

News story: UK and France complete joint counter-terror mission

Combined Task Force 150 (CTF150) polices more than 3 million square miles of sea in order to track down vessels smuggling weapons and drugs and other substances that fund or support terrorism, as well as providing reassurance to ships using the waters.

Between April and June, British, French, US and Australian warships, part of a multinational coalition and commanded by the Franco-British headquarters in Bahrain, scored eight drugs busts. These missions removed 1.75 tonnes of narcotics from the market and included a seizure of 265kg of heroin and 455kg of hashish by the Royal Navy Type 23 frigate, HMS Monmouth.

CTF150 is also focused on deterring and denying maritime terrorist activity in the region. This includes some of the world's most vital trade routes such as the Suez Canal and Bab Al Mandeb Strait, the latter of which saw an unsuccessful attack against a merchant vessel in May.

The headquarters staff has been made up of 24 British and French sailors and commanded by French Rear Admiral Olivier Lebas. In 2019, the task force will be commanded by a Royal Navy officer, with another combined UK-French staff.

Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster, said:

The successful joint command of CTF150, supporting our French allies, has demonstrated Britain's firm commitment to global maritime security.

From the joint leadership of this multinational task force to fighting side by side against Daesh, the UK and France are continuing to build on our historic defence relationship as we work to tackle terror on the global scale.

The Franco-British team has been directing operations since April after taking over from the Canadian Navy, and will pass on command to the Pakistan Navy this month. Navies from the Combined Maritime Forces, a coalition of 31 nations, take it in turns to lead the task force either from a command ship or the headquarters in Bahrain.

News story: From Lancashire to Texas: 10% production milestone achieved for F-35 Lightning II fighter jets

The 318th rear section for an F-35 Lightning II combat jet has rolled off the BAE Systems production line in Samlesbury, Lancashire meaning that 10% of the global requirement has now been produced.

The aft fuselage is the back part of the state-of-the-art aircraft's main body and with more than 3,000 aircraft currently on order it is estimated that 25,000 jobs will be sustained across the UK by more than 500 companies in the supply chain when at peak production.

The rear section has now transferred from BAE Systems' advanced manufacturing suite to Lockheed Martin's Final Assembly and Check Out line in Fort Worth, Texas to be connected with other major assemblies to become one of three aircraft variants. The 318th aft fuselage in particular will form part of a UK 'B' model variant of the combat jet.

This variant has the short take-off and vertical landing capability which makes it ideal for Britain's new Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) aircraft carriers. With HMS Queen Elizabeth set to enter her new home in Portsmouth imminently, the F-35B jets are on track to make their first flight trials from her deck next year.

The F-35 programme is the world's largest single defence programme, and as a key partner, the UK has been working closely with the US from the outset.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin, said:

This is an important milestone and the latest example of how the F-35 programme is benefitting the UK's defence industry, creating thousands of jobs and helping to keep Britain safer and more secure.

Britain is a leading partner in the development of the F-35, supporting not just the aircraft that will operate from RAF Marham and our two new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, but also the thousands of jets that will serve our allies around the world.

Andrea Thompson, F-35 Lightning II Director for BAE Systems Military Air & Information, said:

Reaching the 10% mark of production on the F-35 programme shows how far we have come, but also highlights that there is an enormous

amount of work still to do.

With an order book of more than 3,000 aircraft for the global F-35 fleet, the investments we are making in our advanced manufacturing facilities are key to ensuring we continue to deliver on our commitments.

To add to this, we are also working closely with our supply chain to ensure they are equipped to meet the ramp up in production at the same time as delivering against our existing commitments.

Eric Branyan, vice president of F-35 Supply Chain Management for Lockheed Martin said:

BAE Systems is a valued partner on the F-35 program, and we congratulate them on this significant milestone. The United Kingdom is the F-35 program's only tier one partner and the work of BAE Systems and other in-country suppliers has a significant positive impact on the UK economy. We look forward to many more years of partnering to deliver the most advanced and capable 5th generation fighter jet to our allies around the world.

BAE Systems is responsible for 15% of the work on each aircraft including every aft fuselage as well as other mission critical systems for the F-35 Lightning II programme.

The first operational Lightning II squadrons will be the RAF's 617 Squadron (The Dambusters) and 809 Naval Air Squadron. Combined with the QEC aircraft carriers they will transform the UK's ability to project influence overseas.

Speech: HMS Queen Elizabeth, **Portsmouth: Theresa May's Speech**

It is a great pleasure to be here with you aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth today. Let me start by thanking you all, a great partnership of ship's company and contractors, for your tremendous work putting this great ship through her paces during her sea trials. I know it's been a major undertaking.

This is the biggest and most complex warship ever built for the Royal Navy. So to test her capabilities thoroughly, and to make sure that her 17 million components are working as they should, is a very big job. The fact that she was ready to come in to port ahead of schedule is testament to your hard work.

As the first generation of sailors to form this ship's company, you have a special privilege and responsibility. You are setting the standard for those who come after you. Decades from now, when this ship is carrying our flag around the world, protecting our interests and ensuring our security, you will be able to look back on this time with pride. And the whole country is proud of you. The skill and professionalism of the Royal Navy are world-renowned. Your service is critical to our country's security and success in the world. In doing your vital work, you and your families are often called upon to make enormous sacrifices.

I know that you make them unstintingly and that you always give of your best. Britain truly has the best sailors, marines and officers in the world and I believe that you deserve the very best equipment. That is what we have with HMS Queen Elizabeth. This ship is a symbol of the United Kingdom as a great global, maritime nation.

Clearly, she is a stunning piece of twenty-first century engineering and a true testament to British shipbuilding and design. Six shipyards from across the United Kingdom contributed sections of this vessel. In Glasgow, Devon, Tyneside, Merseyside, Portsmouth and Fife, the skill of British shipbuilders were on display in her construction. Over 10,000 people, including 800 apprenticeships, 700 businesses helped build the mighty ship we see today. We are determined to build on the success of the Queen Elizabeth class carriers with a National Shipbuilding Strategy to open up new opportunities for our great British shipyards in the future.

Britain can be proud of this ship, and what it represents. It sends a clear signal that as Britain forges a new, positive, confident role for ourselves on the world stage in the years ahead, we are determined to remain a fully engaged global power, working closely with our friends and allies around the world.

As a leading member of NATO, the foremost military power in Europe and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Britain has an enduring responsibility to help sustain the international rules-based order, and to defend the liberal values which underpin it.

To ensure we can do so effectively, we will increase defence spending every year and continue to meet NATO's target to spend 2% of GDP on defence. Our carrier programme is an example of what that spending can deliver. As highly versatile and potent assets, they will be able to meet the widest range of challenges around the world. Whether the task be high intensity war fighting, targeted action to fight terrorism or humanitarian relief to save lives overseas, these ships will transform the UK's ability to project power around the world.

Alongside her supporting task-group, including state-of-the-art aircraft, helicopters and escorts, HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales will in time give the UK a truly world class carrier strike capability for decades to come. Here in Portsmouth, the home of the Royal Navy and the new home of this great ship, we are surrounded by reminders of the Royal Navy's proud past. It was from this harbour that Nelson embarked aboard HMS Victory before the

battle of Trafalgar; from here the allied forces left for the Normandy beaches to defeat fascism on D-day; and from here that the task-force set sail for the South Atlantic to liberate the Falklands.

Many times in our history we have called upon the Royal Navy to defend our island and protect our interests and those of our citizens around the world. The threats we face may have changed, and naval technology advanced beyond all recognition. But in the fifty years of service to come from this vessel, we can be inspired by those traditions to face the new challenges of the twenty-first century with the same determination and resolve which have always been the Royal Navy's hallmarks.

I hope that you can all enjoy some respite before you take the ship out of harbour again for the next phase of her sea trials, and let me once again thank you all for your service to our country.

Press release: HMS Queen Elizabeth makes debut in Portsmouth

Greeted by thousands of people lining the Portsmouth seafront, the 65,000-tonne carrier was met with the warmest of welcomes as she arrived in her home port this morning.

Sailors lined the flight deck of the largest warship ever built for the Royal Navy as she passed Portsmouth's Round Tower. HMS Queen Elizabeth was also greeted with a flypast from the Fleet Air Arm, including Wildcat and Merlin helicopters and Hawk jets.

Secretary of State for Defence Sir Michael Fallon said:

Today we welcome our mighty new warship, HMS Queen Elizabeth to her home for the very first time. She is Britain's statement to the world: a demonstration of British military power and our commitment to a bigger global role.

The thousands of people across the UK who have played a part in building her and her sister ship, HMS Prince of Wales, should be immensely proud as our future flagship enters Portsmouth. She has made good progress in sea trials and will now embark on the next phase of preparations that will see the return of Britain's carrier strike ability.

When she enters service she will help keep Britain safe at a time of increased threats, able to fill multiple roles from providing air power anywhere at any time to fight future campaigns,

supporting allies or delivering humanitarian aid.

The Carrier programme has brought together the best of British industry, with construction taking place across six cities and involving more than 10,000 people. This includes 700 businesses and suppliers, 800 apprentices and nearly 8,000 jobs at shipyards around the UK.

The UK has 11 state-of-the-art F-35 Lightning II jets and 120 UK personnel training in the United States. By the end of this year that will be 14 jets, with trial flights from the carrier's deck on track to begin next year.

Captain Jerry Kyd, the Commanding Officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth, said:

HMS Queen Elizabeth's first entry into her home port of Portsmouth is an historic, proud and exciting occasion, not only for those of us serving in her, but also for the wider Royal Navy, the city of Portsmouth and the entire nation.

The UK's future flagship, as well her sister ship HMS Prince of Wales, will be powerful symbols of Britain's outward facing global character and ambition. The Royal Navy has a very special relationship with Portsmouth dating back half a millennium and both carriers will ensure the Navy's city remains the focal point of our great nation's maritime power for generations to come.

The ship will berth at the newly-named and upgraded Princess Royal Jetty at Her Majesty's Naval Base Portsmouth, which will be home to both of the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers. The second, HMS Prince of Wales, will be officially named in a ceremony at Rosyth next month.

The berth has been upgraded and strengthened to support the carriers as part of a £100 million raft of infrastructure upgrades which took place ahead of the arrival of the ship.

A total of 3.2 million cubic metres of sediment, equivalent to 1,280 Olympic swimming pools has been removed from the harbour and approach channel, making it wide and deep enough to accommodate the enormous 65,000 tonne ships.

Sir Peter Gershon, Chairman of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, said:

I am incredibly proud to witness HMS Queen Elizabeth arrive at her home port of Portsmouth Naval Base having successfully completed the first phase of her sea trials programme.

Over 10,000 people have come together to bring HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales to life, from early design to the magnificent ships they are today. It is thanks to their industrious endeavours and pride that we have achieved this historic moment in the programme to bring HMS Queen Elizabeth into service.

We're excited to complete the remainder of her test and commissioning programme before delivering her to the Royal Navy by the end of the year.

Leading Airman Liam Forgeron, 28, from Portchester, is an aircraft handler on board HMS Queen Elizabeth. He said:

Being a local lad, I am extremely proud that Portsmouth will now be the base port for the nation's future flagship.

The historic port has a long and proud association with the Royal Navy and the arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth will cement this relationship for a further 50 years. As a Royal Navy aircraft handler, serving on board this mighty vessel is a real honour, as I too get to make history in my home town.

Both aircraft carriers are being delivered by the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, a partnership between the Ministry of Defence and industry.

Carrier Key Facts

- Each carrier weighs 65,000 tonnes and is 280 metres in length.
- Top speed is upwards of 25 knots.
- The carriers will have a crew of around 700, increasing to 1,600 when a full complement of F-35B aircraft and four Crowsnest helicopters are embarked.
- The flight deck is 70 metres wide and 280 metres long – enough space for three football pitches
- Each carrier keeps 45 days' worth of food in its stores.
- Each carrier is made up of 17 million parts.
- There are 364,000 metres of pipes inside each of the Ships.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- Imagery is available at Defence Imagery
 - For more information contact the MOD News Desk on 0207 218 7907 or Royal Navy communications officer Sam Bannister on 023 9262 5256 or email sam.bannister@royalnavymail.mod.uk.
 - For the latest news follow us on Twitter at @DefenceHQ.
 - Keep up with news and updates from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines by following @RoyalNavy on Twitter.
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News story: New £48m contract for workboat fleet will support UK carriers and UK jobs, Defence Minister announces

The fleet of up to 38 workboats will assist Royal Navy ships from UK bases and on operations all over the world.

With Britain's flagship [HMS Queen Elizabeth Carrier set to enter her new home in Portsmouth in under two weeks time](#), tasks to be carried out by the boats will include transferring personnel to and from both of the UK's carriers. Able to carry up to 36 passengers at one time, the workboats can be stowed inside the Carriers and winched to and from the water using on-board lifting equipment, allowing them to support the enormous ships either in port or on operations.

Building and supporting the boats will also sustain 60 British jobs, including 15 at Atlas Elektronik UK near Dorchester in Dorset where the boats will be built. A further 45 jobs will be sustained across the supply chain, including at E P Barrus in Bicester, KPM-Marine in Birmingham and Mashfords in Plymouth.

Defence Minister Harriett Baldwin said:

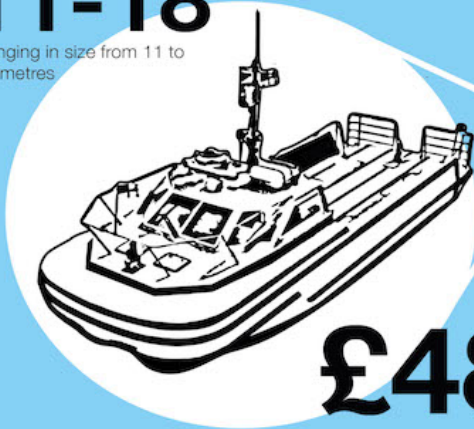
From the south coast to the banks of the Clyde, British shipbuilding is ensuring that our growing Navy has the reach it needs to protect our interests around the globe. These cutting-edge workboats will support the likes of our iconic new aircraft carriers and the Type 26 frigates, as well as sustaining 60 British jobs. This is another step in our £178 billion plan to provide our Armed Forces with the very best equipment to keep our country safe.

NEW WORKBOAT FLEET CONTRACT

Supporting Royal Navy ships worldwide

11-18

Ranging in size from 11 to 18 metres



(Scale compared to HMS Queen Elizabeth)

38

Up to 38 workboats

60

Jobs supported across the UK

£48

 million contract

Duties include:



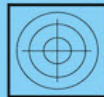
Passenger transfer for QEC Aircraft Carriers



Officer and diver training



Antarctic exploration



Hydrographic survey



Explosive ordnance disposal

Features:

- Innovative modular design for rapid repurposing
- Twin waterjet propulsion
- Glass-reinforced plastic hulls
- Common steering and control systems

Build location:
Atlas Elektronik,
Dorset



The £48m contract will support UK carriers and UK jobs.

Ranging in length from 11 to 18 metres, the boats will also perform other tasks including officer and diver training, Antarctic exploration and explosive ordnance disposal.

They are highly adaptable to operational demands thanks to their cutting-edge modular design elements. For example, if the Royal Navy wished to quickly redeploy a boat from hydrographic survey duties to support diving for explosive ordnance, the survey module can be quickly lifted out of the boat and replaced with the diving module containing the high pressure air required for that task.

The contract will enable the design and construction of up to 38 boats as well as in-service support for the fleet for a further two years after the final boat is accepted. The first boat will enter service next year.

Chief Executive Officer of Defence Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, Tony Douglas said:

These boats use modern materials and have been designed from the keel up to provide the Royal Navy with unparalleled flexibility and adaptability.

DE&S is proud to maintain excellent working relationships with partners across UK industry, ensuring our Armed Forces continue to be provided with the equipment they need while also maintaining

vital British skills and jobs.

The boats will all feature glass-reinforced plastic hulls and advanced twin waterjet propulsion. Despite their varying roles, they will all have the same steering and control system, reducing the need for training and making them simpler to operate.