US and Russian Coast Guards Sign Cooperation Pact

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Rosemarie Alexander/KTOO

U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral Thomas Ostebo and his Russian counterpart Lieutenant General Rafael Daerbaev Wednesday signed an agreement calling for continued cooperation on law enforcement in the Arctic, Bering Sea and North Pacific.

Daerbaev is chief of the Northeast Border Guard of the Russian Federal Security Service. He and other Russian Coast Guardsmen have been in Juneau this week to review recent joint operations with the U.S. and develop a future plan.

Ostebo called this week's work "a great representation of the cooperation" between the two Coast Guards.

US-RUS 1 :12 At the end of the day we all share the same ocean and the same maritime border that we wish to protect, preserve and ensure the safety of our mariners on.

The 17th Coast Guard and Northeast Border Guard coordinate international fisheries enforcement operations and responses to accidents at sea as well as law enforcement along the U.S. and Russian Maritime Boundary Line in the Bering Sea.

Daerbaev said Russia and the U.S. not only share the sea, but the Coast Guards are organized by the same work.

US-RUS 2 :12 And our work helps to expand cooperation between Russia and the USA.

Daerbaev said the U.S. has provided aircraft support for several Border Guard missions in the last six months. The two agencies also worked together on the Bangun Perkasa (Ban-goon Per-kah-sah) pirate ship, seized last September for illegal fishing.

The agencies are updating a joint operations manual and working on an agreement to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing. Ostebo says the cooperative efforts between Russians and U.S. in the North Pacific, the Bering Sea and the Arctic are like a police officer with a radar gun.

US-RUS 3 :19 The cooperation bet the Russians and the United States to have a presence on the maritime boundary line and to have a response presence there is well known in the fishing community so I think that's the real benefit. It's not to catch people in the act. It's to prevent them from doing it in the first place.
By them understanding that we are there.

The two agencies meet twice a year to review their Joint Action Plan -- in Alaska in the spring, and in Russia in the fall. Similar meetings have taken place since 1995.

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