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Russia Deploys Amphibious Troops to Guard Kerch Bridge – Report

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Russian officials tasked with guarding one of the Kremlin's most high-profile political projects have reportedly employed underwater tactics in a bid to deter potential terrorists.

In a move better-suited to a James Bond blockbuster, an underwater taskforce armed with amphibious rifles has been formed to protect Russia's infamous Kerch bridge, Russian tabloid Izvestia reported Friday, citing an anonymous source within the security services.

Troops from Russia's National Guard will reportedly fight off would-be saboteurs and hunt for explosives at the base of the bridge, which will connect the annexed Crimean Peninsula with the Russian mainland.

Due for completion in 2018, the bridge will stretch for over 19 kilometers and accommodate

both trains and cars. The construction site is currently guarded by military counter-sabotage detachments of the Black Sea Fleet.

With its current budget of over 200 billion rubles ($3.4 billion) — and its significant political symbolism — the bridge has been dubbed "too big to fail."

During a visit to the construction site early in 2016, President Vladimir Putin threatened "to hang" anyone who doesn't deliver results on the project.

Several detachments of National Guard combat divers already protect strategically important bridges and hydroelectric power stations, Izvestia reported.

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