

Finnish Prosecutors Charge Ship Officers Over Alleged Baltic Sea Cable Sabotage

By [AFP](#)

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The Eagle S oil tanker in Porvoo, Finland. **Htm (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

Finnish prosecutors have charged the captain and two officers of a ship believed to be part of Russia's "shadow fleet" with sabotaging five undersea cables in the Baltic Sea last December.

The Cook Islands-registered oil tanker Eagle S allegedly dragged its anchor along the seabed for about 90 kilometers (56 miles), damaging the cables in the Gulf of Finland, prosecutors said Monday.

The captain and two officers face charges of "aggravated criminal mischief and aggravated interference with communications." Their nationalities were not disclosed.

Finnish authorities launched a criminal investigation after the EstLink 2 submarine power cable and four telecommunications cables connecting Finland to Estonia were damaged on

Dec. 25, causing at least 60 million euros (\$70 million).

The Eagle S is believed to be part of Russia's network of aging tankers used to evade oil export sanctions. The incident posed a "serious risk" to Finland's energy supply and telecommunications, authorities said.

The defendants deny wrongdoing and argue Finland has no jurisdiction because the cables were damaged outside its territorial waters.

Several Baltic Sea cables were damaged in 2023, incidents that some experts describe as part of a Russian "hybrid war" against Western countries. Since then, NATO has stepped up Baltic Sea surveillance.

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