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Black Sea Fleet to Keep Sochi Olympics Safe

By The Moscow Times

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The Black Sea Fleet will be tasked with ensuring the safety of athletes and spectators at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said in a statement Monday.

Shoigu did not go into details of what the fleet's responsibilities would entail, but said that some of the security equipment is still being built.

"Our task is to bring them into operation in time," Shoigu said.

But this goal could be difficult to achieve considering the current delays in the repairs and upkeep of Russian navy vessels.

The Defense Ministry set aside 54 billion rubles ($1.6 billion) for the repair and maintenance of its ships for the period from 2011 to 2013. Work is to be carried out on 889 ships this year.

"Many of the ships and vessels have numerous restrictions on the use of weapons

and military equipment," Shoigu said.

However, state orders are regularly delayed, according to the minister. The majority of the ships that go for repairs spend four to five years at the facilities instead of the pre-agreed two years.

The state's orders for 2011 to 2012 are still not fully completed, the statement said.

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