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<https://www.yahoo.com/finance/news/russia-going-deploy-division-troops-200127157.html>

**Russia will deploy a division of troops about 50 miles
from the US**

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At a recent event, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that a division of troops would be stationed in Chukotka, Russia's far-east region, just slightly more than 50 miles from Alaska.

"There are plans to form a coastal defense division in 2018 on the Chukotka operational direction," said Shoigu.

He said that the deployment was "to ensure control of the closed sea zones of the Kuril Islands and the Bering Strait, cover the routes of Pacific Fleet forces' deployment in the Far Eastern and Northern sea zones, and increase the combat viability of naval strategic nuclear forces."

Japan and Russia dispute ownership of the northern Kuril Islands, where Russia plans to deploy missile-defense batteries. The Bering Strait is the narrow waterway that separates Alaska from Russia.

Broadly, Russia has taken the lead in militarizing and exploring the Arctic region, as melting ice caps open up new shipping lanes between the East and West. In that context, the deployment of a division to the sparsely populated Chukotka region makes sense.

In the past, Russia has bemoaned NATO and US troop deployments near to its borders. How the US will respond to this deployment remains to be seen.