdom

The Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

# Special Series

**The Russian Federation Navy:  
An Assessment of its Strategic Setting, Doctrine and Prospects**  
James Bosbotinis



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## Key Findings

- Russian grand strategy and military strategy is focused on the protection and projection of Russia's position as a Great Power. Russia identifies itself as a world power and the principal threat to its position as emanating from the United States and NATO. This provides the context for Russian military development which remains focused on high-intensity, state-on-state conventional and nuclear war-fighting. It is believed that Russia intends to increase defence spending by 60 per cent in the short term.
- The renewed interest and investment in sea power is a component of Russia's increasing assertiveness and desire for global influence and power. Contemporary Russian maritime thinking is marked by a significant coherence in its aims, objectives and synergies with wider Russian grand strategy. The continuing influence of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov on Russian naval thinking is also notable.
- Russia is looking to invest in a substantial expansion and enhancement of its naval forces over the long-term. This will focus particularly on nuclear-powered submarines, aircraft carriers (with embarked fifth generation aircraft) and guided-missile cruisers; the comprehensive regeneration of conventional surface combatant forces; the development of an enhanced amphibious capability; and the development of enhanced Command, Control, Communications, Computing, Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance capabilities. Russia also continues to invest in the development of naval strategic nuclear forces and is developing conventional strategic systems and nuclear sub-strategic weapons.
- The Russian Navy continues to have major problems with readiness and the quality of both personnel and equipment. The industrial base also remains a significant area of concern. Attempts are being made to remedy both these areas but will require sustained attention and investment. The Russian Navy is increasing its operational tempo and participating in major combat exercises, primarily geared toward notional contingencies against the US and NATO; it is also looking to expand its presence overseas, in particular in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean region.
- Russia's increasing interest in the Arctic constitutes a core factor in the long-term development of Russian grand strategy and its relations with other powers. The Arctic has been defined as a critical priority for Russia and the Navy assigned a central role in the defence of Russia's position and interests in the Arctic. That is, Russian grand strategy in the twenty-first century will be to a notable extent, based on maritime interests.

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# The Russian Federation Navy: An Assessment of its Strategic Setting, Doctrine and Prospects

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## Introduction

The evolving trajectory of Russian grand strategy<sup>1</sup> and in particular military strategy warrants significant attention. This is due to the increasingly assertive character of Russia's grand strategic posture including the stated objective 'to transform the Russian Federation as a world power',<sup>2</sup> the identification of the principal military-strategic threat to Russia as emanating from the West (particularly NATO) and the general dissatisfaction with the post-Cold War settlement. This is reflected in the ongoing military reform and modernisation programme which is designed to first and foremost, respond to the threat posed by the United States and NATO.<sup>3</sup> It is also a core component of the new *National Security Strategy* and the debate concerning the formulation of the revised Military Doctrine. Mikhail Barabanov, editor of the *Moscow Defense Brief*, states: '... a strong national consensus is forming in support of the restoration of the state as a great power in terms of its economy, politics, military and, to the extent possible within the borders of the former USSR, territory...' and 'The West is thus by definition hostile to Russia's national objectives ... and can be confidently identified as its chief potential adversaries [sic]'.<sup>4</sup>

In the context of the development of Russian military strategy, the aforementioned thinking serves as the basis for the continuing focus on high-intensity, state-on-state warfare as constituting the principal benchmark for Russian military planning. This includes the stated intention of maintaining strategic parity with the United States with regard to strategic offensive weapons.<sup>5</sup> Colonel-General Alexander Rukshin, the then-Chief of the Main Operational Directorate of the Russian General Staff, gave the principal aim of the Russian military as:

... defending independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and its allies, repelling an aggression, inflicting a defeat on an aggressor, and compelling him to terminate military operations... in a *large-scale (regional) war* [emphasis added].<sup>6</sup>

The primary threat to the military security of the Russian Federation as defined in the *National Security Strategy* is also explicitly state-centric and Western, that is:

...the politics of a number of leading foreign countries aimed at achieving a dominant advantage in the military field, especially in the strategic nuclear forces, through the development of high-precision, information and other high-tech means of armed struggle, the strategic weapons in the conventional

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<sup>1</sup> As promulgated by the *National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020* (2009), the *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* (2008) and the *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* (2010).

<sup>2</sup> The *National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020*.

<sup>3</sup> See General Yuri Baluyevsky, 'Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation', *Military Thought*, No. 2, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail Barabanov, 'Towards a Military Doctrine for Russia', *Moscow Defense Brief*, Issue 1, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> The *National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020*.

<sup>6</sup> Colonel-General Alexander Rukshin, 'Doctrinal Views on Employment and Organizational Development of the Armed Forces of Russia', *Military Thought*, No. 2, 2007.

equipment, the formation of a unilateral global missile defense system and the militarization of space...

In the naval context, the desire for great power status and the identification of the West as the principal military threat to Russia is providing the basis for a sustained investment in the redevelopment of Russian seapower. In this regard, Russia intends to spend 25 per cent of a 4.9 trillion rouble (approximately \$39.5 billion out of \$158 billion) defence investment budget on naval construction in the period to 2015/16.<sup>7</sup> With spending on naval strategic nuclear forces included, current total naval expenditure accounts for in excess of 40 per cent of the Russian defence budget.<sup>8</sup> The principal spending priorities include *Borei*-class SSBNs, *Yasen*-class SSGNs and the development and construction of a new class of nuclear-powered conventional take-off and landing (CTOL)-configured aircraft carriers.<sup>9</sup> Russia intends to commence the recapitalisation of its surface combatant force with the series production of Project 20380 *Stereguschy*-class corvettes, Project 22350 *Gorshkov*-class frigates and a new class of destroyer to replace the current *Sovremenny*-class.<sup>10</sup> It is also intended that the three *Ushakov* (ex-*Kirov*)-class cruisers *Admiral Ushakov*, *Admiral Nakhimov* and *Admiral Lazarev* be returned to service,<sup>11</sup> and two *Typhoon*-class SSBNs currently in reserve (the *Arkhangelsk* and *Severstal*) will be overhauled and most likely converted to SSGNs.<sup>12</sup> The development of command and control, navigation, reconnaissance and targeting systems, in particular space-based systems, is also a principal objective of the Russian Navy.<sup>13</sup>

The increasing investment in the Russian Navy is reflective of a resurgent ambition on the part of Russian naval and maritime thinking. The *Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation up to the Year 2020* for example, states: 'Historically, Russia – the leading maritime power, on the basis of its spatial and geophysical features, place and role in global and regional international interactions [sic]'. Further, the then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov stated in 2004 that: '...the fleet forces of the Russian Navy, with regard for the emerging political and economic realities, may prospectively comprise about 280-300 [emphasis added] ships of the main classes'.<sup>14</sup> This is comparable to the current strength of the US Navy, which has at present, 283 deployable 'Battle Force' ships and submarines.<sup>15</sup> This is in contrast to immediate post-Soviet thinking which defined Russia's requirements in much less grandiose terms: 'Russia needs a relatively small navy, but one which is capable – in cooperation with the other armed services – of supporting her foreign policy, protecting her economic interests and guaranteeing national security'.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> 'Russia Says its Navy Ready to Thwart any Threat to Security', *RIA Novosti*, 9 September 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080909/116641317-print.html>.

<sup>8</sup> 'Russian Navy gets over 40 per cent of defence budget – deputy PM', *RIA Novosti* (via LexisNexis), 3 June 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Ilya Kramnik, 'Russia set to build new aircraft carrier', *RIA Novosti*, 3 March 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20090303/120404573.html>.

<sup>10</sup> 'Russia to start building new destroyers in 2012 – navy chief', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 30 June 2009.

<sup>11</sup> 'Russia plans to upgrade 3 nuclear-powered cruisers by 2020 (Update 1)', *RIA Novosti*, 24 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100725/159939020.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100725/159939020.html).

<sup>12</sup> 'Typhoon class submarines to remain in service with Russian Navy', *RIA Novosti*, 26 June 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090626/155362076.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090626/155362076.html). A third *Typhoon*-class boat, the *Dmitry Donskoy*, which serves as the trials platform for the SS-NX-30 *Bulava* submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) programme will remain in service as an SSBN.

<sup>13</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities for 2010*: via <http://www.morskayakollegiya.ru>.

<sup>14</sup> Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, 'Navy Today: Main Trends in its Development and Employment', *Military Thought*, No. 3, 2004.

<sup>15</sup> 'Status of the Navy', [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/navy\\_legacy\\_hr.asp?id=146](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/navy_legacy_hr.asp?id=146).

<sup>16</sup> Admiral Valentin Selivanov (First Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Chief of the Main Staff of the Russian Navy), 'A Navy's Job: The Role of the Russian Navy in the System of International Security and Cooperation in

This is indicative of the wider reassertion of Russian power and prestige initiated under former President Putin and in naval terms, reflects a continuing influence of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov on Russian naval thinking; that is, 'Our state – a great continental *and* [emphasis added] maritime power – at all stages of history has needed a powerful fleet as an essential constituent of the armed forces'.<sup>17</sup> The ability, however, of the Russian economy to fulfil the Navy's, and wider Russian, aspirations for great power status and capability remains uncertain. The economic crisis has had a significant impact on Russia; for example, with an annualised rate of GDP decline of in excess of 8 per cent for 2009.<sup>18</sup> This is in addition to continuing problems with the Russian military-industrial complex resulting in prolonged delays in the re-equipment of the Russian Armed Forces. A pertinent example in this context is the *Bulava* SLBM, which is intended to be the principal weapon of the naval strategic nuclear forces. The missile has however, failed in eight of twelve tests with one 'successful' test reportedly being a partial failure.<sup>19</sup> The ongoing problems with the *Bulava* are symptomatic of a broader, pervasive problem afflicting the Russian Armed Forces; that is, the capacity and efficacy of the military-industrial complex. It is believed that the underlying cause of the continuing *Bulava* test failures is sub-standard components from sub-contractors in the supply-chain and poor manufacturing practice.<sup>20</sup>

This paper will examine the mid-to-long term prospects for the Russian Federation Navy. This will include an examination of the broader context of Russian military and grand strategy; contemporary Russian maritime thinking and doctrine; the role of the Navy in Russian military doctrine; the current posture of the Navy; and the long-term plans for naval modernisation and expansion.

## The Evolution of Russian Grand Strategy and the Implications for Military Strategy

Traditionally, Russia is perceived as a continental power with naval forces serving in a peripheral, supporting capacity. However, the evolving trajectory of Russian military and grand strategy indicates an increasing role and importance for seapower. This is reflected, for example, in the increasing prominence of the Arctic in Russian strategic thinking;<sup>21</sup> the planned modernisation of the Russian Navy focusing on the development of carrier task-groups; and an increasing emphasis being placed on naval and aerospace warfare as part of the general modernisation of the Russian Armed Forces<sup>22</sup>. At the grand strategic level, Russia's posture is shifting from that of an essentially defensive preoccupation with the former Soviet Union to that of a globally active, outward-looking 'great power' with the will to shape the international system.

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the Field of Naval Armaments'; cited by Commander Simon Airey RN, 'Does Russian Seapower Have a Future?' *RUSI Journal*, 140:6, 1996, pp 15-22.

<sup>17</sup> Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State*, (Oxford: Pergamon Press Ltd: 1979), p. 154.

<sup>18</sup> 'Russia's GDP decrease in 2009 to exceed predicted 8.5% - Kudrin', *RIA Novosti*, 2 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20091202/157073600.html>.

<sup>19</sup> 'Bulava missile test history', Available online at <http://russianforces.org/navy/slbms/bulava.shtml>.

<sup>20</sup> 'Production may be to blame for failed Bulava test – General Staff', *RIA Novosti*, 25 December 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20081225/119171656.html> and 'Manufacturing violations cause of Bulava tests failures – Navy', *RIA Novosti*, 24 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100724/159933679.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100724/159933679.html).

<sup>21</sup> President Dmitri Medvedev, 'Speech at Meeting of the Russian Security Council on Protecting Russia's National Interests in the Arctic', 17 September 2008.

<sup>22</sup> The Defence Ministry of the Russian Federation, *The Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation* (Moscow: 2003).

## The Evolving Trajectory of Russian Grand Strategy

The context for the modernisation of the Russian Armed Forces and within this, the ambitious plans for naval expansion, is provided by Russia's evolving grand strategic perspective. This is most clearly elucidated in the *National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020*, published in May 2009. This document provides the basis for Russian statecraft. A revised foreign policy concept was promulgated in 2008 but is consistent with the position established by the *National Security Strategy*. The central tenet of the *National Security Strategy* is the establishment of Russia 'as a world power which seeks to maintain strategic stability and mutually beneficial partnership in a multipolar [sic] world'. This is to be achieved on the basis of the combination of economic, diplomatic and military instruments of power, rather than a dependence on the military instrument. The *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* states in this regard:

Together with the military power of States, economic, scientific and technological, environmental, demographic and informational factors are coming to the fore as major factors of influence of the state on international affairs. Of increasing influence are: ... balance of educational, scientific and production resources; general level of investment in human capital; efficient use of mechanisms governing global markets of goods and services, diversified economic relations; comparative advantages of States in integration processes...<sup>23</sup>

This is indicative of the central importance of economic and geo-economic factors in Russian strategy and the identification of economic security as a core facet of national security. This is especially so with regard to the international energy market and highlights the close correlation of political, economic and strategic factors in Russian foreign and security policy. This in turn, is a reflection of a wider pragmatism and national interests-based approach Russia defines as: 'a key subject of an emerging multipolar [sic] international relations'.<sup>24</sup> This provides the context for the expansion of Russia's horizons beyond the immediate post-Soviet space; for example, the *Foreign Policy Concept* states:

The interests of Russia are directly connected to other global tendencies, inter alia: ... development of regional and subregional [sic] integration in the area of the Community of Independent States (CIS), in the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions, in Africa and Latin America.<sup>25</sup>

The consolidation of Russian global influence is also a key driver of its policy of multi-lateral engagement, in particular through organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Brazil-Russia-India-China grouping, the Group of Eight and Group of Twenty, and the Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition, the *National Security Strategy* reaffirms the importance of the United Nations, and particularly the UN Security Council (UNSC) as forming a 'central element of a stable system of international relations, based on – respect, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation among States, based on civilized political instrument for the global and regional crises'.<sup>26</sup> Further, the *National Security Strategy* states that the maintenance of strategic stability can be enhanced via the presence of Russian military forces in conflict zones and considers peacekeeping operations an effective instrument for conflict resolution.<sup>27</sup> The stressing of the importance of strategic stability as provided by the framework of the UN/UNSC, the commitment to utilise the Russian Armed Forces to contribute toward strategic stability and the reference to 'unilateral force in international relations approaches' (that is, US/Western unilateralism)<sup>28</sup> is

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<sup>23</sup> *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, 2008, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> *The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation*, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> *The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

suggestive of a Russian effort to establish itself as a 'responsible stakeholder' in the international system, and providing the pretext for an increased international activism such as via an increased military presence in areas where 'strategic stability is threatened'. This is akin to the Russian position vis-à-vis US missile defence system deployment plans in Europe; Russia has described these as a threat to Russian interests and strategic stability and thereby justifying a military response. President Medvedev in an address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on the 5 November 2008 stated with regard to a military response to US missile defence plans:

I want to emphasise that we have been forced to take these measures. We have repeatedly told our partners that we want to engage in positive cooperation. We want to act against common threats and to work together. But unfortunately, very unfortunately, they did not want to listen to us.<sup>29</sup>

However, the references to the preservation of the *status quo* as established via the present international system are not reflective of a post-modern commitment to the system as an end in itself.<sup>30</sup> Rather, the existing configuration of the international system, including its recognition of Russia as a 'great power' via its permanent membership of the UNSC serves as a means to an end, that is, as a conduit for the promotion of Russian influence globally. The core tenet of both the *National Security Strategy* and the *Foreign Policy Concept* is the pragmatic protection and projection of the Russian national interest, that is, a commitment to *realpolitik*. It is in this context that difficulties in relations between Russia and the West should be viewed, rather than in a 'neo-Cold War' context.

The evolving trajectory of Russian grand strategy and the thinking that underpins it forms the basis for the modernisation of the Russian Armed Forces and the development of Russian military strategy in the mid-to-long term. It also provides the context within which to consider the changing role of Russian seapower.

### **The Implications for Military Strategy**

The conceptual context for the mid-to-long term development of Russian military strategy is provided by the debates which preceded publication of the revised *Military Doctrine* and the implementation of the military reform programme. The evolving trajectory of Russian military strategy is also indicated by the 2003 white paper *The Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation* and the Defence Ministry's stated spending priorities. These highlight a significant shift in Russian military thinking, which when considered in the broader context of Russia's evolving grand strategy, suggest a major shift in the posture and role of the Russian Armed Forces. This is especially so with regard to the Russian Navy.

The central tenet of the new *National Security Strategy* is that of re-establishing Russia as a world power; this was also the core point for the doctrinal debate and the military reform programme. The debate concerning the formulation of the revised *Military Doctrine* has explicitly sought to frame the discussion in a broader context extending beyond one solely concerned with military issues. For example, General Makhmut Gareev states:

In drafting a new version of the Military Doctrine, the most acute disagreements arise over the assessment of modern threats and ways of countering them. There are two basic approaches here. The first approach, adopted in the current Military Doctrine, is only oriented toward military threats ... whereas the second

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<sup>29</sup> Available at

[http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/11/05/2144\\_type70029type82917type127286\\_208836.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/11/05/2144_type70029type82917type127286_208836.shtml).

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of modern versus post-modern naval roles, see Geoffrey Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, Second Edition (Abingdon: Routledge: 2009).



proceeds from the military-political changes that have occurred ... taking into account a broader range of threats, both military and non-military.<sup>31</sup>

The then Chief of the General Staff General Yuri Baluyevsky expressed a similar position:

... military doctrine should be oriented to the assured providing of military security, and not only by way of “gaining a victory in a war”, but also, and primarily, by the efficient use of preventive diplomacy, international legal, information, economic and other non-military methods for the protection of the vitally important interests of society, state and personality...<sup>32</sup>

In this context, the aforementioned close correlation of economic, political and strategic factors in Russian foreign and security policy-making have operational implications: General Rukshin states: ‘The use of the Armed Forces to assert economic and political interests of the Russian Federation may be aimed at creating conditions for the safe economic activities by the RF itself or its representative economic structures...’<sup>33</sup> This is significant as it indicates a broadening perspective concerning the circumstances whereby the application of force is possible. In addition, General Rukshin wrote in the same paper that: ‘In our view, it is of importance that the use of the Armed Forces should not only be in the nature of a response but also preempt [sic] emerging threats’; that is, to maintain an intervention-capability. Furthermore, the stated commitment to preserving ‘strategic stability’ in the *National Security Strategy* and the defining as a principal military threat to Russia of ‘[the] introduction into Western practices of military strong-arm actions in circumvention of the generally recognized principles and norms of international law’<sup>34</sup> could serve as the basis of an (counter-) expeditionary posture. Stephen Blank has suggested that Russia and China have considered joint intervention operations in North Korea in the event of regime collapse or destabilisation, partly to counter any possible US-led intervention.<sup>35</sup>

The second key component of the debates on military doctrine and modernisation concerned threat assessment. In an address to an Expanded Session of the Defence Ministry Board on the 17 March 2009, President Medvedev stated: ‘There is always the risk of local crises and international terrorism. Attempts to expand the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the borders of our country continue. All this requires a qualitative modernisation of our Armed Forces’.<sup>36</sup> Further, in 2007, the then Chief of the General Staff Yuri Baluyevsky defined the ‘most real threats to national security of the Russian Federation’ as:

The US military-political leadership’s course to preserve its world leadership, and to expand its economic, political and military presence in regions under Russia’s traditional influence; implementation of NATO’s expansion plans; [and] introduction in Western practices of military strong-arm actions.<sup>37</sup>

This identification of the US and NATO as the primary military threats to Russia places high-intensity, state-on-state conventional and nuclear warfare at the centre of Russian military planning and force-development. For example, the ‘Tsentr-2008’ exercise concluded with the simulated launch of seventeen intercontinental- and submarine-launched ballistic missiles

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<sup>31</sup> General Makhmut Gareev, ‘Russia’s New Military Doctrine: Structure, Substance’, *Military Thought*, No. 2, 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Baluyevsky, ‘Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation’.

<sup>33</sup> Rukshin, ‘Doctrinal Views on Employment and Organizational Development of the Armed Forces of Russia’.

<sup>34</sup> Baluyevsky, ‘Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation’.

<sup>35</sup> Stephen Blank, ‘Peace-Mission 2009: A Military Scenario Beyond Central’, *China Brief*, 9:17, 2009.

<sup>36</sup> Available via:

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2009/03/17/2037\\_type82913type84779\\_214073.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2009/03/17/2037_type82913type84779_214073.shtml).

<sup>37</sup> Baluyevsky, ‘Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation’.

plus air-launched cruise missiles from strategic bombers of the 37<sup>th</sup> Air Army.<sup>38</sup> Barabanov suggests the following four priorities for the Russian Armed Forces: 'Ensure effective nuclear deterrence of the US and its allies; Maintain the means to limit most US strategic capabilities; Maintain the capability to prevent US forces from accessing former Soviet territory; [and] Be able to counter the US and NATO in a limited non-nuclear military conflict',<sup>39</sup> that is, the US and NATO constitute the primary threat to Russian security.

This thinking is based on the perspective that the principal obstacle to Russian hegemony over the former Soviet Union is as Barabanov asserts: 'the potential for political and military interference in post-Soviet conflicts on the part of the West'.<sup>40</sup> The fundamental objective of Russian long-term national strategy is the assertion of primacy over the former Soviet Union, especially with regard to the military-security context,<sup>41</sup> and the United States is seen as the principal threat to this objective. Similarly, the threats posed by terrorism, separatism and 'colour' revolutions are perceived by Russia to have in some cases, linkages with the West. In this context, General Gareev stated:

In conducting the landing operation in Sicily in 1943, the Americans freed from prisons in the United States ... members of Italian mafia style organizations and used them to carry out raids and terrorist operations behind Nazi lines. In 1989, I saw similar tactics being used in Jalalabad where (Osama) Bin Laden organized an effective operation ... then US services armed the Taliban via Pakistan and Saudi Arabia (later they also armed Kosovo separatists, etc)...<sup>42</sup>

The *National Security Strategy* does recognise the threat posed by international terrorism; it is however categorised as a 'State and public safety [sic] threat rather than a 'National defense [sic] threat, and is listed *after* the threat posed by 'intelligence and other activities of special services and organizations of foreign countries'.<sup>43</sup> The influence of international terrorism on the military doctrine debate is quite limited and essentially that of reinforcing requirements for developing strategically mobile, permanent readiness forces that can respond rapidly and decisively to terrorist threats. President Medvedev has specifically cited the Collective Security Treaty Organisation's Collective Rapid Reaction Force as the type of body for responding to a terrorist attack.<sup>44</sup>

Russia's evolving grand strategic perspective, military-strategic outlook and threat assessment focused on promoting a multi-polar international system; the need to 'preserve strategic stability'; re-establishing Russian pre-eminence in the former Soviet Union and promoting Russian influence globally; and countering the US and NATO, provides the parameters for the modernisation of the Russian Armed Forces. The core tenets of the modernisation programme include the shift from a mobilisation-based force to one of constant readiness; the re-equipment of the armed forces; the development of enhanced training and military educational structures; and the rebalancing of the manpower component via the streamlining of the officer corps.<sup>45</sup> It is also intended to reform the command-and-control system of the Armed Forces incorporating the latest information and communication technologies.<sup>46</sup> General Rukshin defined the following as fundamental requirements for the Armed Forces; 'an ability to put into practice strategic containment; high combat and

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<sup>38</sup> 'The Report of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation at the Expanded Session of Board [sic] of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation', 17 March 2009.

<sup>39</sup> Barabanov, 'Towards a Military Doctrine for Russia'.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> From personal communication with Russian diplomatic source.

<sup>42</sup> Gareev, 'Russia's New Military Doctrine: Structure, Substance'.

<sup>43</sup> The *National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation*, p. 8.

<sup>44</sup> Speech at an Extended Session of the Defence Ministry Board, 17 March 2009.

<sup>45</sup> 'The Report of the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation at the Expanded Session of Board [sic] of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation', 17 March 2009.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

mobilization readiness; strategic mobility; a high strength level in well-trained and well-prepared personnel, including enlistees; [and] high level of equipment and resources'.<sup>47</sup>

The military modernisation is intended to substantively transform the posture, capabilities and outlook of the Russian Armed Forces; President Medvedev stated the objective as being to provide 'a qualitative modernisation of our Armed Forces to give them a new, forward-looking perspective'.<sup>48</sup> A major element of this is a shift in strategy from that of a ground component-centric force to one emphasising air-and-space and maritime forces delivering long-range precision-guided munitions.<sup>49</sup> This is intended to enable the attainment of objectives by the application of 'fire for effect'; or via:

effective selective strikes onto a small number of "strategically significant" or "vitally valuable" objects of an enemy, discontinued or infringed function of which can lead to impossibility of continuation of aggression or will "catastrophically" reduce efficiency of use of its combat weapons.<sup>50</sup>

This is a component of Russia's de-escalation concept whereby the application of force against strategically vital targets can serve the 'purpose of compulsion of the enemy to terminate immediately military aggression'.<sup>51</sup> The *Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation* states that 'Special significance is attached to prompt disablement of the opponent's infrastructure concerned with political and economic management, and its systems of communication...' It also suggests that traditional concepts of concentrating manpower and equipment needs dispensing with and replaced by 'dominating manoeuvre' whereby the adversary is defeated via the concentration of efforts through manoeuvre and the application of 'massive fire strikes' rather than mass.<sup>52</sup> In addition, the first priority in armed conflict has shifted from attaining a physical advantage to that of attaining supremacy in the information sphere; that is, 'gaining the dominating influence in the public mind and in troop and arms control'.<sup>53</sup>

Further, there is an increasing interest in the application of force as a means of influencing the behaviour of an adversary or coalition. This was highlighted by the then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Masorin:

- interdependence of national economies at the world level that makes it possible, by affecting the economy of one or several countries, to trigger off unacceptable economic vacillations or crises in the entire coalition of potential adversaries; ... [and]
- high dependence of the economies of the industrially advanced countries on an uninterrupted functioning of their energy supply and transport systems, something that makes it possible to regard elements of those systems as the key objects for influencing the economies of the potential adversaries.<sup>54</sup>

The evolving conceptual basis of the Russian Armed Forces is a component of a wider shift in the posture and physical focus of the military. This is especially so with regard to the relative importance of the three services, that is, an increasing prominence for the Air Force

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<sup>47</sup> Rukshin, 'Doctrinal Views on Employment and Organizational Development of the Armed Forces of Russia'.

<sup>48</sup> Speech at an Extended Session of the Defence Ministry Board, 17 March 2009.

<sup>49</sup> *The Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation*.

<sup>50</sup> Colonel M V Fomin, 'Formation of a Rational System of Weapons of Long-Range Aviation'. *Military Thought*, No. 2, 2007.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *The Priority Tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation*, p. 59.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> Admiral Vladimir Masorin, 'Naval Doctrine as a Component Part of the Russian Federation Military Doctrine', *Military Thought*, No. 2, 2007.

and Navy vis-à-vis the Army. The *Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation* states:

The course and outcome of armed struggle as a whole will now be determined mainly by confrontation in air and outer space and at sea, while ground forces will only consolidate the military success achieved and directly ensure the attainment of political goals.<sup>55</sup>

The Defence Ministry's spending priorities are indicative of this shift. After the Strategic Nuclear Forces, the upgrading of the Air Force and Navy, in particular with precision-guided munitions, constitutes the foremost priority for Russia's military modernisation.<sup>56</sup> In functional terms, the Air Force and Navy are devoting significant funds on forces optimised for strategic power projection. Due to the dual nuclear/conventional role of the 37<sup>th</sup> Air Army, the modernisation of the strategic bomber force, focusing on precision-guided weapons and cruise missiles, and the development of a new fifth-generation bomber<sup>57</sup> constitutes a major priority for the Air Force. The Navy is similarly investing in long-range strike capabilities, including; cruise missile-armed submarines, particularly the new *Graney*-class,<sup>58</sup> the potential conversion of two *Typhoon*-class submarines into SSGNs, and the RSM-54 *Sineva* (SS-N-23 'Skiff') SLBM reportedly can be fitted with a conventional warhead of 'about 2 tons to engage targets in high-precision non-nuclear conflict'.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the planned construction of up to six nuclear-powered aircraft carriers<sup>60</sup> and expressions of interest in acquiring French *Mistral*-class LHDs<sup>61</sup> is a further indication of the intention to develop a naval component optimised for force projection.

The identification of the US and NATO as the principal threat to Russia is a contributory factor to the increasing importance of the maritime domain in Russian military strategy. This is especially true with regard to the perceived threat posed by Western aircraft carriers and cruise missile-armed ships and submarines.<sup>62</sup> It also provides the context for the development of synergies between the 37<sup>th</sup> Air Army and the Navy for the purposes of developing long-range strike capabilities as a component of defensive and offensive maritime operations.<sup>63</sup> In a more general sense, the central aim of Russia's developing military and grand strategy, emphasising the promotion of Russian influence, contributing to 'strategic stability' and developing a force that is strategically mobile with high combat readiness, thus provides a favourable context for the development of maritime forces.

## Contemporary Russian Maritime Thinking and Doctrine

The basis for Russian naval policy and development is provided by the *Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the Period Up to 2020* and the *Basic Policy of the Russian*

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<sup>55</sup> *The Priority Tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation*, p. 51.

<sup>56</sup> 'In 2016 half of Russia's military equipment will be new', *Arms-Expo*, 12 February 2009, <http://www.arms-expo.ru/site.xp/049057054048124054053055053.html> [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>57</sup> 'Commander outlines future of the Russian Air Force', *RIA Novosti*, 5 August 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090805/155736575.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090805/155736575.html).

<sup>58</sup> 'RF to build 6 nuclear subs with long-range cruise missiles' *Itar-Tass*, 28 March 2009, <http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/prnt.html?NewsID=13728730>.

<sup>59</sup> 'The Second Launch BR Sineva', *Arms-Expo*, 15 July 2009, <http://www.arms-expo.ru/site.xp/049057054048124057052057049.html> [via <http://www.translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>60</sup> Kramnik, 'Russia set to build new aircraft carrier'.

<sup>61</sup> 'Russia set to purchase large French warship – top brass', *RIA Novosti*, 26 August 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090826/155931865.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090826/155931865.html).

<sup>62</sup> Masorin, 'Naval Doctrine as a Component Part of the Russian Federation Military Doctrine'.

<sup>63</sup> For example, see Fomin, 'Formation of a Rational System of Weapons of Long-Range Aviation', and Yefim Gordon, *Russian Air Power: Current Organisation and Aircraft of all Russian Air Forces* (Hinckley: Midland Publishing: 2009).

*Federation in the Field of Naval Activities for 2010*. The former document, drawing as it does upon the specific maritime provisions of documents including the *National Security Strategy* and the *Military Doctrine*, is due to be updated so to conform with the recently published revised versions of the latter. The *Basic Policy* was approved in 2000 (thus pre-dating the *Maritime Doctrine*). The Maritime Board of the Government of the Russian Federation in December 2009 tasked the Ministry of Defence to draft a 'policy framework of the Russian Federation in the field of naval activities in 2020'; this was to be reported back to the Board in May 2010.<sup>64</sup>

## Maritime Doctrine

The principal guiding document for Russian naval and wider maritime activity is the *Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the Period Up to 2020*. This document assumes a holistic approach to the conduct of Russia's maritime activities, covering economic, scientific and naval functions. The *Maritime Doctrine* seeks to define the position and role of Russia's maritime interests within the wider context of national policy and the specific national interests 'of the Russian Federation in the oceans, the purposes and principles of the National Maritime Policy'.<sup>65</sup> These are defined as including: the inviolability of Russian sovereignty over its internal and territorial waters, seabed and subsoil and the above airspace; the sovereignty of the Russian Federation in its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf; the right to freedom of the high seas for navigation, fisheries, scientific work, the laying of submarine cables and pipelines and over-flight; and protection of human life at sea, prevention of pollution, maintenance of control over sea communications and the creation of favourable conditions for the economic benefit of the Russian Federation through maritime activity.<sup>66</sup>

This constitutes the basis for the development of the National Maritime Policy via an 'integrated approach to maritime activities in general and its differentiation in certain areas, taking into account the changes of priority depending on the geopolitical situation...'<sup>67</sup> The National Maritime Policy is divided into functional and geographic components; for the purposes of this paper, only the naval provisions of the National Maritime Policy will be examined.

The 'main goals and basic principles of the Russian Federation in the field of naval activities' are defined in the *Basic Policy* and form the basis for the naval component of the *Maritime Doctrine*. The *Basic Policy* defines the main objectives of Russian naval policy as: 'Realization and protection of public interests of the Russian Federation in the oceans, the conservation of its status as a world maritime power; [and] the development and effective use of naval building [in] the Russian Federation'.<sup>68</sup> The principles underpinning Russian naval policy are reiterated in the *Maritime Doctrine* as:

[The] Navy is the main pillar and foundation of [the] maritime capabilities [of] the Russian Federation ... and is designed to protect the interests of the Russian Federation and its allies in the oceans by military methods, the maintenance of military-political stability in the adjacent seas, [and] military security with marine and ocean areas. Navy exercises deter the use of military force or threat of force against the Russian Federation, [sic] protect the sovereignty of the military means of the Russian Federation, extending beyond its land territory to the inland marine waters and territorial sea, the sovereign

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<sup>64</sup> *Minutes of the meeting of the Maritime Board under the Government of the Russian Federation*, 21 December 2009, <http://www.morskayakollegia.ru> [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>65</sup> *The Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the Period Up to 2020*, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 2-3.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>68</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities*, p. 4.

rights of the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf as well as the freedom of the seas.<sup>69</sup>

The operational and strategic functions of the Navy are defined in the *Basic Policy*; the *Maritime Doctrine* provides a discussion of the 'Regional trends of national maritime policy',<sup>70</sup> which includes discussion of naval issues in specified regional contexts. The *Maritime Doctrine* defines the major regional areas for the National Maritime Policy as; the Atlantic (including the Baltic, Black Sea, Sea of Azov and the Mediterranean); the Arctic; Pacific; Caspian; and Indian Ocean region (including Antarctica). The regions are discussed at the national policy level, in order of significance and thus cover economic, political, military and other relevant perspectives. The following is a summary of the relevant naval aspects of Russian regional maritime policy.

- *The Atlantic*

Policy in the 'Atlantic regional direction' is 'determined by the growing economic, political and military pressure from NATO countries, promoting it to the east, [and] a sharp decline in the capacity of the Russian Federation to implement its maritime activities'.<sup>71</sup> Other points of naval importance include; the economic and military security of the Kaliningrad region; and the ensuring of a 'sufficient naval presence of the Russian Federation' in the Mediterranean.<sup>72</sup>

- *The Arctic*

The naval significance of the Arctic is related to it providing access to the Atlantic, the role of the Northern Fleet in Russian military planning, and the 'increasing importance of the Northern Sea Route for sustainable development of the Russian Federation'.<sup>73</sup> The 'restriction of foreign naval activities in the agreed areas and zones on the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements with the leading maritime power' is defined as a long-term objective in Arctic maritime policy.<sup>74</sup>

- *The Pacific*

The Russian Pacific coast is defined as of increasing significance, in particular with regard to the resource potential of the Russian Far East, its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf. It is also acknowledged that 'the heavy economic and military development of neighboring [sic] countries in Asia-Pacific' has a 'very significant impact on economic, demographic and other processes in the region'.<sup>75</sup> As with the Arctic, international agreement on limiting naval activities in agreed zones and areas is sought.<sup>76</sup> The development of coastal port infrastructure in the Russian Far East, particularly on Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands is an additional long-term objective.<sup>77</sup>

- *The Caspian*

No specific military tasking is mentioned, however, the 'determination favourable [sic] to the Russian Federation, [of] the international legal regime of the Caspian Sea, the use of fish stocks, oil and gas' is placed as the first task requiring 'solving'.<sup>78</sup> This objective will most likely include as a component of its implementation, the use of the Caspian Flotilla as a means of exerting political influence.

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>70</sup> *The Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation*, pp 10-13.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

- *The Indian Ocean Region*

Maritime policy in the Indian Ocean region covers three principal areas; the expansion of transport shipping and fishing in the region, together with counter-piracy (covering Russian and international shipping); the implementation of policies to 'preserve and consolidate the position of Russia' in the Antarctic; and to ensure 'on a periodic basis ... a naval presence of the Russian Federation in the Indian Ocean'.<sup>79</sup>

It is also stated, with regard to the Atlantic, Arctic and Pacific regions, that Russia will seek the 'creation of conditions ... ensuring the protection of sovereignty, sovereign and international rights of the Russian Federation'.<sup>80</sup>

### **The Basic Policy**

The *Basic Policy* defines the 'main objectives, principles and priorities of [the] Russian Federation in the field of research, development and use of the oceans in the interest of defense [sic] and security of the State'.<sup>81</sup> Much of the *Basic Policy* is reiterated in the subsequently published *Maritime Doctrine*; for example, providing definitions of Russia's national maritime interests, the relevance of maritime activity to the Russian economy, and the national policy context for the Navy. The *Basic Policy* also provides detailed outlines of the 'Priorities for Policy of the Russian Federation in the field of naval operations and measures for their implementation'<sup>82</sup> and 'The role and importance of the Navy in implementing the priorities of policy of the Russian Federation in the field of naval activities'.<sup>83</sup> The former is principally concerned with the modernisation and effective organisation of the Russian Navy and will be discussed subsequently; the latter is concerned with the main tasks of the Navy and its role as an instrument of foreign policy.

The principal tasks of the Navy are defined as including:

- Deterrence of the use of military force or threat of force against the Russian Federation and its allies from maritime and ocean areas, including participation in the [sic] strategic nuclear deterrence ...
- Identification ... and prevention of military threats, the aggression against the Russian Federation and its allies from maritime and oceanic areas, participated [sic] in the actions of prevention and containment of armed conflict in the early stages ...
- Timely building [of] forces and capabilities in the areas of the oceans, from which may emanate threat and security interests [sic] of the Russian Federation ...
- Ensuring a naval presence ... in the oceans, the demonstration of the flag and the military forces of the Russian state ...<sup>84</sup>

The *Basic Policy* also refers to 'establishing and maintaining the conditions for ... economic activities of the Russian Federation in its territorial sea, exclusive economic zone, continental shelf, [and] remote areas of the oceans'<sup>85</sup> as a naval task. This is indicative of a Russian identification of economic factors assuming a politico-military context. The *Basic Policy* is avowedly state-centric; the principal tasks of the Russian Navy are defined in terms of defending, for example, Russian interests in the 'World Ocean', assuring a visible Russian naval presence in areas of interest and the protection of Russian sovereignty in adjacent maritime areas. It does however refer to the participation of the Russian Navy in

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

<sup>81</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities*, p. 1.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-9.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>84</sup> Summary of key points from *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

peacekeeping and humanitarian actions and 'establishment of collective security'<sup>86</sup> as a limited example of Russian involvement in international activities. It is possible, that based on the references to promoting strategic stability in the *National Security Strategy* and Russia's involvement in counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa, that the revised *Basic Policy* for the period through to 2020 may include an increased reference to post-modern naval activities.

### **The Role of the Navy in Russian Military Doctrine**

The revised *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* contains only five, albeit indirect, limited references to the role of naval forces; three of which are within the 'General Provisions' section and one in the section on 'The Military Policy of the Russian Federation'. The first reference is in the context of a discussion of the main external threats to the Russian Federation; 'the deployment (buildup) [sic] of troop contingents of foreign states (groups of states) on the territories of states contiguous with the Russian Federation and its allies and also in adjacent waters'.<sup>87</sup> The second and third references are with regard to the future character of conflict and refer to the 'securing of supremacy on land, at sea, and in the air and outer space will become decisive factors in achieving objectives' and 'autonomous maritime craft' as being among a number of new technologies and systems that will be of increasing significance in future conflict.<sup>88</sup> The final references are within the context of the principal tasks of the Armed Forces in peacetime, which are given as including: 'to combat piracy and ensure the safety of shipping; [and] to ensure the security of the economic activities of the Russian Federation on the high seas'.<sup>89</sup> In comparison, the previous edition of the *Military Doctrine* contained the following references to the role of naval forces:

- Protection of the Russian Federation's facilities and installations on the high seas, in space, and on the territory of foreign states; protection of shipping, fishing, and other types of activities in the adjacent maritime zone and in distant regions of the ocean;
- Protection and defence of the state border of the Russian Federation within the limits of border territory, airspace, and the underwater environment and of the exclusive economic zone and continental shelf of the Russian Federation and their natural resources;
- Support (where necessary) for political acts of the Russian Federation by means of the implementation of corresponding measures of a military nature and [by means of] a naval presence.<sup>90</sup>

The then Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, Admiral Vladimir Masorin, in 2007, criticised the then current 2000 edition of the *Military Doctrine* for its lack of clarity with regard to the role of the Navy:

- First. The wording now in effect evaluates [the] military-political situation without identifying the national interests that need to be defended with the use of the Armed Forces, including the Navy. It indicates only military security threats.
- Second. It fails to sufficiently reflect military security threats coming from the sea and oceanic sectors.
- Third. It does not reflect the aims, objectives and forms of the Navy's peacetime employment.
- Fourth. It fails to sufficiently define the Navy's role and place in ensuring military security in the operationally important oceanic and sea areas.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Text of newly approved Russian Military Doctrine, *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 25 February 2010, p. 3.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>90</sup> *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation*, 2000.



The principal national interests which he defined as those to be defended by the Navy were:

- Ensuring that the Russian Federation has an assured access to resources and expanses of the World Ocean, and excluding discriminatory actions in regard to itself or its allies on the part of separate states or military-political blocs;
- Interdicting domination of any states or military-political blocs in the expanses of the World Ocean that are of importance for the realization of the Russian Federation's national interests, particularly in the contiguous seas.<sup>92</sup>

The principal military threat emanating from the 'sea and oceanic sectors' was defined as: 'an increase in the combat capabilities of ... the leading foreign states, including the capability to engage targets in the entire territory of the Russian Federation [and] ... deployment on naval carriers of ... precision air weapons'.<sup>93</sup> That is, the primary defined threat to Russia in the maritime environment is Western, specifically US and NATO. This is reflective of wider Russian military thinking, including within the new *Military Doctrine*, which defines the principal external military danger to Russia as:

The desire to endow the force potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with global functions carried out in violation of the norms of international law and to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by expanding the bloc...<sup>94</sup>

The identification of the US and NATO as the principal military threats to Russia prioritises high-intensity war-fighting as the main focus for the Russian Armed Forces. In the naval context, the basis for formulating military development and acquisition policy through to 2020 is focused on enhancing the striking power of the fleet and its ability to contribute to continental operations:

The naval forces, in conjunction with other services of the armed forces, will be able to conduct operations not only in the ocean and sea zones, but also on the continental theaters [sic] of operations owing to considerably enhanced capabilities of aircraft-carrier forces, equipping surface combatants and submarines with cruise missiles.<sup>95</sup>

The Russian Navy is also intended to form a component of an integrated aerospace defence system for the Russian Federation. The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky has stated, with regard to the development of plans concerning a new aircraft carrier capability, that 'Russia's aircraft carrier fleet should be an element in a single missile, air and space defence umbrella and should organically fit into its structure'.<sup>96</sup> This derives from the Navy's focus on the destruction of opposing naval task groups as a core operational-strategic task. Admiral Masorin defined this as the primary role of the Navy after that of contributing to strategic deterrence:

It will engage with fires the adversary's naval task forces in the far and near maritime zone, it will aid other Armed Forces services operating in sectors with an outlet to the sea ... The forms of the Navy's employment will be as follows:

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<sup>91</sup> Masorin, 'Naval Doctrine as a Component Part of the Russian Federation Military Doctrine'.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* (2010), p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Major-General Nikolai Vaganov [Deputy Chief of the Russian Armed Forces' Main Armament Research and Development Department], 'Armaments and Military Equipment Development Through 2020', *Military Parade*, Issue 4, July/August 2009, pp. 4-6.

<sup>96</sup> 'Russia to design own aircraft carrier by end of 2010 – navy chief', *RIA Novosti* (via LexisNexis), 26 February 2010.

first and subsequent fleet operations (within the framework of a maritime operation); combat operations by the fleets to engage naval task forces and other important targets...<sup>97</sup>

This is intended to aid in ensuring 'a favourable operational regime', that is, sea control,<sup>98</sup> for maritime operations. This constitutes the principal focus for Russian naval exercises, or the naval elements of larger joint operations. The scope and sophistication of Russian maritime exercises is, particularly since 2008, increasing, and this provides important insight into the role of naval power in Russian military thinking. It also indicates a reconstitution of certain capabilities (for example, over-the-horizon targeting by aircraft for surface-launched missiles) that had diminished following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and a continuing focus on high-intensity (including nuclear) operations. The following is a summary of five notable exercises.

The first exercise of note was a joint naval and air force operation held in the Atlantic in January 2008. This exercise included vessels of the Northern and Black Sea Fleets comprising the aircraft carrier *Admiral Kuznetsov*, the *Slava*-class cruiser *Moskva* (which test-fired an SS-N-12 *Sandbox* surface-to-surface missile<sup>99</sup>), the *Udaloy*-class destroyers *Admiral Levchenko* and *Admiral Chabanenko* plus seven support ships.<sup>100</sup> It also included substantial Air Force participation comprising Tu-160 *Blackjack*, Tu-95MS *Bear-H* and Tu-22M3 *Backfire* bombers, A-50 *Mainstay* airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft, Il-78 *Midas* in-flight refuelling aircraft, MiG-31 *Foxhound* interceptors and Su-27 *Flanker* fighters.<sup>101</sup> The exercise focused on anti-submarine, anti-surface warfare (ASW and ASuW respectively) and air defence operations<sup>102</sup> and included coordinated naval and air operations; most notably including six *Bear-H* and eight *Backfire* bombers (supported by two *Mainstay* AWACS) in one operation.<sup>103</sup> The aviation operations included simulated strikes against a notional opposing 'strike group' and 'air battles and patrols' in support of the naval component<sup>104</sup>. The involvement of *Bear-H* bombers is noteworthy. This is because it was announced that as part of the exercise, the *Bears* conducted 'tactical (electronic) launches simulating cruise missile launches'.<sup>105</sup> However, the *Bear-H* is principally a strategic platform armed with the Kh-55 (AS-15 *Kent*) or Kh-101/102 strategic cruise missiles, its use as a tactical cruise missile platform indicates the potential service introduction of the Kh-SD, a reported tactical anti-ship derivative of the Kh-101 advanced cruise missile.<sup>106</sup>

The second exercise was 'Stability-2008'. This was a national-level operation including all elements of the Russian Armed Forces undertaking operations to ensure strategic and regional deterrence. This exercise was explicitly designed to test Russia's abilities to undertake full-scale war-fighting. The naval component included major operations in the

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<sup>97</sup> Masorin, 'Naval Doctrine as a Component Part of the Russian Federation Military Doctrine'.

<sup>98</sup> The term 'favourable operational regime' or 'sea domination' is commonly used by the Russian Navy to connote command of the sea or sea control. This is explained in Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State*, p. 231.

<sup>99</sup> 'Russian strategic aviation, navy "successfully complete" drill in Atlantic', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 22 January 2008.

<sup>100</sup> 'Russian paper ponders composition of fleet on naval exercises in Atlantic', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 24 January 2008.

<sup>101</sup> 'Russian strategic bombers involved in Navy drill', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 31 January 2008.

<sup>102</sup> 'Russian strategic aviation, navy "successfully complete" drill in Atlantic'.

<sup>103</sup> 'Russian strategic aircraft complete joint drill with navy in Atlantic', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 29 January 2008.

<sup>104</sup> 'Russian strategic bombers involved in Navy drill'.

<sup>105</sup> 'Russian strategic aircraft complete joint drill with navy in Atlantic'.

<sup>106</sup> Gordon, *Russian Air Power*, p. 168 provides a brief description of the Kh-SD. The *Bear* can reportedly carry up to fourteen Kh-SD missiles, 'Tu-95 Bear Strategic Bomber', <http://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/tu95bear/>.

Pacific (off Primorye), in the Barents Sea and Norwegian Sea,<sup>107</sup> and in the case of the Northern Fleet, was centred on the operations of the naval strategic nuclear forces.<sup>108</sup> As part of this, a *Sineva* SLBM was test-launched to its maximum range of 7,170 miles.<sup>109</sup> 'Stability-2008' was also notable due to a force of *Bear* and *Blackjack* strategic bombers conducting on 6 October, a full live-fire launch of cruise missiles (six and twelve missiles per aircraft respectively); the first time such a test had been undertaken since 1984.<sup>110</sup>

A third significant, albeit smaller-scale, exercise occurred in April 2010. This exercise involved three warships of the Pacific Fleet undertaking coordinated, simultaneous launches of supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles against a target representing a formation of opposing ships in the Sea of Japan. This exercise is noteworthy as it marked the first time a target was prosecuted in a coordinated manner by three ships firing simultaneously and the missiles being guided to the target via off-board targeting from an aircraft operating at 'distance from the fire area'.<sup>111</sup> The further development and refinement of this capability will be important if the Russian Navy is to take full advantage of the long-range capabilities of systems such as the *Klub* anti-ship/land-attack missile.<sup>112</sup>

The fourth exercise involved the *Ushakov*-class nuclear-powered guided missile cruiser *Pyotr Velikiy* and the *Slava*-class cruiser *Moskva* operating in the Indian Ocean during May 2010. One element of this exercise, held on 5 May 2010, involved the two ships responding to a simulated nuclear attack against them. This was based on the scenario of 'the Aggressor delivered a nuclear strike with a yield of about 200 kilotons at a distance of some 15 miles from the Russian warships' and the conduct of a subsequent at sea rescue and recovery of a vessel in distress.<sup>113</sup> This exercise is reflective of a continuing Russian interest in nuclear maritime operations; this is highlighted in a quote from Major-General Vaganov, who states with regard to the future role of the naval strategic nuclear forces:

Their ability to inflict predetermined damage to the military and economic centers [sic] of the adversary with conventional precision-guided and *non-strategic nuclear weapons* [emphasis added], destroy enemy naval groups in distant and near sea zones will considerably increase, thus creating favorable [sic] operative conditions for protection of Russia's maritime activity.<sup>114</sup>

The fifth exercise is the operational-strategic level 'Vostok-[East] 2010' held in July 2010. The naval component, staged off Primorye Territory on the Sea of Japan, of 'Vostok-2010' focused on, as its first stage, the attainment of sea control or a 'favourable operational regime' via ASW operations; this proceeded to a missile and artillery operation against a notional opposing surface force thus enabling a joint maritime and airborne landing on the

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<sup>107</sup> 'Russia's Pacific Fleet joins in Stability-2008 strategic exercise', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 3 October 2008, and 'Russia's Northern Fleet N-subs, ASW ships, naval aviation on Stability exercise', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 27 September 2008.

<sup>108</sup> 'President Medvedev observes Barents Sea drills from aircraft carrier', *RIA Novosti*, 11 October 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20081011/117680093.html>.

<sup>109</sup> 'Russian submarine conducts full-range test of Sineva ICBM', *RIA Novosti*, 11 October 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20081011/117682147.html>.

<sup>110</sup> Ilya Kramnik, 'Stability-288: back to the major leagues', *RIA Novosti*, 7 October 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20081007/117536324.html> and 'Russia's strategic bombers to drill with full combat payloads', *RIA Novosti*, 2 October 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20081002/117389135.html>.

<sup>111</sup> 'Russian Pacific Fleet fires cruise missiles at drill in Sea of Japan', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 22 April 2010 and Andrei Gavrilenko, 'Missile firing Pacific Fleet', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 23 April 2010 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>112</sup> For analysis of the potential range of the *Klub*, see James Bosbotinis, 'The Russian Navy in 2009: A Review of Major Developments', *Corbett Paper* No. 1 (Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies), 2010, p. 5.

<sup>113</sup> 'Russian warships hold nuclear defense drills in Indian Ocean', *RIA Novosti*, 5 May 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100505/158884417.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100505/158884417.html).

<sup>114</sup> Vaganov, 'Armaments and Military Equipment Development Through 2020'.

adversary's flank.<sup>115</sup> 'Vostok-2010' also included the destruction of an adversary's attempted amphibious assault.<sup>116</sup> Joint air defence operations with the Russian Air Force simulating the repelling of an adversary's air raids were an additional element of the exercise.<sup>117</sup> The maritime component of 'Vostok-2010' included the *Pyotr Velikiy* and *Moskva* from the Northern and Black Sea Fleets respectively, plus various assets from the Pacific Fleet (including marines and aviation);<sup>118</sup> detachments of marines from the Northern and Baltic Fleets also participated.<sup>119</sup> The scenario for 'Vostok-2010' was defined as being 'exclusively defense-oriented ... and not directed against any specific country or military-political bloc' and focusing on countering 'low-intensity threats'.<sup>120</sup> However, the content of the exercise was primarily based on high-intensity conflict, and with implied references to either operating against a Chinese assault on the Russian Far East, or the United States Navy.<sup>121</sup>

The continuing emphasis on high-intensity state-on-state warfare, in particular vis-à-vis the US and NATO (and to a lesser extent, China), provides the principal driver for developing medium-to-long term military planning, procurement and research and development.<sup>122</sup> There is one exception to this emphasis of high-intensity operations; that is, the Russian Navy's continuing involvement in counter-piracy activities off the Horn of Africa. The commitment to counter-piracy has been placed alongside participation in large-scale combat training exercises (such as 'Vostok-2010') and maintaining a sustained global presence as the principal priorities for the Russian Navy.<sup>123</sup> Furthermore, the Commander of the Pacific Fleet, Vice Admiral Konstantin Sidenko, has indicated that the construction of 'at least one special-purpose ship to fight sea piracy' for the Pacific Fleet is under consideration.<sup>124</sup> It has not been disclosed whether this vessel would be a new design or derived from an existing project.

The extent to which counter-piracy is seen as an ends in itself versus its use as a means to 'legitimise' an increasing Russian naval activism and presence 'out-of-area' warrants discussion. Aside from a reference in the current *Military Doctrine*, counter-piracy does not feature in either the *Maritime Doctrine* or *Basic Policy* governing Russian naval activity. Counter-piracy is cited with regard to the acquisition of overseas basing rights. At present, Russia has access to the port of Djibouti for its counter-piracy operation off Somalia<sup>125</sup> but is involved in discussions with other countries concerning possible basing arrangements;<sup>126</sup> reports<sup>127</sup> have focused on the former Soviet base on Socotra (Yemen), the port of Tripoli

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<sup>115</sup> Leonid Hayremdinov, 'Vostok-2010', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 6 July 2010, [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>116</sup> Ilya Kramnik, 'Vostok-2010 games: A test of Russia's new army', *RIA Novosti*, 5 July 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20100705/159695795.html>.

<sup>117</sup> Ilya Kramnik, 'Russian Navy participates in Vostok-2010 military exercises', *RIA Novosti*, 7 July 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20100707/159728960.html>.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> 'Vostok-2010 strategic exercise gets under way in Russian Far East', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 29 June 2010.

<sup>120</sup> Leonid Hayremdinov, 'The dawn of "the East"', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 29 June 2010 (citing General Nikolai Makarov, Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces) [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>121</sup> Roger McDermott, "'Virtual' Defense of the Russian Far East: Vostok 2010', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 7:127, 6 July 2010; and Jacob W. Kipp, 'Vostok 2010 and the Very Curious Hypothetical Opponent', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 7:133, 12 July 2010.

<sup>122</sup> Vaganov, 'Armaments and Military Equipment Development Through 2020'.

<sup>123</sup> 'Russian Navy prioritizes combat training, global presence', *RIA Novosti*, 1 June 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100601/159250324.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100601/159250324.html).

<sup>124</sup> 'Russia mulls construction of "anti-piracy" ship', *RIA Novosti*, 8 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100508/158930048.html>.

<sup>125</sup> 'Russian warships to base in Djibouti port to fight piracy', *RIA Novosti*, 16 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100516/159039505.html>.

<sup>126</sup> Sergey Safronov, 'Interview with Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy, Commander of the Russian Navy', *Moscow Defense Brief*, Issue 1, 2010, pp. 21-24.

<sup>127</sup> See 'Moscow confirms talks on foreign naval bases', *RIA Novosti*, 16 January 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090116/119629941.html>.

(Libya) and an expansion of the naval base at Tartus (Syria), which has been confirmed.<sup>128</sup> The use of Tartus and Socotra, particularly the latter, would have utility for current operations in the Indian Ocean and fulfil Russia's objective of maintaining a presence in the region. At the same time, Russia is seeking to significantly expand its influence in Africa and especially Latin America.<sup>129</sup> This includes the development of strategic relations with Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua (potentially including involvement in the construction of a trans-isthmus canal),<sup>130</sup> and Bolivia.<sup>131</sup> In addition, both Cuba and Venezuela have been mentioned with regard to Russian naval deployments and or strategic or maritime patrol aircraft basing; one purpose of a visit to the region in 2008 by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin was reportedly to develop a military alliance with Venezuela and Cuba.<sup>132</sup>

The central theme in contemporary Russian maritime thinking is that of developing a balanced, powerful navy that can operate globally against high-end adversaries. The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky recently stated at a conference to mark the centenary of Admiral Gorshkov's birth, that:

Russia's status as successor to the great Soviet Union means that it must have a powerful and balanced ocean navy to defend its interests in any part of the world ocean where such interests exist, and they exist everywhere.<sup>133</sup>

Further, Admiral Vysotsky also stated that 'we largely owe it to Admiral Gorshkov that we are now making very considerable efforts to maintain strategic nuclear parity in Russia's interests, at the same time as changing the approaches that were dominant in the 1990s'.<sup>134</sup> That is, the more-modest ambitions for limited naval forces as espoused by, for example, Admiral Valentin Selivanov (see page three). The desire for a 'powerful and balanced ocean navy' and the confirmation of Russia's 'great power' status provides the setting for current Russian naval planning and the long-term development of the Russian Navy. This, and its implications, will now be examined.

## The Current Posture of the Russian Navy

As a means of providing context for reviewing Russian plans for maritime force developments, a brief survey of the Russian Navy's current principal combat capabilities will be undertaken. This will indicate the extent of the planned investment in maritime capabilities that Russia seeks to make.

The current core combat capability of the Russian Navy is based around three main elements: the submarine force (including naval strategic nuclear forces); the surface fleet; and naval aviation (primarily ground-based).

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<sup>128</sup> 'Russian Navy to base warships at Syrian port after 2012', *RIA Novosti*, 2 August 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100802/160041427.html>.

<sup>129</sup> 'Russia back to Latin America – Medvedev', *RIA Novosti*, 15 April 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100415/158587036.html>.

<sup>130</sup> 'Russia, Nicaragua sign deals after presidents' meeting', *RIA Novosti*, 18 December 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20081218/118933560.html>.

<sup>131</sup> Stephen Blank, 'Putin Makes Energy and Arms Deals with Potential Latin American Allies', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 7:92, 12 May 2010.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> 'Commander argues case for Russia's global naval presence, carrier capability', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 27 February 2010.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*



- *Naval Strategic Nuclear Forces*

The naval strategic nuclear forces are equipped with ten active SSBNs<sup>135</sup> comprising five *Delta III* (Project 667BDR) and five *Delta IV* (Project 667-BDRM)-class boats; the latter have completed overhauls and are now equipped with the SS-N-23 (R-29RMU2/RSM-54) *Sineva* SLBM.<sup>136</sup> The *Delta III*- and *Delta IV*-class boats are armed with sixteen SLBMs; the former carry the SS-N-18 (R-29R) equipped with three multiple independently-targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRVs). The *Sineva* is equipped with four MIRVs.<sup>137</sup> The 160 SLBMs are armed with a total of 560 warheads. The *Delta III* boats are reported to have five to seven years of life left and the *Delta IV* boats between ten and twenty years.<sup>138</sup> A sixth *Delta IV*-class boat, the *Novomoskovsk* (K-407), is currently in overhaul at the Zvezdochka Ship Repair Centre; it is due to rejoin the Navy in November 2010.<sup>139</sup> This will provide an additional sixty-four warheads on sixteen extra missiles providing Russia with a total of 624 naval strategic nuclear warheads. In 2009, it was reported that ‘about ten’ submarines, some armed with nuclear weapons, were on patrol at any one time.<sup>140</sup> The *Delta III*-class boats are being decommissioned, albeit at a slow pace;<sup>141</sup> the *Delta IV*-class are likely to start decommissioning toward 2020 – the boats having entered service between 1985 and 1991.

- *SSN and SSGN Force*

The Russian nuclear-powered submarine force currently comprises approximately (there are some discrepancies in numbers between Russian and Western sources) twelve *Akula I* and *II* (Project 971)-class, four *Victor III* (Project 671 RTMK)-class (armed with and three *Sierra I* and *II* (Project 945)-class attack boats and eight *Oscar II* (Project 949A)-class guided-missile armed boats.<sup>142</sup> In contrast, the International Institute for Strategic Studies reports a total of seventeen active SSNs and five active SSGNs with a further two inactive<sup>143</sup> – one in reserve and one in refit. The *Oscar II*-class boat *Voronezh* is currently undergoing refit and due to rejoin the Northern Fleet by the end of 2010.<sup>144</sup> The fate of the *Oscar II*-class boat *Belgorod* which remains 80 per cent complete at the Sevmash shipyard is yet to be decided. In 2009, the Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov stated that its completion depended on the Russian Ministry of Defence.<sup>145</sup>

The *Akula*-class boats are armed with twenty-eight SS-N-21 *Sampson* land-attack cruise missiles, torpedoes and anti-submarine missiles, eighteen *Strela* surface-to-air missiles are also carried for point defence; the *Victor III*-class boats are armed with up to twenty-four *Sampson* cruise missiles, anti-submarine missiles and torpedoes; and the *Oscar II*-class boats are armed with twenty-four SS-N-19 *Shipwreck* anti-ship missiles and twenty-four anti-submarine missiles and torpedoes.<sup>146</sup> Detailed information concerning the armament of the

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<sup>135</sup> ‘Head of the new generation of submarines will join the fleet in 2010’, *RIA Novosti*, 19 March 2010 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>136</sup> ‘Karelia’s Return to Service’, *Military Parade*, Issue 1, January/February 2010, p. 62.

<sup>137</sup> Makeyev Design Bureau, <http://makeyev.ru/roccomp/3rd/r29rm>.

<sup>138</sup> Ilya Kramnik, ‘Development of strategic nuclear fleet under threat?’ *RIA Novosti*, 18 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20091218/157286164.html>.

<sup>139</sup> ‘Another modernized nuclear submarine to be launched in 2010’, *Barents Observer*, 19 March 2010 <http://www.barentsobserver.com/another-modernized-nuclear-submarine-to-be-launched-in-2010.4761358-58932.html>.

<sup>140</sup> ‘Up to 10 Russian subs at sea around world – Navy source’, *RIA Novosti*, 20 March 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090320/120657257.html>.

<sup>141</sup> ‘Project 667BDR submarine decommissioned’, *Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces*, 27 July 2010, [http://russianforces.org/blog/2010/07/project\\_667bdr\\_submarine\\_decom.shtml](http://russianforces.org/blog/2010/07/project_667bdr_submarine_decom.shtml).

<sup>142</sup> ‘Submarine Fleet Russia [sic]: Prospects and Expectations’, *VPK-News*, 22 June 2010 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>143</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010* (Abingdon: Routledge: 2010), p. 225.

<sup>144</sup> ‘Russia: Two new, refitted nuclear submarines to start sea trials this summer’, *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 29 March 2010.

<sup>145</sup> ‘Russian Navy gets over 40 per cent of defence budget – deputy PM’.

<sup>146</sup> *Russia’s Naval Ships, Armament and Equipment*, p. 19, 21 and 23.

*Sierra*-class is not provided; the boats are equipped with *Sampson* cruise missiles and torpedoes.<sup>147</sup>

Russia has recently reorganised the command structure for its nuclear-powered submarine force, creating integrated submarine commands within the Northern and Pacific Fleets respectively. The new command structure combines the strategic and attack boats in one 'submarine forces command' within each fleet, which will report directly to a submarine force commander holding the rank of deputy fleet commander.<sup>148</sup> The new command structure is intended to 'strengthen the vertical chain of command' and remove redundancies within the structure.<sup>149</sup> It may also be intended to enhance the operational coordination of the strategic and attack boats for joint operations<sup>150</sup> and the incorporation of the strategic boats into non-strategic tasks.<sup>151</sup>

Vice Admiral Oleg Burtsev, First Deputy of the Naval General Staff, has stated that Russia requires forty to fifty nuclear-powered submarines so to counter the 'at least nine combat ready nuclear subs' that the US, France and Britain have deployed.<sup>152</sup>

#### ▪ *SSK and Special-Purpose Submarines*

The SSK force currently number twelve to fifteen *Kilo*-class (Project 877 and 636) boats in active service<sup>153</sup>; plus in May 2010, the Russian Navy commissioned the *Sankt-Peterburg*, first-of-class of the new *Lada*-class (Project 677). At least two additional *Lada*-class boats are under construction: the *Kronshtadt* and *Sevastopol*, with a total of eight boats planned.<sup>154</sup> This may change as five *Lada*-class boats are planned for deployment with the Black Sea Fleet alone in the period up to 2020.<sup>155</sup> The *Lada*-class are armed with eighteen missiles (*Klub-S* - 3M-14 and 3M-54 land-attack and anti-ship respectively), torpedoes and mines.<sup>156</sup>

The Russian Navy also operates a number of specialist submarines. The *Military Balance* reports the Russian Navy operates eight SSANs comprising one *Delta Stretch*, one *Losharik*, two *Paltus*, three *Uniform*, and one *X-Ray*.<sup>157</sup> A *Delta IV*-class boat, the K-64 *Vladimir*, has reportedly been converted to a special-forces submarine.<sup>158</sup> The existence of a hybrid diesel-electric and nuclear-powered submarine, the B-90 *Sarov* (Project 20120), has also been disclosed (albeit inadvertently).<sup>159</sup> The *Sarov* is reportedly employed to test new weapon systems and military equipment<sup>160</sup> whilst other reports suggest a potential intelligence-gathering role.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, p. 225.

<sup>148</sup> 'Russian navy forms submarine forces fleet-level direct chain of command', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 19 March 2010.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> See 'Russia outwitted US strategic defenses [sic] with missile test', *RIA Novosti*, 15 July 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090715/155530936.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090715/155530936.html).

<sup>151</sup> Vaganov, 'Armaments and Military Equipment Development Through 2020'.

<sup>152</sup> 'Russia needs minimum 50 nuclear subs for fleet – Navy Vice Admiral', *RIA Novosti*, 20 March 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100320/158260734.html>.

<sup>153</sup> 'Submarine Fleet Russia [sic]: Prospects and Expectations'.

<sup>154</sup> 'Russian Navy to commission first Lada class diesel sub in 2010', *RIA Novosti*, 20 March 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090320/120665371.html>.

<sup>155</sup> 'The Black Sea Fleet will receive up to 2020, 15 new ships and submarines', *RIA Novosti*, 23 June 2010. [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>156</sup> *Russia's Naval Ships, Armament and Equipment*, p. 29.

<sup>157</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, p. 225.

<sup>158</sup> Pavel Podvig, 'Strategic Fleet', *Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces*, <http://www.russianforces.org>.

<sup>159</sup> 'New spy-sub operates in northern waters', *Barents Observer*, 10 June 2009, <http://www.barentsobserver.com/new-spy-sub-operates-in-northern-waters.4605222-16149.html>.

<sup>160</sup> 'Head of the new generation of submarines will join the fleet in 2010'.

<sup>161</sup> 'Only 8 Russian strategic submarines are combat-ready – analyst', *RIA Novosti*, 1 June 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090601/155137755.html>.

▪ *The Surface Fleet: Principal Surface Combatants*

The Russian Navy currently operates some fifty-seven principal surface combatants, comprising; one aircraft carrier; one nuclear-powered guided missile cruiser; four cruisers; fourteen destroyers; fourteen frigates; and twenty-three corvettes.<sup>162</sup> The cruiser, destroyer, frigate and corvette force consists of fifteen classes and sub-classes of ship (for example, the *Udaloy*- and *Udaloy-II*-classes of destroyer). It is the intention of the Russian Navy to consolidate its force structure around single classes of ship as part of its modernisation and re-equipment programme.<sup>163</sup>

The Russian Navy's sole aircraft carrier, the *Admiral Kuznetsov*, is reported to be subject to a major overhaul from 2012, potentially involving the removal of its SS-N-19 *Shipwreck* anti-ship cruise missiles, the upgrade of its propulsion, electronic and air-defence systems, and the installation of a waist catapult for the assisted launching of aircraft.<sup>164</sup> The Sukhoi Su-33 *Flanker-Ds* currently embarked on the *Admiral Kuznetsov* are to be replaced by twenty-six MiG-29K *Fulcrum-D* multi-role fighters;<sup>165</sup> Sukhoi T-50 fifth generation fighters may also be deployed.<sup>166</sup> The ship will reportedly re-enter service in 2017; it may be intended to serve effectively as a trials-platform pending the service entry of the planned nuclear-powered aircraft carriers from 2020 (see below). The last major activity the *Admiral Kuznetsov* was reported as being involved in were deck trials of MiG-29K aircraft in the Barents Sea in October 2009;<sup>167</sup> the ship was also involved in the 'Ladoga-2009' exercise held in September 2009.<sup>168</sup> The composition of the ship's air-group was disclosed during the aforementioned January 2008 exercise in the Atlantic. For this exercise, thirteen *Flanker-Ds*, and eight Kamov Ka-27PS *Helix* helicopters were embarked although it was reported that the 'authorised strength' of the air-group allows for thirty-six *Flankers* and sixteen *Helix*.<sup>169</sup>

The primary source of combat power within the Russian Navy's surface combatant force is concentrated effectively around nineteen ships; the nuclear-powered cruiser *Pyotr Velikiy*; three *Slava*-class cruisers; thirteen destroyers (comprising five [plus two in reserve] *Sovremenny*, seven *Udaloy* and one *Udaloy-II* class vessels); and two *Neustrashimy*-class frigates. These vessels provide the majority of the Russian Navy's conventional offensive power and deployable assets. However, all the above were either designed in the 1970s and 1980s and commissioned before the collapse of the Soviet Union, or were commissioned in the 1990s or 2000s after protracted delay due to the impact of the Soviet collapse. For example, the 'new' *Neustrashimy*-class (Project 11540) frigate *Yaroslav Mudry* was commissioned in 2009 after nineteen years of construction.<sup>170</sup> It is, however, inferior to the Project 11356 *Talwar*-class frigates exported to India; this is primarily due to the latter being armed with the *Klub-N* land-attack and anti-ship missile system (range of up to 220 kilometres [km]), whereas the *Neustrashimy*-class are equipped with the *Uran* (Kh-35, 3M-24) anti-ship missile system (range of up to 130 km).<sup>171</sup> Further, although both classes are derived from the *Krivak*-class, the project 11356 ships incorporate signature reduction measures.

<sup>162</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, pp. 225-226.

<sup>163</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities for the Period up to 2010*, p. 8.

<sup>164</sup> Ilya Kramnik, 'Moscow set to upgrade Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier', 6 April 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20100406/158454665.html>.

<sup>165</sup> 'Russian navy to buy 26 MiG-29K carrier-borne fighter jets – source', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 25 April 2010.

<sup>166</sup> Kramnik, 'Moscow set to upgrade Admiral Kuznetsov aircraft carrier'.

<sup>167</sup> 'Russia: Murmansk Region media highlights 28 Sep-4 Oct 09', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 10 October 2009.

<sup>168</sup> 'Russian Zvezda TV reports on West, Ladoga drills', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 28 September 2009.

<sup>169</sup> 'Russian paper ponders composition of fleet on naval exercises in Atlantic', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 24 January 2008.

<sup>170</sup> 'Russian navy takes delivery of new frigate', *RIA Novosti*, 19 June 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090619/155299296.html>.

<sup>171</sup> Data from *Russia's Naval Ships, Armament and Equipment*, p. 49, 103 and 106.



### ▪ *Naval Aviation*

The principal assets of the Russian Navy's Naval Aviation branch are its Tu-22M3 *Backfire* bombers (~fifty-six),<sup>172</sup> Tu-142M *Bear-F* and Il-38 *May* ASW/maritime patrol aircraft (twenty-seven and twenty-nine respectively).<sup>173</sup> The Il-38 *May* also undertakes reconnaissance and surveillance missions following the retirement of the Tu-95MR *Bear-E* and Tu-95RTs *Bear-D* aircraft;<sup>174</sup> the latter having provided targeting support to the *Oscar-II* force and the SS-N-19 *Shipwreck* missile system.<sup>175</sup> Aircraft and helicopters embarked on ships are under the command of Naval Aviation. The Naval Aviation also operates tactical assets (including *Frogfoot*, *Fencer*, *Flanker* and *Foxhound* aircraft) plus Tu-142MR *Bear-J* and Il-22 *Coot-B* airborne command posts. The primary role of the *Bear-J* is to provide a communications link between submerged SSBNs and land-based communications posts; *Bear-J* patrols over the Arctic and Atlantic have reportedly recommenced.<sup>176</sup> In addition, incursions by Russian maritime aircraft into British airspace have resumed;<sup>177</sup> these are likely to be by Tu-142M *Bear-F* ASW aircraft. The increasing activity of Russian Naval Aviation is a component of attempts to reconstitute the Navy's ability to conduct coordinated air-sea operations, in particular involving over-the-horizon missile strikes; the above-mentioned Pacific Fleet exercise in April 2010 (see page eighteen) is indicative of this. In this context, the maintenance of the *Bear-F*, *Bear-J* and *May* fleets remains a priority.<sup>178</sup>

### ▪ *General Issues, Infrastructure and Readiness*

At present, the Russian Navy faces significant challenges, including major readjustment as part of the ongoing military reform effort; this includes a near-halving of the current fleet (from 240 to 123 vessels) and a rationalisation of personnel, in particular with regard to the officer corps.<sup>179</sup> Technical and personnel readiness remains problematic with a number of incidents in 2009 and 2010 being particularly noteworthy. This includes; a fatal fire onboard the *Admiral Kuznetsov* during an exercise in the Mediterranean resulting in 'slight damage' to the ship;<sup>180</sup> the breakdown of the *Kilo*-class submarine *Alrosa* during a training exercise (the submarine was the only active boat in the Black Sea Fleet);<sup>181</sup> the crash of a helicopter whilst attempting to land onboard the *Neustrashimy*-class frigate *Yaroslav Mudry* during the latter's sea trials;<sup>182</sup> a reported fire aboard the *Slava*-class cruiser *Moskva* (flagship of the Black Sea Fleet);<sup>183</sup> and the crash of two *Bear-F* aircraft from the Pacific Fleet in separate incidents in November 2009 and May 2010.<sup>184</sup> In addition, Russian out-of-area naval deployments are, for the most part, accompanied by rescue-tugs. For example, the July 2010 visit of the *Slava*-class cruiser *Varyag* to San Francisco included the *Fotiy Krylov* rescue tug; President Medvedev visited the *Varyag* in San Francisco as part of his visit to the

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<sup>172</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, p. 227.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> Gordon, *Russian Air Power*, p. 220.

<sup>175</sup> 'Submarine Fleet Russia [sic]: Prospects and Expectations'.

<sup>176</sup> Gordon, *Russian Air Power*, p 226.

<sup>177</sup> Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, Chief of the Air Staff, 'Combat Operations: The Asymmetric Advantage of Air Power', RUSI Lord Trenchard Memorial Lecture, 14 September 2009.

<sup>178</sup> 'Russia's Beriyev aircraft designer gives details of work on military orders', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 13 February 2010 and 'Russia: First "series" naval aircraft upgrade to fly February', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 19 January 2009.

<sup>179</sup> 'Military reform of [sic] 2009-2012', *Independent Military Review*, 12 December 2008.

<sup>180</sup> 'Seaman dies as fire breaks out on board Russian aircraft carrier', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 7 January 2009.

<sup>181</sup> 'Submarine accident reflects crisis in navy', *RIA Novosti*, 24 November 2009,

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20091124/156965001.html>.

<sup>182</sup> 'Russian crew survive Ka-27 helicopter crash', *RIA Novosti*, 4 May 2009,

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090504/155000852.html>.

<sup>183</sup> 'Russian Navy denies reports of damage to Black Sea Fleet flagship', *RIA Novosti*, 11 September 2009,

[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090911/156089913.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090911/156089913.html).

<sup>184</sup> 'Russian military plane crashes in Far East', *RIA Novosti*, 7 November 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20091107/156740077.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20091107/156740077.html) and 'Russia plans to resume Tu-142 search in Far East', *RIA Novosti*, 25 May 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100525/159146737.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100525/159146737.html).

United States.<sup>185</sup> The tempo of Russian naval operations, aging equipment and sub-optimal personnel<sup>186</sup> are the most likely causes of the increasing rate of incidents.

Shore infrastructure and fleet support is a major area of concern. In 2009, Mikhail Barabanov wrote, with regard to the potential acquisition of *Mistral*-class LHDs for the Russian Navy:

The Russian Navy has earned itself a sorry reputation for wasting its large warships – suffice is to recall the unenviable fate of the Soviet *Kiev*-class heavy aircraft carrier cruisers, *Kirov*-class heavy nuclear-powered guided missiles [sic] cruisers and the Project 956 [*Sovremenny*-class] destroyers. Even now the Navy is unable to maintain the *Admiral Kuznetsov* aircraft carrier in proper working order – the ship still isn't [sic] completely finished.<sup>187</sup>

The First Deputy Defence Minister, Vladimir Popovkin has admitted that Russia lacks port infrastructure to support aircraft carriers but that it will be remedied.<sup>188</sup> However, on a more positive note, the Russian Navy has sustained since 2007 a relatively high operational tempo with little reported difficulty. It has staged, or participated in, major exercises in 2008, 2009 and 2010, including; the strategic level 'Stability 2008', 'Ladoga-2009' and 'Vostok-2010' exercises; the aforementioned joint air and naval exercise in the Atlantic in December 2007 and January 2008; a visit (led by *Pyotr Velikiy*) to the Caribbean in late 2008; exercises in the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean in the defined period; and has sustained a rotational presence off Somalia undertaking counter-piracy operations. In addition, the Russian Navy's Black Sea Fleet was involved in combat operations against Georgia in August 2008 and in May 2010, Russian naval Special Forces successfully undertook an operation to free a Russian tanker captured by pirates off Somalia.<sup>189</sup>

## The Long-term Development of the Russian Navy

The context for the modernisation and long-term development of the Russian Navy is provided by the desire to establish Russia's position as a 'great maritime power' with a 'powerful and balanced ocean navy to defend its interests in any part of the world'. The specific objectives of naval modernisation are defined within the *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities for 2010*. This document is to be revised to cover the period up to 2020 in conformity with the publication (expected in the latter part of 2010) of the State Armament Programme 2011-2020. The themes addressed in the extant *Basic Policy* correspond to the publicly defined priorities of the Russian Navy and thus the revised *Basic Policy* will most likely have continuity with the current document. The *Basic Policy* defines the following as objectives:

- The establishment of a strategic missile submarine ... of a new generation, upgrading and repair of boats of this class, the development and manufacture of their missile weapons;
- Construction of multipurpose submarines and surface ships, including aircraft carriers, with increased combat capabilities, equipped with high-shock and anti-missile weapons, means of defense, effective aviation systems for

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<sup>185</sup> 'Russian Pacific Fleet warships return from U.S.', *RIA Novosti*, 15 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100715/159819086.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100715/159819086.html).

<sup>186</sup> 'Russian admiral confirms French helicopter ship plans – agency, radio', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 1 November 2009.

<sup>187</sup> Mikhail Barabanov, 'The Mistral Problem', *Moscow Defense Brief*, Issue 3, 2009.

<sup>188</sup> 'Russia to build port facilities for Mistral ships', *RIA Novosti*, 8 April 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100408/158479979.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100408/158479979.html).

<sup>189</sup> 'Operation to free Russian tanker from Somali pirates lasted 22 minutes (WRAPUP 5)', *RIA Novosti*, 7 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100507/158908577.html>.

various purposes, as well as the universal landing and mine central [sic] vessels;

- The creation of multi-aircraft (airplanes, helicopters, unmanned facilities) a [sic] ship and shore-based, universal-shore reconnaissance and strike systems;
- Development and equipment of the oceans as the possible scope of warfare through the establishment (maintenance) and the deployment of a unified system of lighting conditions in the oceans, global navigation systems, communications and battle management, intelligence and targeting, hydro, topogeodesic and cartographic services ...<sup>190</sup>

The above is not exhaustive but serves to indicate the principal aims that the Russian Navy has been working toward since 2000. The *Basic Policy* states the highest priorities for the Navy to be:

- Strategic missile submarines;
- Multi-purpose submarines;
- Universal combat ships; [and]
- Reconnaissance and targeting systems, combat control, navigation, first of all space systems.<sup>191</sup>

These priorities provide a framework within which to examine the long-term development plans of the Russian Navy, albeit with the addition of extra categories relating to the acquisition of new aircraft carriers and amphibious warfare vessels. Reconnaissance and targeting systems will be covered under the broader heading of intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR). The section will conclude with a brief examination of developments concerning the naval industrial base and its capacity to deliver the planned modernisation and expansion of the Navy.

#### ▪ *Strategic Missile Submarines*

The foremost priority for the Russian Navy is the development and entry into service of its new generation SSBN, the *Borei*-class (Project 955), and the associated SS-NX-30 *Bulava* SLBM. The first-of-class SSBN, the *Yuri Dolgurukiy* (Project 955) is currently undergoing sea trials and it is planned that a successful test-launch of a *Bulava* should be undertaken by the end of 2010 thus allowing the SSBN and SLBM to enter service.<sup>192</sup> Two additional *Borei*-class (Project 955A) submarines, the *Alexandr Nevsky* and the *Vladimir Monomakh*, are under construction at the Sevmash shipyard; a fourth boat, provisionally named as the *Syvatitel Nikolay* is due to be laid down in 2010. This boat will be an improved design and designated Project 955U;<sup>193</sup> it may have an increased armament of twenty SLBMs compared to the sixteen carried by the first three boats.<sup>194</sup> A total of eight *Borei*-class boats are planned by 2020.<sup>195</sup>

The intended armament for the *Borei*-class is the SS-NX-30 *Bulava* SLBM. The *Bulava* is intended to deliver six MIRVs per missile although it is reported that ten warheads could be carried but 'requires the forfeiture of all final stage countermeasures and of some shielding'.<sup>196</sup> Based on an eight boat class, three of which will be armed with sixteen missiles and five potentially with twenty missiles, and the *Typhoon*-class (Project 941) boat *Dmitry*

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<sup>190</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities*, p. 8.

<sup>191</sup> *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities*, p. 9.

<sup>192</sup> 'Fate of Russia's Bulava missile must be decided this summer – Navy', *RIA Novosti*, 21 March 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100321/158264791.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100321/158264791.html).

<sup>193</sup> 'Russia's fourth Borei-class submarine to differ from sister ships – source', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 3 March 2010.

<sup>194</sup> 'The fourth submarine will be upgraded', *Arms-Expo*, 3 March 2010 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>195</sup> 'Russia's submarine fleet has 60 vessels in active service', *RIA Novosti*, 19 March 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090319/120643942.html>.

<sup>196</sup> 'Russia Navy to continue work with Bulava missile – commander', *Itar Tass*, 15 December 2009.

*Donskoi* (the trials boat for the *Bulava*), which will return to active service and be armed with twenty missiles, all armed with six warheads, the naval contribution to Russia's strategic deterrent will increase from the current 560 warheads to 1008 warheads. This is dependent on the problems with the *Bulava* being successfully resolved.

#### ▪ *Multi-purpose Submarines*

The construction of new multi-purpose nuclear-powered submarines constitutes a major priority for the Russian Navy. It is planned that one nuclear-powered submarine will be laid down per year from 2011; the last new submarine to be laid down being the second *Graney* (Project 885M)-class boat *Kazan* in July 2009.<sup>197</sup> The first-of-class *Severodvinsk* (Project 885 *Yasen*) was launched in June 2010; this boat was laid down in 1993 and substantially delayed due to the circumstances of the post-Soviet collapse, namely lack of funding and then the need to modernise the submarine whilst still under construction. The subsequent boats, starting with *Kazan*, will be of an updated design;<sup>198</sup> a total of seven *Graney*-class boats are planned.<sup>199</sup> The *Graney*-class will mark a significant addition to the combat capabilities of the Russian Navy, in particular due to each boat being equipped with eight three-round vertical-launch silos for cruise missiles. The armament of the *Graney*-class will include a naval version of the Kh-101 advanced strategic cruise missile.<sup>200</sup> The Kh-101 is a conventional long-range (5,000 km) weapon reportedly incorporating low-observable technologies, a terminal guidance system and delivers a 400 kg warhead; a nuclear variant, the Kh-102, also exists.<sup>201</sup> The missile is intended to replace the Kh-55 (AS-15 *Kent*) air-launched cruise missile and due to the apparent existence of a naval variant, the SS-N-21 *Sampson*. The *Graney*-class may also be armed with the Kh-102 nuclear cruise missile.<sup>202</sup>

The equipping of the *Graney*-class with the Kh-101 cruise missile will provide the Russian Navy with a potent conventional strategic strike capability; this will be further enhanced with the potential conversion of two *Typhoon*-class boats (the *Arkhangelsk* and *Severstal*) to SSGNs. The details of a conversion have not been disclosed, but comparisons with the US conversion of *Ohio*-class SSBNs to SSGNs have been made.<sup>203</sup> A *Typhoon*-class SSGN would likely be capable of carrying between 120 and 140 Kh-101 cruise missiles, based on six or seven missiles replacing each SS-N-20 SLBM (diameter of 2.4 metres)<sup>204</sup>. In comparison, seven *Tomahawk* cruise missiles are deployed in place of one *Trident II* SLBM (diameter of 2.11 metres).<sup>205</sup>

The Russian Navy has also been working since 2006 on a new SSN that will displace 5,000 to 6,000 tons to complement the larger (and more expensive) *Graney*-class.<sup>206</sup> The then Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Masorin, announced in 2006 that the long-term plan for the submarine fleet was to consolidate it around four classes; the

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<sup>197</sup> 'Russia to lay down one multipurpose submarine a year from 2011', *RIA Novosti*, 26 July 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090726/155627360.html>.

<sup>198</sup> 'Russia lays down 2<sup>nd</sup> Graney class nuclear sub', *RIA Novosti*, 24 July 2009, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090724/155609253.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090724/155609253.html).

<sup>199</sup> 'Russia's second Yasen-class submarine, Kazan, has "unique versatility"', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 13 July 2009.

<sup>200</sup> 'Russia: Two new, refitted nuclear submarines to start sea trials this summer'.

<sup>201</sup> Gordon, *Russian Air Power*, pp. 167-168.

<sup>202</sup> 'Russia could focus on tactical nuclear weapons for subs', *RIA Novosti*, 23 March 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090323/120688454.html>.

<sup>203</sup> 'Typhoon class submarines to remain in service with Russian Navy'.

<sup>204</sup> Pavel Podvig (ed.) *Russia's Strategic Nuclear Forces* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press: 2001), p. 334.

<sup>205</sup> 'Trident Fleet Ballistic Missile', United States Navy Fact File, [http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact\\_display.asp?cid=2200&tid=1400&ct=2](http://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=2200&tid=1400&ct=2).

<sup>206</sup> 'Russia launches project to create next-generation nuclear submarine', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 13 February 2006.



*Borei*-class SSBN; *Yasen*-class SSGN; the *Lada*-class SSK; and a fourth unnamed class – probably the new SSN.<sup>207</sup>

▪ *Aircraft Carriers*

The principal aim concerning the development of the Russian Navy's surface fleet is the procurement of six nuclear-powered, 75,000 ton conventional take-off and landing configured aircraft carriers.<sup>208</sup> It is planned that the ships will be deployed with the Northern and Pacific Fleets. The embarked air-groups will include a naval variant of the Sukhoi T-50 fifth generation fighter aircraft, helicopters and unmanned air vehicles (UAVs).<sup>209</sup> Development of the latter has begun with the involvement of the Vega Corporation.<sup>210</sup> This company is a specialist in the development of UAVs and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; its involvement in the development of a carrier-based UAV indicates that the organic airborne surveillance and early warning capability for the carriers will be UAV-based. Ilya Kramnik, military commentator for the Russian state news service RIA Novosti, has suggested that the air-group may comprise twenty-four T-50s and twenty-four MiG-29Ks plus fixed- and rotary-wing support assets.<sup>211</sup> It is intended that construction of the first-of-class should begin in 2012-13,<sup>212</sup> with an in-service date of circa 2020. The shipyard to undertake construction has not yet been selected<sup>213</sup> but will most likely be either the Baltic Shipyard in St. Petersburg or the Sevmash yard in Severodvinsk. Both yards are capable of constructing vessels displacing up to 100,000 tons and with nuclear propulsion. As part of the process of developing supporting on-shore infrastructure, a new naval pilot training facility is to be built on the site of an existing airfield (Eisk) on the Sea of Azov; it is planned that this facility will become operational in 2012.<sup>214</sup>

The new aircraft carriers are intended to provide Russia with a means of projecting power; Admiral Vysotsky described the purpose of the planned ships as:

Russia's aircraft carrier fleet should be an element in a single missile, air and space defence umbrella and should organically fit into its structure ... It is a powerful, diverse nucleus of both general-purpose forces and an element of strategic arms that can tackle the most broad range of tasks.<sup>215</sup>

Furthermore, the success of naval activity in general was 'impossible' without 'aerospace superiority'.<sup>216</sup> Admiral Vysotsky has also stated that the ships are to be an element in a broader 'sea-borne aircraft carrier system' which will operate 'in close contact with Russia's orbital group of military satellites and also with the Air Force and air defense'.<sup>217</sup> That is, building upon the operational approach developed in the previously discussed January 2008 Atlantic exercise. The design of the carrier should be complete by the end of 2010, and it is intended that development of the ships will take place under the auspices of a federal targeted-development programme, thus meaning financing will come from outside of the state defence order.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> 'Kramnik, 'Russia set to build new aircraft carrier'.

<sup>209</sup> 'Ready to Build an Aircraft Carrier', *Military Parade*, Issue 3, May/June 2009, pp. 24-27.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> Kramnik, 'Russia set to build new aircraft carrier'.

<sup>212</sup> 'Building of aircraft carriers for Russian Navy will begin in 2012-2013 – Russian Navy General Staff (Part 2)', *Interfax*, 9 June 2009.

<sup>213</sup> 'Russia to build nuclear-powered 60,000-ton aircraft carrier', *RIA Novosti*, 27 February 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090227/120342249.html>.

<sup>214</sup> 'Russia to start building naval pilot training center [sic] in 2010', *RIA Novosti*, 6 May 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090506/121460459.html>.

<sup>215</sup> 'Russia to design own aircraft carrier by end of 2010 – navy chief'.

<sup>216</sup> 'Commander argues case for Russia's global naval presence, carrier capability'.

<sup>217</sup> 'Russia to have 5-6 aircraft carriers in Northern, Pacific Fleets', *RIA Novosti*, 27 July 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080727/115004797.html>.

<sup>218</sup> 'Russia' to design own aircraft carrier by end of 2010 – navy chief'.

▪ *Amphibious Warfare Ships*

A second significant area of investment planned by the Russian Navy is amphibious warfare. Currently, the Russian Navy operates one *Ivan Rogov*-class large landing ship and a variety of other landing ships, particularly landing ship tanks (LSTs) (nineteen).<sup>219</sup> The acquisition of four *Mistral*-class LHDs is under negotiation with France; two of which will be built in France and two under licence in Russia.<sup>220</sup> This is a concession to France, as Russia had originally sought to build three ships under licence.<sup>221</sup> A fifth ship may also be acquired.<sup>222</sup> The ships will be deployed with the Northern and Pacific Fleets; the Chief of the General Staff General Nikolai Makarov has specifically mentioned the need for a *Mistral*-class vessel to counter threats to the Kuril Islands.<sup>223</sup> The planned composition of the air-group has been declared as including Kamov Ka-52 *Hokum-B* attack helicopters, Kamov Ka-226 *Hoodlum* utility helicopters, Kamov Ka-29 *Helix-B* assault helicopters and Kamov Ka-27M *Helix* helicopters.<sup>224</sup> The Russians are not just looking to procure the *Mistral* as a means of providing enhanced amphibious lift; it is also being considered as a command ship (the French designate the ship as a 'force projection and command' vessel).<sup>225</sup> The vessels will also be modified somewhat to replace French weaponry with Russian systems, to operate Russian helicopters and to make them suitable for operations in Arctic waters.<sup>226</sup>

The *Mistral* variant to be acquired has not been disclosed; DCNS offer versions ranging from 14,000 to 25,000 tons. The requirement for a slightly enlarged hangar deck to operate Kamov helicopters, strengthening of the hull for Arctic operations, and Russian interest in power projection points to the procurement of either the 21,500 ton variant (Russian statements describe the *Mistral*-class as displacing 21,500 tons) or the enlarged 25,000 ton variant. Both versions can carry two landing craft air cushioned or four landing craft utility, have six deck landing spots and hangar capacity for sixteen helicopters; lift capacity is up to 1,000 and 1200 personnel respectively.<sup>227</sup>

Interest has also been expressed in the acquisition of four landing platform docks (LPDs) similar to the *Johan de Witt*-class produced by the Dutch company Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding.<sup>228</sup> The lift capacity of the *Johan de Witt*-class is up to 547 troops plus support; the ships can also embark six medium weight helicopters (NFH-90 class) or four heavy weight helicopters (EH-101 class) and has a total vehicle area (over two decks) of 2000 square metres.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, p. 226.

<sup>220</sup> 'Russia to define Mistral purchase scheme – Navy', *RIA Novosti*, 23 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100723/159923931.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100723/159923931.html).

<sup>221</sup> 'Russia to build coastal infrastructure if it buys French warship – official', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 8 April 2010.

<sup>222</sup> 'Russian admiral confirms French helicopter ship plans – agency, radio'.

<sup>223</sup> 'Russia needs Mistral to protect Kuril Islands – General Staff', *RIA Novosti*, 8 June 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100608/159349478.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100608/159349478.html).

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid* and 'Russian Air Force to get dozens of helicopters if Mistral deal agreed', *RIA Novosti*, 5 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100705/159693195.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100705/159693195.html).

<sup>225</sup> 'Russian Navy chief interviewed on Mistral sale, Bulava missile, Black Sea Fleet', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 26 July 2010.

<sup>226</sup> 'Russia set to buy Mistral with transfer of French technologies', *RIA Novosti*, 5 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100705/159698259.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100705/159698259.html) and 'Russian Navy going French', *Barents Observer*, 27 August 2009, <http://www.barentsobserver.com/index.php?id=4625241&xxforcedir=1&noredir=1>.

<sup>227</sup> DCNS Group, 'Mistral Family: A Political Tool for Civilian and Military Action', [http://www.dcnsgroup.com/download.php?file=/files/pdf/Mistral\\_en.pdf](http://www.dcnsgroup.com/download.php?file=/files/pdf/Mistral_en.pdf).

<sup>228</sup> Menno Steketee, 'Russia mulls acquisition of Dutch and French amphibious vessels', *Jane's Navy International*, 114:8, October 2009, p. 4.

<sup>229</sup> Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding, 'Landing Platform Dock II', [http://www.damennaval.com/nl/company\\_product-range\\_landing-platform-dock-ii.htm](http://www.damennaval.com/nl/company_product-range_landing-platform-dock-ii.htm).

Further, the Yantar shipyard has reported a substantial increase in funding for 2010 for construction of the first-of-class Project 11711 landing ship *Ivan Gren*.<sup>230</sup> The *Ivan Gren* is due to launch in 2001 and be commissioned in 2012, and up to five ships of the class may be procured.<sup>231</sup> The *Ivan Gren*-class displace 5,000 tons and can carry up to thirteen main battle tanks or thirty-six armoured personnel carriers, or up to 300 soldiers.<sup>232</sup> The acquisition of four (or five) *Mistral*-class LHDs plus the potential acquisition of a similar number of LPDs and *Ivan Gren*-class landing ships would provide the Russian Navy with a substantially improved amphibious lift capability, and if deployed between the Northern and Pacific Fleets, the core components of an amphibious task group within each fleet. The enhancement of the Northern Fleet's amphibious capabilities would also be of potential significance vis-à-vis wider Russian activities in the Arctic, in particular the Spitsbergen archipelago. This is due to a stated interest in demonstrating a naval presence in the area;<sup>233</sup> the Russian Navy resumed patrols in the Arctic and around the Spitsbergen archipelago in July 2008, the initial deployment including the *Udaloy*-class destroyer *Severomorsk* and the *Slava*-class cruiser *Marshal Ustinov*.<sup>234</sup>

- 'Universal Combat Ships

The Russian Navy is in the process of recapitalising its force of surface combatants. This will concentrate on the acquisition of the *Steregushchy*-class (Project 20380) corvettes, *Admiral Gorshkov*-class (Project 22350) frigates and a new class of destroyer. It is intended that the *Steregushchy*-class will replace the various classes of ship currently assigned to the 'close maritime zone' and the *Gorshkov*-class frigates will replace existing types assigned to the 'distant maritime zone'.<sup>235</sup>

The Project 20380 first-of-class *Steregushchy* was commissioned in March 2008, and the second-of-class *Soobrazitelny*, reportedly featuring significant revisions, was launched in March 2010 and is due to be commissioned in 2011.<sup>236</sup> The Russian Navy plans to deploy seven or eight *Steregushchy*-class corvettes with each of the four fleets.<sup>237</sup>

The Project 22350 first-of-class *Admiral Gorshkov* is due to launch by the end of 2010 and be commissioned in 2011. The *Gorshkov*-class are designed by the Severnoye Design Bureau, displace 4,500 tons, incorporate signature reduction measures and have vertical launch systems for their missile armament.<sup>238</sup> The latter is reported to include eight SS-N-26 *Yakhont* anti-ship cruise missiles, the *Uragan* medium-range (up to 50 km) air defence system (also known as *Shtil-1*), and the *Medvedka-2* anti-submarine missile system.<sup>239</sup> The *Gorshkov*-class will also be capable of being armed with the *Klub* family of missile systems and the *BrahMos* anti-ship cruise missile system; this is because a common vertical launch system, designated UKSK-X (the 'X' being the specific vessel project number), has been developed for surface ships to utilise the *Yakhont*, *Klub* and *BrahMos* systems

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<sup>230</sup> 'Russian shipyard says funding upped on Mistral-rival large landing ship', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 22 May 2010.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> 'OJSC Armalit-1 will manufacture the fittings for amphibious ship "Ivan Gren"', 3 June 2010, <http://navalshow.ru/eng/news/id/370/>.

<sup>233</sup> Vice Admiral Alexander Balyberdin (retired) [deputy director of the Russian Federation Government's administrative department and executive secretary of the Maritime Board], 'Arctic in the System of Priorities for Maritime Activities', *Military Parade*, Issue 4, July/August 2009, pp. 48-50.

<sup>234</sup> 'Russian Navy resumes military presence near Spitsbergen', *RIA Novosti*, 14 July 2008, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20080714/113914174.html>.

<sup>235</sup> 'Russian Navy gets over 40 per cent of defence budget – deputy PM'.

<sup>236</sup> 'Russia launches new corvette', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 31 March 2010.

<sup>237</sup> 'Russian report describes new corvette in service', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 2 March 2008.

<sup>238</sup> 'Leader of Surface Ship Makers', [profile of the Severnaya Verf shipyard], *Military Parade*, Issue 3, May/June 2009, pp. 20-24.

<sup>239</sup> 'Russian Navy to get first frigate of new type in 2011', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 26 February 2010.

interchangeably.<sup>240</sup> The *Gorshkov*-class are intended to serve as multipurpose frigates and be capable of countering 'surface, submarine and aerial threats and conduct land-attack missions'.<sup>241</sup> Construction of the first two *Gorshkov*-class frigates is under way at the Severnaya Verf shipyard in St. Petersburg;<sup>242</sup> a total of up to thirty ships are planned.<sup>243</sup>

The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy in 2009 announced plans for a new class of destroyer to commence construction in 2012. The new class are intended to replace the *Sovremenny*-class,<sup>244</sup> but as the Russian Navy is seeking to consolidate its force structure around single classes of ship, the new destroyer will also likely replace the *Udaloy* and *Udaloy-II*-classes. The number of destroyers to be acquired has not been stated. The design of the new destroyer has not been officially revealed but it is possible to garner substantial insight into the likely general characteristics of the ship. This is because the Severnoe Design Bureau (responsible for numerous Russian warship designs including the *Sovremenny*-class) has released a concept for a new destroyer (including offering it for export); the Project 21956.<sup>245</sup>

The design is of a surface combatant displacing around 9,000 tons and incorporating signature-reduction measures. Its proposed armament would include the 'Rif-M' surface-to-air missile (SAM) system, and using the 48N6 missile, would be capable of engaging targets up to a distance of 150 km.<sup>246</sup> It would also include variants of the *Klub* (SS-N-27 *Sizzler*) missile system for anti-submarine (91RTE2), anti-ship (3M-54T) and land attack (3M-14T) missions (the 'T' denotes the Russian abbreviation for the ship-based vertical launch variant).<sup>247</sup>

In addition to the acquisition of new surface combatants, the Russian Navy is also planning to upgrade and return to service existing ships laid up due to the financial constraints of the post-Soviet period. In particular, the Russian Navy has announced that it intends to reactivate and upgrade by 2020 the three currently laid-up *Ushakov*-class nuclear-powered guided missile cruisers *Admiral Ushakov*, *Admiral Lazarev* and *Admiral Nakhimov*. The three ships' equipment and weapon systems will be fully modernised;<sup>248</sup> the *Pyotr Velikiy*, the sole in-service *Ushakov*-class ship, will also likely be upgraded. Details regarding the planned modernisation of the ships have not been disclosed, but Vice Admiral Oleg Burtsev, First Deputy Chief of the Navy Main Staff, stated in October 2009 that 'they cannot be remade as they were. It must be done anew, with new armament in mind, with new technology in mind...'<sup>249</sup> In an interview with Sergey Victor for *Krasnaya Zvezda* ['Red Star'], Andrei Kokoshin, a former First Deputy Defence Minister and current State Duma member, disclosed that the planned modernisation of the *Ushakov*-class includes the rebuilding of the superstructure and in effect, the development of a 'new generation' of ship.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> 'Ship general-purpose firing complex', Concern Morinformsystem-AGAT JSC, [http://www.morinsys.ru/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=90%3A2008-11-20-14-03-08&catid=81%3A-1-1-r&Itemid=129&lang=en](http://www.morinsys.ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=90%3A2008-11-20-14-03-08&catid=81%3A-1-1-r&Itemid=129&lang=en).

<sup>241</sup> 'Leader of Surface Ship Makers', p. 24.

<sup>242</sup> Severnaya Verf Shipbuilding Plant, 'Stock of Orders', [http://www.nordsy.spb.ru/sv2/buildwarship\\_eng.php?lev1=1](http://www.nordsy.spb.ru/sv2/buildwarship_eng.php?lev1=1).

<sup>243</sup> 'Russian Navy to get first frigate of new type in 2011'.

<sup>244</sup> 'Russia to start building new destroyers in 2012 – navy chief'.

<sup>245</sup> Severnoe Design Bureau, 'Project 21956 Multi-purpose Ship', <http://spkb.air.spb.ru/en/offers/warships/21956/> and [http://spkb.air.spb.ru/en/news/publications/asian\\_def\\_february/](http://spkb.air.spb.ru/en/news/publications/asian_def_february/).

<sup>246</sup> JSC ALTAIR Naval Radio Electronics Scientific Research Institute, 'Rif-M SAM System', <http://www.altair-navy.ru/eng/catalogue/6/9/>.

<sup>247</sup> *Russia's Naval Ships, Armament and Equipment*, p. 106.

<sup>248</sup> 'Russia plans to upgrade 3 nuclear-powered cruisers by 2020 (Update 1)'.

<sup>249</sup> 'Russian admiral confirms French helicopter ship plans – agency, radio'.

<sup>250</sup> Sergey Victor, 'Ocean-going fleet to be', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 3 October 2009 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].



Based on the existing armament of the *Ushakov*-class and contemporary Russian systems, a notional upgrade could potentially include the replacement of the SA-N-6 *Grumble* (S-300F: 90 km range) with the S-400 system. This consists of three missiles; the 9M96E lightweight missile, which can be quad-packed in existing S-300 launchers, with a range of up to 40 km; the 9M96E2 medium-range (150 km) missile; and a 400 km range missile, with ballistic missile defence (BMD) capabilities, possibly designated the 40N6.<sup>251</sup> This would provide a substantial improvement to the Russian Navy's air defence capabilities and provide it with a BMD capability, which conforms to the aforementioned statements by the Admiral Vysotsky on the need to contribute to the air and missile defence of Russia. The fate of the SS-N-19 *Shipwreck* anti-ship missile system will also be of significance, especially with regard to whether the *Ushakov*-class remain primarily ASuW assets, or are provided with a broader ASuW, ASW and land-attack capability; for example, via the installation of a UKSK-X launcher, and or the Kh-101 strategic cruise missile.

On a recent visit to the *Pyotr Velikiy*, the Russian President and Admiral Vysotsky are reported by RIA Novosti, to have indicated an interest in the acquisition of *new* nuclear-powered missile cruisers.<sup>252</sup> Further to the reactivation of the *Ushakov*-class, the Russian Navy is also reported to be looking at reacquiring the *Slava*-class cruiser *Ukraina*, which was launched in 1990 in the then Soviet Ukraine but has languished since due to primarily a lack of funds for its completion.<sup>253</sup> The purchase and upgrade of the *Ukraina* would reportedly cost 35 billion roubles (approximately \$1.16 billion).<sup>254</sup> Ilya Kramnik suggests that the acquisition of the ship, if subsequently upgraded with new systems and armament, would be a valuable contribution to the development of the Russian Navy.<sup>255</sup> If the *Ukraina* is commissioned into the Russian Navy, it will take the number of *Slava*-class cruisers in service to four. This may result in two *Slava*-class ships each being deployed with the Northern and Pacific Fleets, as opposed to the current deployment of one vessel with the Northern, Black Sea and Pacific Fleets respectively. The Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy has expressed his doubts as to whether a heavy cruiser is needed within the Black Sea Fleet's order of battle, taking into account the Fleet's intended roles in the Black Sea region and Mediterranean (such as countering Turkey's increasing naval presence and potential US missile defence deployments in Romania and Bulgaria).<sup>256</sup>

#### ▪ *ISTAR*

A key aspect of Russia's wider military reform effort is the development of a significantly improved Command, Control, Communications, Computing and *ISTAR* (C4*ISTAR*) capability. The development of a C4*ISTAR* system is intended to create the conditions within which to efficiently employ precision-guided munitions, electronic warfare and improve general organisation of the Armed Forces.<sup>257</sup> Ultimately, the Russian Armed Forces aspire to a network-centric type approach to warfare.<sup>258</sup> In the naval context, efforts are focusing on intelligence and electronic warfare systems, reconnaissance and targeting systems,

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<sup>251</sup> Data from 'Russia tested new missiles for air defense system – S-400 Triumph', Almaz-Antey, and 'S-400 Triumph air missile defense system', *RIA Novosti*, 17 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/infographics/20091217/157272520.html>.

<sup>252</sup> 'Medvedev inspected the nuclear missile cruiser "Pyotr Velikiy"', *RIA Novosti*, 4 July 2010 [via <http://translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>253</sup> 'Russia mulls purchase of Ukrainian missile cruiser', *RIA Novosti*, 26 June 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100626/159588715.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100626/159588715.html).

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> 'Russia considers buying back missile cruiser *Ukraina*', *RIA Novosti*, 20 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20100520/159095012.html>.

<sup>256</sup> Safronov, 'Interview with Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy, Commander of the Russian Navy'.

<sup>257</sup> 'Emphasis on Better Troop Control' [excerpts of remarks by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin], *Military Parade*, Issue 1, January/February 2010, pp. 6-7.

<sup>258</sup> Major-General Vasily Burenok [chief of the Russian MoD's 46<sup>th</sup> CNII Central Research Institute] 'Organizational and Technology Basis for Network-Centric Warfare', *Military Parade*, Issue 1, January/February 2010, pp. 14-17.

including unmanned vehicles, surface vessels and submarines, manned aircraft and space-based systems.

The Russian Navy is currently investing in the acquisition of at least one new AGI (intelligence collection vessel), the *Yuri Ivanov* (Project 18280), for the Northern Fleet and a possible second vessel for the Pacific Fleet.<sup>259</sup> A Russian source describes the Project 18280 as intended to 'support communications and command and control of the fleet and to conduct signals intelligence and electronic warfare'.<sup>260</sup> The Russian Navy currently has a total of eleven operational AGIs.<sup>261</sup> The Russian Navy is also investing in a broader regeneration of key reconnaissance, surveillance and targeting systems (the current weakness in this area is a major constraint on the effectiveness of the *Oscar II*-class SSGNs).<sup>262</sup> This includes the replacement of the US-PU/*Legenda* naval reconnaissance and *Tselina* electronic intelligence satellite systems with the *Liana* satellite system;<sup>263</sup> the development of a Tupolev Tu-214 based replacement for the Il-38 *May* and Tu-142 *Bear* maritime patrol aircraft;<sup>264</sup> and the *Monolit-B* coastal surface and air reconnaissance system. The *Monolit-B* is an integrated target acquisition (utilising active and passive means), command, control and communications system linking coastal missile systems, ships and fixed- and rotary-wing assets for littoral operations.<sup>265</sup> A near-term priority for the Russian Navy is the completion of the deployment of *Bal-U* and *Bastion* coastal missile systems (equipped with the Kh-35 and *Yakhont* anti-ship cruise missiles respectively).<sup>266</sup>

The concept for the new aircraft carriers under development is indicative of the increasing emphasis on network-centric warfare and ISTAR. This is especially due to the characterisation of the ships as a component of a wider maritime system also incorporating air- and space-based assets. In addition, the work being undertaken by the Vega design bureau on carrier-based UAVs is likely to be particularly concerned with the development of maritime ISTAR capabilities. The successful development of a robust ISTAR capability is of particular importance to the Russian Navy as it seeks to enhance its long-range strike capabilities (for example, using *Klub* or Kh-101 cruise missiles) and undertake power projection operations. Further, the continuing focus on containing the 'threat' posed by foreign aircraft carriers, in particular those of the United States (and potentially China in the longer term?), will require the regeneration and maintenance of ocean surveillance systems (the Russian Air Force strategic bomber fleet also contributes to this task).<sup>267</sup>

#### ▪ *The Naval Industrial Base*

The principal obstacle to the implementation of Russia's long-term naval plans is the naval and wider military-industrial base. In economic terms, Russia has both the resources and financial commitment to invest in the expansion of naval forces discussed above. This was affirmed by President Medvedev in November 2009, stating that '*Our objective is to invest more considerable sums in the Navy [emphasis added]*'.<sup>268</sup> Despite the impact of the

<sup>259</sup> Nick Brown, 'Spy games: the dark arts of intelligence at sea', *Jane's Navy International*, 112:1, 2007, pp. 14-17.

<sup>260</sup> 'Report on Russian navy strength, ships under construction, ships ordered', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 15 August 2009.

<sup>261</sup> IISS, *The Military Balance 2010*, p. 226.

<sup>262</sup> 'Submarine Fleet Russia: Prospects and Expectations'.

<sup>263</sup> 'Cosmos-2455 – a new generation electronic intelligence satellite', *Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces*, 20 November 2009, <http://russianforces.org/blog/2009/11/cosmos-2455 - a new generation.shtml>.

<sup>264</sup> 'Tupolev to develop military patrol ship on Tu-214 platform', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 1 January 2010.

<sup>265</sup> *Russia's Arms 2006-2007* (Moscow: Military Parade: 2006), pp. 712-713.

<sup>266</sup> Vladimir Popovkin [First Deputy Minister of Defence], 'Advanced Material as Mainstay of Reformed Russian Armed Forces', *Military Parade*, Issue 3, May/June 2009, pp. 4-6.

<sup>267</sup> 'Russia could double number of bombers on strategic patrols – general', *RIA Novosti*, 22 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091222/157325197.html>.

<sup>268</sup> 'Medvedev says Russia to step up navy presence in world's oceans', *RIA Novosti*, 16 November 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091116/156857756.html>.

economic downturn on the Russian economy, Russia's GDP contracted by more than 8.5 per cent in 2009,<sup>269</sup> and substantial government intervention in the economy, Russia's gold and currency reserves amount to more than \$440 billion.<sup>270</sup> In July 2010, the Speaker of the State Duma, Boris Gryzlov announced that spending on the Russian Navy would increase, encompassing both the upgrading of ships and infrastructure;<sup>271</sup> defence spending in 2010 has been increased by 3.4 per cent overall<sup>272</sup> of which the Navy receives 40 per cent.<sup>273</sup> Further, it is reported that Russian defence spending may increase by as much as 60 per cent by 2013 with the Navy being a major beneficiary.<sup>274</sup> However, as has been demonstrated by the continuing problems with, for example, the *Bulava* SLBM programme and the ex- *Gorshkov* conversion for the Indian Navy, the naval industrial base requires substantial investment and improvement.

Within the context of wider military reform and planned rearmament, Russia is starting to invest significant sums in improving its military-industrial (including naval) base. Of particular note is the development of a new defence industrial policy (formulated in conjunction with the Ministry of Defence and Trade and Industry plus Federal Space Agency and other relevant agencies) and a federal programme for the development of the defence industry which will include \$3.4 billion of funding per year through to 2020.<sup>275</sup>

In the naval context, the Russian President Dmitri Medvedev has announced that Russia will adopt an integrated military-civilian shipbuilding programme with the aspiration to produce the 'most advanced ships' and enable the modernisation of the Russian Navy.<sup>276</sup> An element of the interest in acquiring warships from European manufacturers is to gain access, via technology transfers, to Western shipbuilding methods as Russia lacks in modern shipbuilding technologies. Further, the head of the Russian Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev has stated that naval doctrine and shipbuilding plans will be coordinated so to overcome, what was reportedly described as, the 'critical state' of the shipbuilding sector.<sup>277</sup>

Industrial development is being pursued via the formation of the United Shipbuilding Corporation (November 2007) and the consolidation of Russian naval and civilian shipbuilding under its auspices. Three regional centres have been created within the United Shipbuilding Corporation (USC); the Western Shipbuilding Centre in St. Petersburg; the Northern Shipbuilding and Repair Centre in Severodvinsk; and the Far Eastern Shipbuilding and Repair Centre in Vladivostok.<sup>278</sup> This restructuring is intended to increase efficiency and specialisation and thus improve productivity. Within the civilian shipbuilding industry, for example, Russian average productivity, as measured by the man-hours required to produce a ton of structure, is 105 man-hours per ton of structure as against a benchmark figure of 35

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<sup>269</sup> Russia's GDP decrease in 2009 to exceed predicted 8.5% - Kudrin'.

<sup>270</sup> 'Russia's international reserves down \$3.3 bln [sic] in week to \$440 bln [sic]', *RIA Novosti*, 24 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20091224/157341431.html>.

<sup>271</sup> 'More money for Russian Navy', *Barents Observer*, 27 July 2010, <http://www.barentsobserver.com/more-money-for-russian-navy.4802520-58932.html>.

<sup>272</sup> Nail Gafutulin, 'Military Budget 2010', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 28 October 2009, [via <http://www.translate.google.co.uk>].

<sup>273</sup> 'Russian Navy gets over 40 per cent of defence budget – deputy PM'.

<sup>274</sup> 'Russia's defense spending to rise by 60% by 2013 – paper', *RIA Novosti*, 30 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100730/160003543.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100730/160003543.html).

<sup>275</sup> 'Russia approves new defense industry policy', *RIA Novosti*, 19 March 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100319/158253423.html>.

<sup>276</sup> 'Russia to adopt single military/civilian shipbuilding program', *RIA Novosti*, 15 June 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100615/159436953.html>.

<sup>277</sup> 'Shipbuilding plans require revision of Russian naval doctrine – security chief', *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 9 June 2010.

<sup>278</sup> 'Putin Establishes United Shipbuilding Corp., center [sic] – Kremlin- 1' *RIA Novosti*, 22 March 2007, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20070322/62459410.html>.

man-hours per ton of structure in South Korea.<sup>279</sup> In this context, Russia has entered into a joint venture with the South Korean company Daewoo to upgrade civilian shipbuilding facilities at the Zvezda shipyard in the Russian Far East.<sup>280</sup>

This is part of a wider investment in shipbuilding facilities in the Far East intended to develop four shipbuilding zones, including the equipping of the aforementioned Zvezda shipyard to construct aircraft carriers (Russia currently has two shipyards capable of constructing carriers up to a displacement of 100,000 tons – Sevmash and the Baltic Shipyard).<sup>281</sup> The development of improved infrastructure to support the Pacific Fleet is also planned.<sup>282</sup> At the national level, Russia is working to rejuvenate its shipyards; for example, the Admiralty Shipyards in St. Petersburg are to be relocated to a new facility in Kronshtadt over the next six to eight years.<sup>283</sup> The Yantar shipyard and other facilities (possibly Severnaya Verf or the Baltic Shipyard) in St. Petersburg may also be re-equipped, according to the head of the USC, Roman Trotsenko.<sup>284</sup> The USC is also to establish a joint venture with Ukrainian shipbuilding companies, including gaining access to the Nikolayev shipyard;<sup>285</sup> this will potentially provide Russia with a total of four shipyards capable of building large surface combatants.

The substantial investment Russia is undertaking to modernise its shipbuilding sector will contribute significantly to the ability of the Russian military-industrial base to deliver the planned naval rearmament programme. However, there remains the substantial issue of the range of system and sub-system manufacturers and broader naval supply chain and whether it can deliver the intended product. The cause of the problems afflicting the *Bulava* SLBM is believed to be linked to various issues within the supply chain. The modernisation of the Russian naval, and wider military, industrial base will need to comprehensively address the entire supply chain, otherwise plans to, for example, build fifth generation fighters for the Air Force and Navy and integrated ISTAR systems, will be unattainable. On a positive note, the formulation of a coherent defence industrial policy backed by the Russian Government as a whole should substantially raise the probability of success.

## Conclusion

The modernisation of the Russian Navy and Armed Forces more broadly, is driven by the aim, as defined in the *National Security Strategy*, to establish Russia as ‘a world power which seeks to maintain strategic stability and mutually beneficial partnership in a multipolar [sic] world’. This is expressed in naval terms by the desire to develop a ‘powerful and balanced ocean navy’ which can protect and project Russian interests globally as befitting the ‘successor to the Soviet Union’.<sup>286</sup> The ambition to build a ‘powerful and balanced ocean navy’ is demonstrated by the long-term naval re-equipment plan with its focus on high-end

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<sup>279</sup> Elvira Nabiullina [Minister of the Russian Federation for Economic Development and Trade], ‘Results Achieved by the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Economic Development and Trade in 2007, and Targets for 2008’, Presentation to Meeting of the Board [of the Ministry for Economic Development and Trade], [http://www.economy.gov.ru/wps/wcm/connect/economylib/mert/resources/c9f0a5004969564b8f34afbe213d6ed5/nabiullina\\_presentation\\_25\\_03.ppt](http://www.economy.gov.ru/wps/wcm/connect/economylib/mert/resources/c9f0a5004969564b8f34afbe213d6ed5/nabiullina_presentation_25_03.ppt).

<sup>280</sup> ‘Putin estimates \$5bn for shipbuilding in Russian Far East by 2020’, *RIA Novosti*, 28 December 2009, <http://en.rian.ru/business/20091228/157399626.html>.

<sup>281</sup> ‘Four shipbuilding zones to be established in the Far East’, 15 April 2010, [http://www.rusnavy.com/news/navy/index.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=9183](http://www.rusnavy.com/news/navy/index.php?ELEMENT_ID=9183).

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>283</sup> ‘St. Petersburg to move historic 18<sup>th</sup> century shipyard from the city’, *RIA Novosti*, 17 June 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100617/159460020.html>.

<sup>284</sup> ‘Shipbuilding plans require revision of Russian naval doctrine – security chief’.

<sup>285</sup> ‘Russian shipbuilding corp [sic] to set up joint venture with Ukrainian companies’, *BBC Monitoring* (via LexisNexis), 9 June 2010.

<sup>286</sup> ‘Commander argues case for Russia’s global naval presence, carrier capability’.



capabilities, which in summary include; eight new SSBNs; seven SSGNs and a new class of SSN; six large nuclear-powered aircraft carriers; four upgraded nuclear-powered guided-missile cruisers and potentially new-build vessels; up to thirty new frigates and a new class of destroyer (perhaps in similar numbers to the frigates); around thirty new corvettes; and new amphibious warfare ships including four (possibly five) LHDs and potentially four LPDs. Further, a significant qualitative enhancement is planned encompassing particularly on-shore infrastructure, personnel, C4ISTAR, air and missile defence and land-attack capabilities.

The comprehensive regeneration of the Russian Navy is recognised as a long-term undertaking; Admiral Vysotsky has stated it should be complete, for the most part, by circa 2035.<sup>287</sup> It is also highly ambitious; President Medvedev's call to equip the Navy with the 'most advanced ships' is indicative of Russian ambitions, as is the scale of the planned future fleet. However, the planning for naval development is taking place within a coherent conceptual framework that establishes the roles and utility of seapower broadly defined (that is, the commercial, economic, scientific and military aspects of exploiting the maritime environment for national policy ends) in relation to Russian national policy. This is indicated by the scope of policy documents on maritime policy, or aspects thereof, in particular, the *Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation for the Period Up to 2020*, the *Basic Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of Naval Activities for 2010* (both of which are due for updating in the near-term), and the forthcoming integrated military-civilian shipbuilding programme. The *Maritime Doctrine* is especially significant as it links the maritime provisions of the *National Security Strategy*, *Foreign Policy Concept* and *Military Doctrine*; it thus constitutes a grand strategic level conception of Russia's maritime interests. This means that the development of naval policy is occurring within an established wider national policy context predicated on the attainment of mid-to-long term objectives.

This is important because, if Russia is to successfully achieve its desired level of maritime power, it will require sustained long-term investment. In this regard, the setting out of naval and wider military modernisation objectives, in conjunction with the articulation of a new defence industrial policy and federal programme for defence industrial development, backed by defined levels of annual funding, indicates that sustained investment will be forthcoming. In the naval context, the decision to commence construction of one nuclear-powered multipurpose submarine per year from 2011<sup>288</sup> points to a sustainable submarine growth path due to there being clarity with regard to both naval and industrial planning. Similarly, at the broader naval-industrial level, the coordination of naval doctrine and shipbuilding plans should contribute to the attainment of a coherent and sustainable naval rearmament effort.

The long-term prospects for the Russian Navy will also depend on continuing political support for the Navy and the vision of the Russian Armed Forces currently espoused. President Medvedev and his predecessor and current Prime Minister Vladimir Putin appear to support the expansion of Russian seapower. In addition, the role of the Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov is interesting in this regard. He is head of the Maritime Collegium (the coordinating body for maritime activities) and is responsible for the military-industrial complex. As Defence Minister, he promulgated the document *The Priority Tasks of the Development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation* which prioritised air and naval operations over land warfare and espoused power projection and long-range 'fire for effect' as key goals. As discussed above, these ideas are central tenets of the ongoing military reform and modernisation effort in Russia.

An increasingly significant factor in Russian national policy and one which will ensure a substantial, potentially central, role for the Russian Navy is the Arctic. President Medvedev in 2008 described the Arctic thus:

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<sup>287</sup> 'Russia may develop fully-fledged fleet by 2050', *RIA Novosti*, 24 July 2010, [http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20100724/159934551.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100724/159934551.html).

<sup>288</sup> 'Russia to lay down one multipurpose submarine a year from 2011'.

This region has strategic importance for our country and that its development has a direct bearing on our efforts to implement our long-term national development goals and make our country competitive on global markets...Our biggest task now is to turn the Arctic into Russia's resource base for the twenty-first century. Reaching this goal requires us first to resolve a whole number of specific issues. The main issue is that of reliably protecting our national interests in the region.<sup>289</sup>

It is reported that the forthcoming revised *Maritime Doctrine* will highlight the Arctic and the Russian Navy as the principal actor for ensuring Russia's interests in the region.<sup>290</sup> This highlights a key point. If the Arctic is a core Russian national interest, and a Navy-led maritime strategy the primary means of ensuring the security of Russian interests in the Arctic, Russian national strategy in the twenty-first century will be to a notable extent, based on maritime interests. This is further indicated by the significant increase in the share of the strategic deterrent contributed by the naval strategic nuclear forces; up from the current 560 warheads to 1008 by circa 2020. This points to an increasing prominence of the Russian Navy within Russian military and grand strategy. It also highlights the evolving nature of the Russian Armed Forces and one which is emphasised within the military modernisation programme; that is, a shift from being a predominantly land-centric force with supporting naval and air arms to a balanced air, naval and land force capable of protecting Russian interests globally.

The ambition underpinning the long-term vision for the Russian Navy is its development into a global naval force and the recognition of Russia as a great maritime power. It will require a considerable investment in financial and human resources and time but it is based on a coherent and well-articulated conceptual foundation. It will remain to be seen whether the grandiose vision of the future Russian Navy will be realised but the prospects for Russian seapower do appear positive.

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<sup>289</sup> President Dmitri Medvedev, 'Speech at Meeting of the Russian Security Council on Protecting Russia's National Interests in the Arctic', 17 September 2008,

[http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/09/17/1945\\_type82912type82913\\_206564.shtml](http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/09/17/1945_type82912type82913_206564.shtml).

<sup>290</sup> 'New Russian Maritime Strategy highlights Arctic', *Barents Observer*, 5 February 2009, <http://www.barentsobserver.com/index.php?id=4554994&cat=16175>.

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ISBN 978-1-905962-86-0



**Published By:**

**Defence Academy of the**  
**United Kingdom**

Defence Academy of the UK  
R013 Greenhill House  
Shrivenham  
SN6 8LA  
England

Telephone: (44) 1793 785534  
Fax: (44) 1793 785953  
Email: [Publications.hq@da.mod.uk](mailto:Publications.hq@da.mod.uk)  
<http://www.da.mod.uk/r-and-a-b>

**ISBN 978-1-905962-86-0**