

## [News story: @MODPolice Twitter launch](#)

The new MDP Twitter account can be found on the handle [@MODPolice](#).

This will supplement our existing [Ministry of Defence Police](#) (MDP) pages on the GOV.UK website, our [recruitment website](#) and our [Facebook page](#).

Speaking on the launch, MDP Deputy Chief Constable Andy Adams said:

Our Twitter account will provide us with a primary communication tool in order to raise public awareness of the MDP and enhance their understanding of what we do and the specialist policing services and capabilities that we provide.

It will also support us in connecting with the defence communities, stakeholders and customers that we serve by furnishing us with a news feed for regular messaging on continuous vigilance and success stories.

In the event of an operational incident Twitter will also present the means for us to communicate quickly and effectively with stakeholders, customers, staff, the public and the media.

Twitter will be used to support and promote MDP policing operations and wider force initiatives, including the ongoing roll-out of Project Servator.

Assistant Chief Constable Paul McLaughlin comments:

The launch of the MDP Twitter account marks a progressive step in enhancing the digital footprint of the force. Twitter will play an essential and vital role in supporting Project Servator.

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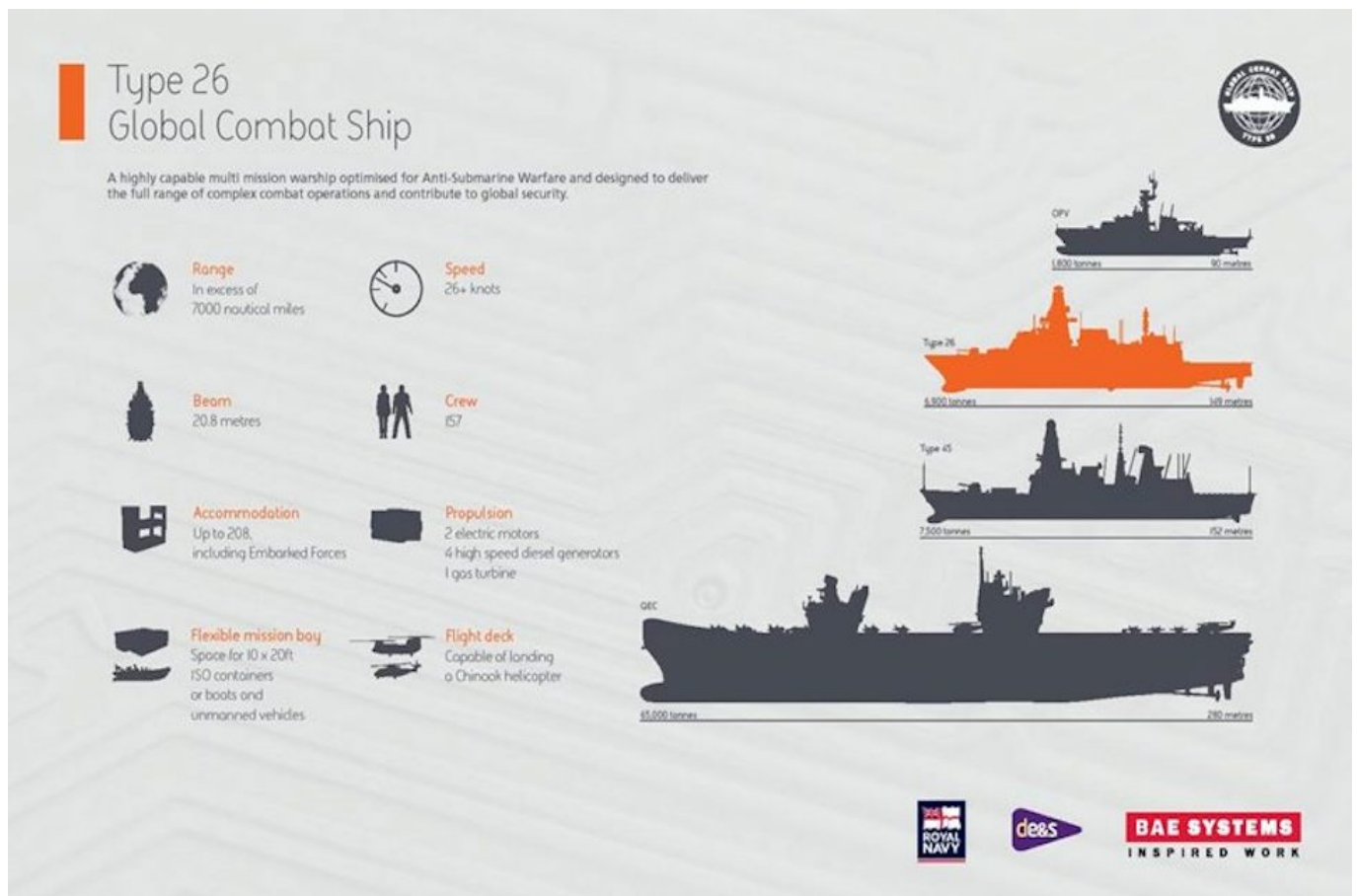
## [News story: Multi-billion pound defence deal secures thousands of UK jobs](#)

Manufacture of the first three of these new highly capable warships will secure approximately 1700 skilled shipbuilding jobs in Scotland and 1700 jobs throughout the supply chain across Britain until 2035.

## Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon said:

The Type 26 Frigate is a cutting-edge warship, combining the expertise of the British shipbuilding industry with the excellence of the Royal Navy. We will cut steel on the first ship later this month – a hugely significant milestone that delivers on our commitment to maintain our global naval power. These ships will be a force to be reckoned with, there to protect our powerful new carriers and helping keep British interests safe across the world.

Backed by a rising defence budget and a £178bn Equipment Plan, the Type 26 programme will bring vast economic benefits to Scotland and the wider UK. The contract is structured to ensure value for taxpayers' money and, importantly, now designed to protect them from extra bills from project overrun. The investment will secure hundreds of skilled jobs at BAE Systems on the Clyde for the next twenty years, and thousands of jobs in the supply chain across Britain.



The Royal Navy's new Type 26 frigate.

These world-class warships will protect the nation's nuclear deterrent and the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers, the first of which, HMS Queen Elizabeth, has recently taken to sea for the first time. The ships specialise in anti-submarine warfare, protecting the UK's overseas territories and interests across the globe. The flexible design will allow the capabilities

to be adapted throughout its lifespan to counter future threats.

The deal also reaffirms the commitment made by the Government in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR15) to build eight Type 26 ships. The contract for the second batch of five ships is expected to be negotiated in the early 2020s, paving the way to sustain further jobs in Scotland and across the wider supply chain for many years to come. The Type 26 programme will secure the long term future of the Scottish shipbuilding industry.

**Admiral Sir Philip Jones, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, said:**

For an island nation, dependent on maritime trade, a strong Royal Navy is essential for our national security and economic prosperity. Today there are over 500 submarines in the world operated by 40 navies. As one of the quietest and most potent submarine-hunters of any Navy, the Type 26 will have a crucial role to play to protect the nuclear deterrent and our two new aircraft carriers.

Although designed to fight and win in the most demanding scenarios, they will also work alongside our international partners to protect and promote the United Kingdom's interests around the world.



A Computer Generated Image of the Royal Navy's new Type 26 frigate.

The Type 26 will be the most advanced anti-submarine warfare ship in its

class around the world. The MOD is exploring potential export opportunities where there is strong interest from international customers.

The contract is specifically structured to motivate both sides to deliver to a successful outcome where both parties share in the pain and gain in the delivery of the programme. This will deliver better value for money for the UK taxpayer.

The MOD spent £1.5 billion with Scottish businesses last year and supports 9,700 jobs across Scotland. The Royal Navy's new Queen Elizabeth Carriers are being built in Rosyth and the new Offshore Patrol Vessels are under construction in Govan and Scotstoun ahead of this summer's Type 26 Frigate steel cut.

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## [News story: Sweden and Finland join UK-led response force](#)

Sweden and Finland have joined a UK-led high-readiness force tasked with tackling threats and responding to crises around the world.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon welcomed the two Scandinavian nations to the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) during an official signing event at Karlberg Castle, in Stockholm, alongside Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist and Finnish Defence Minister Jussi Niinisto.

Launched in 2015, the joint force has continued to develop and will become fully operational next year, which could mean the mobilisation of 10,000 troops to respond quickly to a range of issues, using combat power, deterrence or humanitarian support.

Spearheaded by the UK, Sweden and Finland make the JEF a nine-nation-strong pool of forces, alongside Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Norway. The JEF builds on many years of experience between the UK and these countries.

During the Ebola outbreak a Dutch ship worked alongside the Royal Navy, and the Norwegians provided twice weekly C130 flights to support the UK response to the crisis. This example of joint work is a clear example of the kind of humanitarian support the JEF will be able to provide.

The JEF concept is distinct from existing international organisations, and can operate alone, but has the ability to integrate with other multinational high-readiness forces, and can support NATO, EU, and UN forces.

## **Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:**

In an uncertain world, the UK is spearheading this high-readiness joint force, which will help us tackle growing threats. Together, we pack a more powerful punch.

This is a Force of Friends, and alongside Sweden, Finland, and our other partners in this force, we remain committed to security, in Europe and around the world.

The UK's contribution to the JEF will include lead commando, airborne, armoured, aviation, and air and maritime task groups.

The first exercise took place last year at RAF St Mawgan, in Cornwall. Joint Venture 16 involved 1,600 UK personnel in the JEF force headquarters, known as the Standing Joint Force Headquarters and commanded by a British 2\* general, which was put to the test in a dynamic fictional scenario.

Joint Venture 17 is already underway, with a similar number of personnel taking part from the Royal Navy, Army, and RAF, and is testing the UK's operational level command and control, using force elements from JEF partner nations.

These exercises, and future JEF training and operations, enable the nine partner nations to train, integrate, share knowledge, skills and resources.

## **Sir Michael added:**

We are stronger together, and, this joint force clearly shows Britain is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our international allies.

During the signing event, the Defence Secretary's Swedish and Finnish counterparts underlined their commitment to working with the other JEF members on cooperative European security and managing crises.

## **Minister for Defence of Sweden Peter Hultqvist said:**

The JEF will complement our bilateral and multilateral cooperation focusing both on our close vicinity and a broader global agenda.

## **Minister of Defence of Finland Jussi Niinisto said:**

Both Sweden and the UK are important partners for Finland and joining JEF gives our cooperation yet another dimension. We believe that the cooperation will enhance our national defence capability

and deepen cooperation with our partners.

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## [News story: Potential Army Officers meet Defence Secretary](#)

The latest intake of the Army's School of Education's Potential Officer Development Programme (PODP) visited MOD Main Building in London this Tuesday as part of their intensive 12-week development programme.

As part of their visit, the potential officers had the opportunity to meet and put questions to Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon during a question and answer session.

In welcoming the students to the Ministry of Defence, Sir Michael said:

Our Armed Forces are held in high esteem, and recent events have shown that in difficult times people look to us for support.

And in such challenging times, it will be vitally important that our future leaders are thinking soldiers, capable and able to adjust to and overcome those threats which come against us.

We need the best people of each successive generation. You've got what it takes to be our future leaders, and I look forward to you not just making it to Sandhurst but spearheading our nation's charge towards a brighter future.

Potential Officer Annabelle Mash, 21 from the Isle of Wight said:

I am passionate about working in an organisation with a disciplined environment where there is the opportunity for me to develop as a person and with the ability to lead men and women confidently.

The Potential Officer Development Programme has been essential to my development, enabling me to develop my weaknesses and acting as a stepping stone towards my future career.

Potential Officer Reece Munnery, 22 from Tavistock, currently serves as a Private in the Parachute Regiment. Before joining the programme he served as a Section Second in Command. He said:

The Potential Officer Development Programme course has been very helpful in reassuring me that commissioning is the route I would like to go down, in building my confidence, and has been one of the most enjoyable courses I have attended in my Army career.

Potential Officer Moiz Abusin, 23 from Chertsey, completed his secondary education abroad in Dubai, before completing a degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of Nottingham.

He said:

I aspire to lead a life of adventure, achievement and service. Whether leading a platoon of soldiers on operations or helping to build critical infrastructure and rebuild lives after a natural disaster, I relish the prospect leading a life far from routine.

The programme supports serving soldiers and direct entry civilian candidates by equipping participants with the skills necessary to pass the Army Officer Selection Board (AOSB).

On completion of the PODP, students will attend the AOSB to determine whether they are suitable for commissioning. If successful at this stage, they will then go on to begin Officer Cadet training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS).

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## [News story: Defence Secretary steps up UK commitments to NATO](#)

At a meeting of NATO Defence Ministers today, the Defence Secretary confirmed:

- The Royal Navy will take the lead of half of NATO's maritime forces for a year.
- Offensive cyber support to NATO operations.
- Increased UK support for advising the Afghan Government, and its defence and security forces.
- Strengthened cooperation on Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

The meeting also confirmed that Britain continues to meet its commitment of spending 2% of GDP on defence, as well as meeting the target of 20% defence spend on equipment and capabilities.

## **Leading NATO's maritime forces**

HMS Duncan, a state of the art Type 45 Destroyer, will lead NATO's Standing Maritime Naval Group 2 (SNMG2), providing reassurance and deterrence in the Black Sea, as well as commanding NATO's counter migration activity in the Mediterranean. The naval force will also exercise together to improve the Alliance's readiness and ability to work together on operations, as well as conducting port visits in the region, including to Ukraine.

HMS Enterprise will also lead Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2 (SNMCMG2) from July this year. The Mine Countermeasures Group is a multinational, integrated maritime force, made up of vessels from a number of NATO countries. The group is mainly based in the Mediterranean and is capable of searching for and disposing of explosive ordnance. HMS Enterprise will be the flagship for the force, and will be joined by HMS Pembroke in the second half of 2017.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

As part of our leadership within the Alliance, we're stepping up our NATO commitments. Whether it's in the cyber domain, where I'm committing UK support to NATO operations, or on the high seas with HMS Duncan and HMS Enterprise leading half of the Alliance's maritime forces in the Mediterranean, the Aegean and the Black Sea, Britain is playing its full part.

## **Strengthening cooperation on Maritime Patrol Aircraft**

On the margins of today's meeting, Sir Michael signed a Statement of Intent on North Atlantic Maritime Patrol with his US and Norwegian counterparts. The agreement enhances collaboration on each nation's P-8A Maritime Patrol Aircraft programmes and will provide NATO Allies with multiple benefits in the maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine areas.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

The P-8A aircraft will play a vital role in protecting the UK's nuclear deterrent, the two new Queen Elizabeth Class carriers and supporting our NATO Allies.

By investing in these aircraft, as part of our £178 billion defence equipment programme, we're showing that we're serious in tackling the threats on NATO's North Atlantic flank.

And in stepping up our cooperation with the US and Norway on maritime patrol around our shores, we will help keep Britain safer



and more secure.

## **Stepping up to counter terror around the world**

The Defence Secretary also confirmed today that Britain is stepping up its support to Afghanistan, with around 85 extra service personnel to support NATO's mission in the country.

Britain has an enduring commitment to Afghanistan, and supporting the Government and the Afghan National Security and Defence Forces (ANDSF) helps to prevent the country from becoming a safe haven for terror.

The increase of UK personnel comes in response to a NATO request, which was made to all partner nations, for additional troops to support the Alliance's train, advise and assist mission in the country.

The additional troops will continue to work in non-combat roles mentoring the Afghan Army and Police, the Afghan Air Force, and will provide further support to the ANDSF in training and leadership development.

Underlining Britain's leadership within NATO, the uplift will add to the already significant contribution of 500 troops the UK already makes to NATO's Resolute Support Mission.

## **Endgame for Daesh in Mosul**

Three years on since the start of the so-called caliphate was proclaimed in Mosul, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon underlined that Daesh faces its endgame in the city where it originally launched its ideological campaign of terror and violence.

Sir Michael said that the terrorist group faces irreversible momentum and progress from local forces on the ground, and UK and Coalition aircraft in the skies. UK aircrew have now hit over 700 targets in support of operations to liberate Mosul since last year. In addition to operations over Mosul, the RAF has so far struck 69 targets in and around Raqqa in support of Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) advancing on the city from the north, east and west.

With Daesh losing ground on two fronts in Mosul and Raqqa, around 70% of territory once controlled by the terror group in Iraq and 51% in Syria, has now been liberated. This amounts to over 4 million Iraqis and Syrians who have been freed from Daesh tyranny.