

Press release: Royal Navy's new offshore patrol vessel named HMS Tamar

HMS Tamar, the fourth of the Royal Navy's five cutting-edge new Offshore Patrol Vessels, has been formally named in Glasgow today.

The next-generation River Class ship will boost Britain's counter-terrorism and anti-smuggling work and provide essential support to defence operations.

The 90-metre vessel, which is equipped with a 30mm cannon and flight deck capable of accommodating a Merlin helicopter, is part of a five-strong OPV contract with BAE Systems, worth a combined £635m.

Minister for Defence Procurement Stuart Andrew said:

From patrolling our coastlines and protecting UK waters, to anti-smuggling and counter terrorism operations, these ships are a key part of our Royal Navy fleet.

Today's naming marks an important milestone in HMS Tamar's programme ahead of starting sea trials and being accepted into operational service next year.

At Scotstoun today, the ship's sponsor, Lady Peach, officially named HMS Tamar by pressing a button to smash a bottle of Camel Valley 'Cornwall' Brut against the hull – in recognition of the ship being affiliated to Cornwall.

All the vessels are initially constructed in BAE System's Govan yard, before being moved to their Scotstoun site to be fitted out with their systems ahead of rigorous sea trials.

Alongside the Type 26 anti-submarine frigate programme, the Royal Navy work has filled the Glasgow shipyards' order books until the early 2030s, protecting 1,700 Scottish jobs and supporting a further 2,300 roles across the nation through the supply chain.

Sir Simon Bollom, chief executive for Defence, Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement agency, said:

HMS Tamar continues the legacy of ships being built on the Clyde for the Royal Navy and will perform a vital role defending the UK's interests.

It is great news that we are celebrating this milestone alongside

our partners in the Royal Navy and BAES.

We look forward to the delivery of the remaining OPVs and the further progress on the Type 26 build programme.

All the Batch 2 OPVs, named HMS Forth, HMS Medway, HMS Trent, HMS Tamar and HMS Spey, are set to be delivered to the Royal Navy by the end of 2020.

Last year it was announced by Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson that the Batch 1 Offshore Patrols Vessels, HMS Tyne, HMS Mersey and HMS Severn, which currently support the Fishery Protection Squadron, would also be retained for at least the next two years.