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Russia Seizes Tugboats from Danish Shipper Maersk Unit

By AFP

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maersksupplyservice.com

Russia has seized four tugboats belonging to a subsidiary of Danish shipping giant Maersk in Russia's Far East, according to the group, which ceased operations in the country after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

"On April 25 we were informed a local court has ordered the tugboats cannot leave Russia and also transferred custody of the tugboats to a third party," Maersk said in a statement on Wednesday.

The four vessels, owned by Maersk unit Svitzer, were operating on a long-term contract for the Sakhalin-2 oil and gas project in Russia's Far East.

Maersk tried unsuccessfully to divest the operation for a year before abandoning its efforts in mid-April and suspending its services.

But port authorities ordered the local crews and tugboats to continue to operate, before seizing the vessels, Maersk said.

"Since then, all (of) Svitzer's employees in Russia have resigned, and Svitzer is no longer operating the four tugs," Maersk said, describing the situation as "untenable."

"Efforts to resolve the matter are ongoing."

In June, the Kremlin handed control of Sakhalin-2, in which Japanese companies hold stakes, to a Russian group.

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