

Russia's First Borei Class Submarine 'Almost Combat-Ready'

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Then-President Dmitry Medvedev overseeing Yuri Dolgoruky's sea trials in 2009

The lead boat in Russia's new class of nuclear ballistic missile submarines, the Yuri Dolgoruky, could begin combat patrols this year, the head of Russia's Northern Fleet said.

The Borei class vessel, named after Moscow's founder, has already completed sea trials and will be ready later this year once it has been equipped with Bulava intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs, Northern Fleet Commander Alexander Moiseyev said Wednesday.

The second boat in the class, the Alexander Nevsky, joined the fleet in December, the third is currently undergoing sea trials, while the fourth is still under construction, RIA Novosti reported.

At the Alexander Nevsky's commissioning ceremony in December 2013, President Vladimir Putin said that "vehicles of this class will be the core of the seaborne component of our nuclear triad," Voice of Russia reported.

Putin also said that eight of the Borei class submarines will join the fleet by 2020, replacing the aging Typhoon class submarines and the Delta-III and Delta-IV submarines, which had been the mainstay of Soviet sea-based nuclear deterrence since the 1970s.

The Borei class submarines are slightly smaller than the 175-meter Typhoons, the largest submarines ever constructed, measuring 170 meters in length. They will carry 16 Bulava ICBMs outfitted with 10 independently targeting nuclear warheads.

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