The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Bombers Did Not Carry Nuclear Weapons to British Borders – Military Source

By The Moscow Times

February 02, 2015



Russia has ramped up its long-range aircraft patrol activity over the last year.

Two Russian Tu-95 strategic bombers that skirted British airspace above the English Channel last week were not carrying nuclear warheads, Russia's state-run RIA Novosti news agency quoted a military source as saying on Monday.

British tabloid The Express on Sunday cited a source in the British defense ministry as saying that one of the Russian bombers was outfitted with a nuclear tipped submarine-killing missile capable of hunting down Britain's Vanguard-class nuclear subs from the sky.

RIA's source slammed the report: "We fly without armaments," he said. "This is false information aimed at provoking us."

The Russian bomber flight comes as an upsurge in violence in eastern Ukraine has raised

tensions between Moscow and the West, with both sides accusing the other of spurring the confrontation.

Russia has ramped up its long-range aircraft patrol activity over the last year, with NATO reporting over 100 intercepts of Russian aircraft operating near the alliance's airspace, a threefold increase over 2013.

In an interview with a German television station last year, President Vladimir Putin justified the increased aerial activity as an answer to similar practices by NATO nations, especially the United States, which still sends its B-52 strategic bombers on regular long-range patrols along Russian airspace.

The Russian Defense Ministry has said it will extend the breadth of its strategic bomber coverage in the future, extending into the eastern Pacific and western Atlantic Oceans.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has downplayed concerns that the moves are provocative, ensuring that they are conducted in accordance with international regulations over neutral waters.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/02/02/russian-bombers-did-not-carry-nuclear-weapons-to-british-borders-military-source-a43463