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U.S. Navy Fires Sailors for Drinking in Vladivostok

By The Moscow Times

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The skipper of a U.S. Navy frigate and three officers have been fired after an investigation found they had engaged in drunken behavior and misconduct during a recent port visit in Vladivostok, the Navy said.

Commander Joseph Darlak was relieved of command of the USS Vandegrift in Guam after an investigation determined that several of the ship's officers had been drunk and disorderly during the September visit, a spokeswoman said Saturday.

"The officers demonstrated poor judgment including some officers being drunk [and] disorderly, and not adhering to established liberty policies," said Commander Tamsen Reese, spokeswoman for the Naval Surface Force Pacific.

The Navy also relieved the ship's executive officer, operations officer and chief engineer from their duties "for personal conduct and use of alcohol," Reese said.

The Navy Times reported that it was the fleet's first mass firing stemming from a liberty port visit since March 2011.

Darlak and the other three officers were being temporarily re-assigned to fleet operations San Diego "pending potential other administrative actions," Reese said.

The Vandegrift left San Diego in May for a seven-month deployment to the western Pacific and docked in Vladivostok on Sept. 21 for a visit, during which the misconduct occurred.

Darlak, a 1990 Naval Academy graduate, took command of the Vandegrift in Singapore in July. He was the ship's 17th commanding officer.

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