



This update of improvements to capabilities (and challenges) in Russia's Northern Fleet over the last 18 months was prepared using ChatGPT as the primary research tool. It's sources are cited wherever possible.

Modernisation and Enhanced Capabilities

1. Submarines

Yasen-M Class (Project 885M)

In December 2024, the Arkhangelsk nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine was commissioned into the Northern Fleet. This is the fleet's third Yasen-class submarine, equipped with Kalibr, Oniks, and Tsirkon missiles, bolstering its strike capabilities. Sources :High North News, Naval News, Izvestia, Etterretningstjenesten,Ã,Ã <https://debuglies.com>

Borei-A Class (Project 955A)

The Knyaz Pozharsky, a strategic ballistic missile submarine, was launched in early 2024. Armed with 16 Bulava ICBMs, it increas Russia's nuclear deterrent in the Arctic region. Source

:High North News, Izvestia, <https://debuglies.com>

Lada Class (Project 677)

The diesel-electric submarine Kronshtadt joined the fleet in January 2024. Equipped with Kalibr missiles, it offers improved stealth and versatility for coastal defense and reconnaissance missions. Sources :<https://debuglies.com> , Izvestia, gfsis.org

2. Surface Fleet

Admiral Golovko Frigate

Commissioned in December 2023, this Admiral Gorshkov-class frigate is armed with Kalibr, Oniks, and Tsirkon missiles, along with advanced air defense systems, enhancing the fleet's multi-role capabilities. Source :<https://debuglies.com>

Project 23550 Arctic Patrol Vessels

The Nikolai Zubov, launched in December 2024, is the second in this class designed for Arctic operations. With reinforced hulls and the ability to operate in ice up to 1.7 meters thick, these vessels support patrol, logistics, and potential missile deployment roles. Source : Naval News

3. Aerial and Unmanned Systems

Mixed Arctic Aviation Corps

Established in December 2023, this corps integrates fighter regiments, anti-submarine helicopters, and mixed aviation units, enhancing aerial surveillance and defense in the Arctic.
Source: gfsis.org

Unmanned Underwater Vehicles

The fleet is integrating advanced systems like the Poseidon nuclear-powered underwater drone, capable of delivering strategic payloads to expand its deterrence and operational reach..
Source : [ArcticToday](https://arctictoday.com)

Maritime Surveillance and Deterrence

The fleet has increased its patrols in the North Atlantic, aiming to deter NATO forces and secure maritime routes.. Source : [Etterretningstjenesten](https://etterretningstjenesten.no)

Submarine Deployments

Yasen-M class submarines have been active in projecting power and gathering intelligence, supporting operations related to the Ukraine conflict. Sources : [Izvetia](https://izvetia.com), [Naval News](https://navalnews.com), <https://debuglies.com>

Operational Challenges

Despite advancements, the Northern Fleet faces several hurdles: Source : [The Barents](https://thebarents.com)

Observer

Maintenance Backlogs

Aging infrastructure and limited shipyard capacities have led to delays in vessel maintenance, affecting operational readiness. Source : The Barents Observer, rcinet.ca

Resource Allocation

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has strained resources, leading to difficult choices between fleet expansion and maintenance.. Source : The Barents Observer, rcinet.ca

Command Structure Reorganization

Reverting to the Soviet-era military district model has introduced integration challenges, potentially impacting coordination and efficiency. Source : Arctic Institute