

RAF trains alongside Royal Navy over the Black Sea

ROYAL AIR FORCE TRAINS ALONGSIDE ROYAL NAVY OVER THE BLACK SEA

Typhoon

aircraft from the Royal Air Force currently based, in Eastern Romania have been testing the air defence capabilities of HMS Duncan, a Royal Navy Type 45 destroyer which is leading the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Black Sea.

The Four

Typhoons from 3(F) Squadron were tasked to test the capability of HMS Duncan in controlling air defence and anti-surface warfare. During the exercise the ship's crew had the opportunity to control some of the jets to defend the destroyer from air attack and at the same time practice launching an air attack on other surface ships.



HMS

Duncan's Senior Warfare Officer Lt Cdr Michael Waters said: "Opportunities for

Type 45 to work with the RAF Typhoons are few and far between, even in the UK.

The chance to operate with 135 EAW, and for HMS Duncan to control live aircraft

in the execution of both Air-Air and Air-Surface missions was invaluable and proved our interoperability while both were tasked to NATO in the Black Sea."

Flight

Lieutenant Brett Fusco, from 3(F) Squadron, co-ordinated 135 EAW's participation

and who flew during the exercise explained what happened. He said: "There were

two elements, their fighter controllers on board practiced controlling us against an air threat while one of us was acting as the threat and two of us were on Combat Air Patrol protecting the ship.

"The other

element was conducting Anti Surface Forces Air Operations (ASFAOs) using the fourth

jet. For Duncan it was a chance for them to concurrently have different elements of their crew defending against an air threat whilst controlling an

anti-surface
operation.”



Following the
conclusion of the exercise there was an opportunity for an exchange with 18
RAF
personnel visiting HMS Duncan for a tour of the ship and 15 RN personnel
being
hosted at MK Air base.

Flt Lt Gemma
Bean, the 135 EAW Detachment Administrative Officer said: “It was really
interesting. It was the first time I’ve ever been on a RN ship. Just to see
how
their lifestyle compares to ours was eye-opening. We saw everything from
their helicopter, the operations centre to the bridge and the weapons
systems.”
She reflected on the similarities of
operations, adding: “They are also on NATO ops. It was interesting to see
how
they conduct theirs working with different nations, liaising with host
nations
and how everything fits together as a NATO package.”



Petty
Officer Tim Rumble, from HMS Duncan said: “It was great to have the
opportunity to visit an Expeditionary Air Wing deployed with NATO and offered
a
fascinating insight into the way our RAF colleagues operate. I particularly
enjoyed
seeing the aircraft up close as well as the unique facilities at MK
Airbase.”

The RAF has deployed 135 Expeditionary
Air Wing, from RAF Leeming with four Typhoon aircraft, from RAF Coningsby,
to
western Romania until the end of August as part of a four-month NATO mission
to
enhance air policing. At the same time the Portsmouth-based Type 45
Destroyer,
HMS Duncan has been tasked in the Black Sea leading the Standing NATO
Maritime
Group 2, providing reassurance and deterrence in the Black Sea, as well as
commanding NATO’s counter migration activity in the Aegean.

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