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Wanted: Five Dolphins for the Russian Defense Ministry

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Russia's Defense Ministry is seeking to buy five dolphins, and is willing pay up to 1.75 million rubles ($25,000) for them, according to an ad posted Wednesday on the government procurement website.

The ministry is specifically looking for bottlenose dolphins, two females and three males, aged between three and five years, ranging in body length from 2.3 meters to 2.7 meters, all healthy and exhibiting "motional activity," the description on the Zakupki.gov.ru website said.

The dolphins will be used for the "needs of the Defense Ministry," the ad said, without specifying what the ministry planned to do with the animals.

Documents to be submitted by bidders must include a certificate demonstrating that the dolphins had been caught within the past two years, and listing the time, place and means of the capture, the documents accompanying the ad said.

Capturing bottlenose dolphins must comply with regulations on catching sea mammals for

“scientific, research, cultural, educational and other non-commercial purposes,” and those who catch them must hold a license for capturing animals from endangered species, the documents said.

“Capture of bottlenose dolphins must be conducted in the presence of a veterinarian specializing in marine mammals, while transportation of dolphins must be conducted by freight carriers in baths with seawater,” documents said.

The dolphins for the Defense Ministry will be transported to Sevastopol, according to the documents. The port city is the base of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, located on the Crimea peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

Bottlenose dolphins are the best-known and most common members of the oceanic dolphin family, renowned for their cognitive ability and curiosity about interacting with humans.

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