

World's Largest Nuclear Icebreaker Starts Sea Trials

By [The Barents Observer](#)

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Rosatomflot

Painted in the Russia's flag's tricolor, the new Arktika sailed out to the Gulf of Finland on Thursday for a two-day test voyage.

During sea trials, the icebreaker will test its ballast system, navigation equipment, anchors and electric installations as well as maneuvering characteristics, Rosatomflot informs.

Arktika is the lead vessel in the new class of powerful nuclear-powered icebreakers of which five will be built.

The 173-meter-long and 34-meter-wide Project 22220 (LK60Ya) class is the largest and most powerful icebreakers in the world, providing 60 MW to the shafts. The two RITM-200 reactors on board have a thermal power capacity of 175 MW each.

Vyacheslav Ruksha, the head of Russia's Northern Sea Route directorate, told the

Kommersant business daily on Wednesday that the first sea trials will happen without the reactors running.

"We didn't have time to complete the launch [of the reactors]... This first part will be with backup generators," Ruksha said but declined to comment on which problems are the reason for the delayed startup of the icebreaker's main power source, the reactors.

"The universal nuclear icebreaker of Project 22220 are equipped with the most advanced electric propulsion systems," Rosatomflot Director Mustafa Kashka said in a news update posted on the state-owned company's portal.

Related article: [Russia Plans New Icebreakers, Ports and Satellites for Northern Sea Route](#)

A second, and longer, test voyage is planned for March-April before the icebreaker will sail around Scandinavia later this year to its homeport in Murmansk on Russia's Barents Sea coast.

The main waters of operation will be from the Kara Sea and further east along the Northern Sea Route.

The two other icebreakers of the class that are under construction at the yard in St. Petersburg, the Ural and Sibir are expected to be commissioned in 2021 and 2022. Contracts for icebreaker No. 4 and 5 in the class are signed, but construction has not yet started.

The new Arktika icebreaker is named after the former which was sailing from 1975 to 2008. On Aug. 17th, 1977, the old Arktika became the first surface vessel to reach the North Pole.

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