

# News story: UK maritime forces visit Vietnam with French naval task group

Around 60 Royal Navy and Royal Marines are currently taking part in a five-month French naval deployment to the Indian Ocean and Far East, aboard French assault ship FS Mistral.

The arrival of UK maritime personnel in Ho Chi Minh City further strengthens the UK's Defence relationship with Vietnam, and while docked, UK sailors and marines, alongside French colleagues, will meet with personnel from the Vietnam People's Navy to compare national maritime operating procedures and exchange experiences.

Two Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopters are also embarked with France's annual Jeanne d'Arc naval deployment, which will include port calls in Singapore, Sri Lanka, Japan, Guam and Australia.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mike Penning said:

"Alongside French forces, our world class Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel are flying the flag for Britain in Vietnam, one of our important partners in the region.

"This deployment continues to show the flexibility of our Armed Forces to work with our partners, particularly with France, and contribute to international maritime security."

The UK continues to work globally alongside Vietnam, both of our countries contributing personnel to the UN peacekeeping mission South Sudan.

Additionally, the UK regularly carries out Defence Engagement with Vietnam, and last year a Royal Navy dental team deployed as part of Pacific Partnerships 16, a multinational capacity building exercise led by the US. This year a small team of Army medics will travel to Vietnam to take part in Pacific Partnerships 17.

During the Jeanne d'Arc deployment, UK maritime personnel will also take part in multilateral amphibious exercises. This reflects our commitment to exercise at the highest levels with close partners in the Asia Pacific region, including Japan and the US, and demonstrates the UK's ability to operate seamlessly alongside French forces in particular.