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Russian Jailed for Sharing Military Secrets With CIA – TASS

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Sergei Konkov / TASS

A Russian citizen who worked on naval ships has been sentenced to 13 years in prison for attempting to pass military secrets to the CIA, the state-run TASS news agency reported Friday.

Yury Yeshchenko is accused of trying to share confidential information about advanced weaponry of the Russian Navy's Northern Fleet. According to the report, Yeshchenko worked at a radioelectronic maintenance systems provider for the Northern Fleet's warships in its headquarters of Severomorsk, a closed town in the Arctic.

"He purposely copied secret documentation for Northern Fleet weapons systems in 2015-17," TASS quoted the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB)'s public relations center as saying.

Yeshchenko established contact with the CIA in 2019, the FSB told TASS. He was reportedly detained in the western region of Bryansk while trying to pass state secrets to an unnamed foreign intelligence service in July 2019.

A Bryansk court found Yeshchenko guilty of committing high treason and sentenced him Tuesday to 13 years in a high-security colony, it added.

Yeshchenko reportedly pleaded guilty in court.

News of the conviction comes one day after the U.S. Justice Department said a former U.S. Army Special Forces officer pleaded guilty to charges of spying for Russia.

Prosecutors said U.S.-born Green Beret Peter Rafael Dzibinsk Debbins, 45, was recruited by Russia as early as 1996. Debbins was alleged to have provided Russian intelligence information about his U.S. Army chemical and Special Forces units in 2008.

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