

Russian Factory Trawler Catches Fire and Sinks



Enigma Astralis (file image via social media)

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A Russian search team has located the wreck of the fishing vessel *Enigma Astralis*, which disappeared in the Sea of Okhotsk last weekend after catching fire. On January 21, a fire broke out in the engine room of the 3,000 dwt factory trawler *Enigma Astralis* off the coast of Magadan, Russia. The 47-member crew was evacuated safely to a nearby good samaritan vessel.

Firefighting was initially delayed due to the risk of an explosion from the vessel's refrigeration plant, according to Russian emergency response officials. At least one explosion was observed from response vessels, according to TASS. As the days passed, a storm arrived, further hampering attempts to fight the fire and salvage the ship. The *Enigma Astralis* disappeared from radar contact on January 26, and the response team launched a search for her with 11 vessels.

A trawler detected what is believed to be the *Enigma Astralis*' hull using sonar over the weekend. On Monday, the Federal Agency for Maritime and River Transport concluded that the wreck's signature is indeed that of the *Enigma Astralis*.

Russia's Far Eastern Transport Prosecutor's Office is investigating the circumstances of the fire, including a review of the vessel's statutory compliance.

The 2001-built *Enigma Australis* (ex name Adalsteinn Jonsson II) was operated by Moscow-based Fareastern Catching Company.