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Yacht Linked to Putin Sails Through Danish Waters Escorted by Russian Warships

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A luxury yacht widely reported to be linked to Russian President Vladimir Putin sailed through Danish waters on Monday under the escort of two Russian naval vessels, Danish broadcaster DR reported.

The 82-meter Graceful crossed the Great Belt strait overnight and was later spotted passing the Danish island of Anholt before heading toward Grenen, the northern tip of the Jutland peninsula, DR reported. The convoy was being shadowed by the Danish Navy patrol vessel P521 Freja.

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According to DR, Graceful was accompanied by a Russian destroyer and a patrol ship. The yacht's destination has not been disclosed.

Danish military officials told DR that monitoring vessels transiting the country's straits, including foreign state ships, is routine.

The convoy had also been tracked by the German coast guard before entering Danish waters on Sunday, the broadcaster said.

Graceful's Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponder has been switched off since Aug. 30, 2022, according to DR, making the vessel difficult to track electronically. Despite that, the yacht has been sighted periodically in St. Petersburg and elsewhere in the Baltic Sea.

International media outlets, including Forbes, have linked Graceful to Putin, though the Kremlin has never acknowledged ownership. Forbes has estimated the yacht's value at around 100 million euros ($117 million).

The vessel was undergoing maintenance in the German port of Hamburg before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and departed on Feb. 7, 2022 — 17 days before Russian troops crossed the Ukrainian border.

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