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Fire injures several aboard Russia's only aircraft carrier

By
Clyde Hughes

The Russian aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov caught fire in an Arctic port on Thursday, officials in Moscow said. File Photo by Russian Defense Ministry/EPA-EFE

Dec. 12 (UPI) -- Several people were hospitalized Thursday after a fire started aboard Russia's only aircraft carrier in an Arctic port, authorities said.

The vessel Admiral Kuznetsov caught fire at a dock in Murmansk, in Russia's far northwestern corner, near its border with Finland. At least eight were taken to the hospital with injuries and a few others were unaccounted for, The Moscow Times reported. The Russian Emergencies Ministry cited three injured. Crews were doing repair work on the ship, in a power unit, when smoke was spotted on the upper deck. One report said power lines had caught fire.

The fire, fueled by diesel fuel, grew quickly but was eventually brought under control.

"There is no open combustion," Alexei Rakhmanov, the head of the United Shipbuilding Corporation, said. "The temperature in adjacent compartments does not exceed the permissible level."

Specialists from the Zvyozdochka ship repair center were evacuated from the vessel. Murmansk is about 930 miles north of Moscow.

The Kuznetsov has been at sea since the mid-1980s, but has spent a significant amount of time undergoing repairs.