

Russia Probes Explosion on Oil Tanker

By [AFP](#)

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The Koala ship **Aleksandr Drozdenko** / [Telegram](#)

An explosion Sunday on an oil tanker at a port in northwest Russia forced the crew to evacuate and was being investigated, the country's Federal Agency for Sea and Inland Water Transport (Rosmorrechflot) [said](#).

The Rosmorrechflot wrote on Telegram that "an explosion took place in the engine room" of the Koala ship in Ust-Luga port west of St. Petersburg on Sunday morning.

It said the crew fled the vessel, but the blast did not cause "a spill of the cargo or a leak of oil products," and there was no risk of the ship sinking.

"The appropriate agencies are investigating the incident," it said, and the ship's condition would be inspected.

Ship tracking site Vesselfinder showed that the Koala, built in 2023 and flying the Antigua and Barbuda flag, arrived at Ust-Luga on Thursday.

Russia's Baza Telegram channel [wrote](#) that the ship is carrying 130,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil.

Two tankers carrying oil were wrecked in the Black Sea in December, causing a massive spill of fuel that is still washing up ashore.

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The United States in January designated more than 180 Russian ships it assesses to be part of Russia's "shadow fleet" exporting crude oil despite Western sanctions. The Koala is not on this list.

Ukraine's security services in January claimed to have used drones to strike a fuel terminal at Ust-Luga, saying that "through it, Russia sells oil and gas with the help of the 'shadow fleet.'"

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