

INTERNATIONAL SEA POWER CONFERENCE 2025

WARFIGHTING READY

8TH DECEMBER | BT HEADQUARTERS



**LEAD
FIGHT
WIN**



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Foreword



Welcome to the International Sea Power Conference 2025.

The Royal Navy's responsibility is to safeguard the nation's security under, on, above, and from the sea. To do this, we work closely with our allies to deter aggression and defend each other. We undertake this mission at a time when world orders are changing, and the pace of technological change is reshaping warfare at an unprecedented rate. In response, we require a Royal Navy that is agile and adaptable, consistently keeping pace with rapid technological advancements to ensure we maintain our strategic and operational advantage. We also need to nurture the warfighting spirit, demonstrating our leadership, being ready to fight if needed, and then able to secure victory when the situation demands it – lead, fight, win.

Our commitment to forging a new model for naval operations is built on hard analysis and extensive wargaming. As a result, we are rapidly bringing to life a hybrid Royal Navy; uncrewed wherever possible and assigning skilled crewed assets only where their expertise is indispensable. This transformation is not a promise for tomorrow; it must happen now, with pace and resolute determination. In this way, we will expand our reach, multiply our operational mass, and improve survivability and lethality, all while driving down procurement costs per unit and improving industrial capacity to deliver an expanding navy at pace, when it is needed.

This decisive shift is central to protecting the North Atlantic alongside our North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) partners, as well as fulfilling our broader international roles. From the formidable 'Atlantic Bastion' to our pioneering uncrewed escorts, we will build a modern, world-leading navy.

We do not undertake this journey alone. Industry, academia and international partners are essential in shaping our thinking and delivering solutions at pace. This spirit of partnership and shared endeavour is what brings us together at this conference. We will engage in a dynamic programme featuring panels, conversations, debates and interactive sessions; all organised around the framework of 'lead, fight, win'. This focus will underpin our discussions, ensuring coherence and purposeful progress throughout.

I look forward to the insights and discussions that will emerge as we shape the future of the Royal Navy together, reaffirming the critical role of the navy in securing our nation and supporting our allies in these challenging times.

GEN. SIR GWYN JENKINS KCB OBE ADC RM

First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff

Welcome word



We are honoured to welcome you to the International Sea Power Conference 2025.

This is the third Sea Power Conference that we at the Council on Geostrategy have hosted for the First Sea Lord and the Royal Navy, but the first one to have a distinct international and transformational focus, reflecting Britain's global maritime reach and prowess.

Russian aggression in Europe, intensifying geopolitical competition, hostile state activity both in and around the United Kingdom (UK), and the incredible technological evolution of warfare provoke reflection on where we stand today, as well as what is required for us to succeed in making Britain and its allies and partners both secure at home and strong abroad. This now includes ensuring that the UK is prepared for war.

The pace and the magnitude of change inevitably require a distinct approach. Therefore, with the concept of the New Hybrid Navy, the First Sea Lord's mission is to transform the Royal Navy to warfighting readiness over the next four years – ready to lead, fight, and win together with our key allies and partners. This mission is at the centre of the International Sea Power Conference for 2025.

The main event, hosted in the contemporary setting of BT Headquarters, Aldgate, in central London, gathers 300 senior figures from the Royal Navy and allied navies together with representatives from military, industry, government, expert and academia communities, and beyond. Here, through a combination of keynote speeches, panel sessions, debates and conversations, we will focus on the delivery of this transformation.

The International Sea Power Conference 2025 also extends beyond the main event. This year, we have partnered with the Pacific Future Forum in Japan and London International Shipping Week, as well as four leading universities in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar, to expand the impact and engagement of the Royal Navy, and strengthen support for its priorities and mission.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all industry supporters for enabling us to deliver this year's International Sea Power Conference – an event generating innovative maritime thinking and vision, and demonstrating the Royal Navy's commitment to global leadership and intellectual excellence.

Thank you for joining us and playing an important part in shaping this debate – seizing the moment to help the Royal Navy drive forward and deliver what Britain needs to lead, fight, and win.

JAMES ROGERS and VIKTORIJA STARYCH-SAMUOLIENĖ

Co-founders, Council on Geostrategy

Warfighting ready

During his first public speech as First Sea Lord, Gen. Sir Gwyn Jenkins outlined his vision for the future direction of the Royal Navy. As global geopolitics become increasingly volatile, it is imperative that the Royal Navy becomes 'warfighting ready' within the next four years in order to defend Britain, as well as its allies and partners, from adversaries who seek to overturn the rules-based international order.

With a growing number of sub-threshold operations targeting the UK's critical infrastructure, the Royal Navy's mission encompasses protection of vital maritime shipping lanes and monitoring vessels of hostile actors as well as providing security for Britain, both close to home and abroad. To meet these requirements, the Royal Navy is embracing the rapid evolution of military technology, with the First Sea Lord stating his aim of utilising autonomous systems for a 'New Hybrid Navy' which is 'uncrewed wherever possible; crewed only where necessary'.

The future transformation of the Royal Navy aligns with His Majesty's (HM) Government's Strategic Defence Review (SDR) and National Security Strategy (NSS), both published in June 2025. The SDR recognised the changing character of conflict in the 21st century, as well as the centrality of the Royal Navy to the defence of the UK, and announced the 'Atlantic Bastion' concept to deter Russian aggression in the North Atlantic and protect British interests in the 'Wider North'. The NSS laid out the direction of the wider British Armed Forces, reinforcing the 'NATO first, but not NATO only' posture described in the SDR.

These developments have shaped the First Sea Lord's mission, and consequently the formation of the International Sea Power Conference 2025, around the theme of 'Warfighting ready'. Using the Royal Navy's aim of 'lead, fight, win' as a framework, the conference explores these key concepts through four panel sessions, including discussions, a Q&A session and a debate. In doing so, it aims to inform the next generation of strategic thinking regarding the Royal Navy's role in protecting the UK and its core geostrategic interests in an era of growing geopolitical competition.




2025, Royal Navy Crown Copyright

Agenda

Monday, 8th December

- 08:30-09:15 Arrivals and refreshments
- 09:20-09:30 **Welcoming remarks:** Jon James, Chief Executive Officer, BT Business Division; Viktorija Starych-Samuolienė, Co-founder (Strategy), Council on Geostrategy
- 09:30-09:45 **Keynote address:** Minister Luke Pollard MP, Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry
- 09:45-10:05 **Keynote address:** Gen. Sir Gwyn Jenkins KCB OBE ADC RM, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff
- 10:05-11:20 **Panel 1:** The strategic command
- 11:20-11:50 Refreshment break
- 11:50-13:00 **Panel 2:** Leading in the Euro-Atlantic
- 13:00-14:00 Lunch break
- 13:00-14:00 Launch event for *Britain's world: The strategy of security in twelve geopolitical maps*
- 14:00-14:20 **Keynote address:** The Rt. Hon. James Murray MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury
- 14:20-15:30 **Panel 3:** Fighting to deter (Q&A session)
- 15:30-15:50 Refreshment break
- 15:50-17:00 **Panel 4:** How we win (debate)
- 17:00-17:10 Award ceremony
- 17:10-17:15 Closing remarks and departures
- 19:15-23:00 **Black-tie dinner** (*invitation only*)
- 19:00-22:00 **Side dinners** (*invitation only*)
- Towards a new technology partnership: The MOD, Primes and SMEs
 - The role of people in delivery autonomy
 - Growing the maritime economy and strengthening maritime industry
 - Balancing short-term and long-term needs: The capabilities of today and tomorrow



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Side events

As part of the International Sea Power Conference 2025, the Council on Geostrategy was proud to host additional events throughout the year with our event partners, building on the theme of the conference and strengthening relationships with likeminded professionals and organisations.

Pacific Future Forum

The Council on Geostrategy was delighted to partner with the Pacific Future Forum 2025 on 30th August 2025 on board HMS Prince of Wales in Tokyo Bay.

The panel was entitled ‘The “Wider North”: A new front linking the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific?’. It explored how Russia’s geographic position, potentially bolstered by Chinese support, allows it to exert influence over the ‘Wider North’ – a dynamic which may be intensified as climate change opens the Arctic and critical resources become more accessible and desirable.



The roundtable discussed the growing integration between the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific through the emergence of the Wider North, encouraging allied and partner nations to consider strategic competition in the region and, fostering closer collaboration between the UK and Japan.

London International Shipping Week



On 17th September 2025, the Council on Geostrategy was pleased to host an event at London International Shipping Week 2025.

The panel discussed ‘Protecting shipping in an age of contestation’, and examined how disruptions to maritime trade threaten the sea-based global economy, as well as whether existing approaches to protecting shipping are sufficient in the face of increasingly complex and sophisticated threats. The chokepoints where trade routes are most vulnerable, and the rise of ‘grey shipping’ and the ‘shadow fleet’, were also discussed.

The session highlighted emerging public-private models, including technological innovations and dual-use vessels, which could help to offset government and naval constraints. Participants underscored the need for more effective collaboration to strengthen supply-chain resilience and bolster maritime security.



University engagement

As part of the International Sea Power Conference 2025, the Council on Geostrategy and the Royal Navy Strategic Studies Centre are hosting additional events at four British universities.

University of Gibraltar

The Council on Geostrategy was delighted to partner with the University of Gibraltar on 23rd September 2025.

The mini-conference, titled 'The future of international merchant shipping', featured panels on sustainability and alternative fuels in merchant shipping; the perspective of the next generation of seafarers; and building the skills needed for a sustainable maritime future. Attendees were also given a tour of the Rock and the Port of Gibraltar.

The Royal Navy was represented by **Cdre. Tom Guy**, Commander British Forces Gibraltar.



University of Hull



On 17th November 2025, the Council on Geostrategy partnered with the University of Hull.

The mini-conference, titled 'NATO's new maritime strategy and North Sea security', featured three sessions on NATO's recently revised maritime strategy and its implications for Britain and North Sea security; the importance of the region to energy security; and irregular security threats posed by criminal activity and sub-threshold risks.

The Royal Navy was represented by **Cdre. Thomas Knowles**, Naval Regional Commander Northern England and the Isle of Man.

Aberystwyth University

On 19th November 2025, the Council on Geostrategy partnered with Aberystwyth University for a mini-conference on 'Unconventional maritime challenges'.

Two panels examined key unconventional maritime challenges. Panel one discussed Russia's covert maritime activities and the role of navies in British-French nuclear collaboration. Panel two focused on unconventional security challenges, including global health, refugee movements and climate change.

The Royal Navy was represented by **Cdre. Tristram Kirkwood OBE ADC**, Naval Regional Commander Wales, Western England and the Channel Islands.



Queen's University Belfast

The Council on Geostrategy is delighted to partner with Queen's University Belfast for an event in early 2026 to discuss maritime security cooperation between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Delivering warfighting readiness



Keynote speakers



MINISTER LUKE POLLARD MP

Minister of State for Defence Readiness and Industry

Minister Luke Pollard MP is Minister of State for Defence Readiness and Industry, a position he has held since September 2025. In this role, he is responsible for procuring the capabilities which defence needs, ensuring defence can exploit these capabilities faster, and overseeing a new partnership between the Ministry of Defence and industry to make defence an engine for growth – all in line with the Strategic Defence Review.

He has served as Labour (Co-op) Member of Parliament for Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport since June 2017. Prior to his appointment as Minister for Defence Readiness and Resilience, he served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Armed Forces from July 2024 until September 2025.

In opposition, he held roles as Shadow Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Fisheries, Flooding and Water) from July 2018 to January 2020; Shadow Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from January 2020 to November 2021; and Shadow Minister (Defence) from February 2022 to May 2024. He was a member of the Transport Committee from September 2017 to October 2018 and the Electronic Trade Documents Bill Second Reading Committee in June 2023.

He is a member of both the Unite and GMB trade unions, as well as an active member of the Co-operative Society and the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA) – an environmental campaign affiliated with the Labour Party. Before his parliamentary career, he held a number of roles, including working for the Labour campaign in 2005; Edelman, the global communications firm; and the Association for British Travel Agents.

Keynote speakers



GEN. SIR GWYN JENKINS KCB OBE ADC RM

First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff

Gen. Sir Gwyn Jenkins KCB OBE ADC RM was commissioned into the Royal Marines in 1990. He served junior officer roles in the Commando Logistics Regiment and operations in Northern Ireland with 42 Commando.

He graduated from the Advanced Command and Staff Course in 2004, completing a Masters degree in Defence Studies. As a Lieutenant Colonel, he oversaw global operations in Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ), before assuming a Commanding Officer appointment in 2009. After this, he was promoted to Colonel and served a 12-month tour in Afghanistan, for which he was awarded OBE. Returning to the UK, he served as Military Assistant to the Prime Minister.

After completing the Higher Command and Staff Course, he was promoted to Brigadier and assumed a 3* civilian appointment in the Cabinet Office as Deputy National Security Adviser for Conflict, Stability and Defence. Following this, he took command of 3 Commando in April 2017. Promoted to Major General in January 2019 – the first from the Royal Navy to serve in the rank – he became Assistant Chief of Naval Staff before assuming command of a tri-service organisation.

In August 2022, he was appointed Vice Chief of the Defence Staff and promoted to General, and in November 2022, was appointed Commandant General of the Royal Marines. In August 2024, he was made Strategic Adviser to the Secretary of State for Defence, where he negotiated Britain's Defence Agreement with Germany and cohered the UK's strategic partnership with Norway. In May 2025, he became the first Royal Marine to be appointed as First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

Keynote speakers



THE RT. HON. JAMES MURRAY MP

Chief Secretary to the Treasury

The Rt. Hon. James Murray MP is Chief Secretary to the Treasury, having been appointed on 1st September 2025. In this role, he is responsible for public expenditure, including spending reviews and strategic planning; in-year spending controls; and ensuring efficiency and value for money.

He has served as Labour (Co-op) Member of Parliament for Ealing North since December 2019. Prior to his appointment as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, he was Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury from July 2024 until September 2025.

In opposition, he held roles as Opposition Whip (Commons) from April until October 2020, followed by Shadow Financial Secretary to the Treasury from October 2020 until May 2024. Additionally, he was a member of the Health and Social Care Committee from March to May 2020, and the Public Accounts Committee from October 2024 until October 2025.

He served as Deputy Mayor of London for Housing and Residential Development from 2016 to 2019, and advised Sir Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, throughout the selection and election processes. In this position, he developed a 'fast track' approach to boost affordable housing, as well as the first 'City Hall' initiative to build council housing.

Before being appointed Deputy Mayor, he served as a councillor in Islington for ten years, six of which were as an executive member for housing and development. Here, he led Islington Council's homebuilding, and coordinated efforts across London councils to increase affordable housing.

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Panel 1

The strategic command

With the return of peer threats and a deteriorating international environment, the Royal Navy has set the challenge to move to 'warfighting readiness' over the next four years. Amid technological changes and geopolitical developments, the Royal Navy will need to adapt to ensure deterrence continues to hold. The Strategic Defence Review and the National Security Strategy have laid bare what needs to be done, emphasising 'NATO first', but not 'NATO only'. This panel will explore how the Royal Navy will implement these changes, and how it will work with other key stakeholders – including the defence industry – to forge ahead in the drive for warfighting readiness.



CHAIR: VIKTORIJA STARYCH-SAMUOLIENĖ

Co-founder (Strategy), Council on Geostrategy

Viktorija Starych-Samuolienė is Co-founder (Strategy) at the Council on Geostrategy. She is also a Fellow of the Durham Institute of Research, Development and Invention (DIRDI). She leads the organisation and delivery of the International Sea Power Conference, alongside other programmes. Her areas of research expertise include maritime affairs, Euro-Atlantic geopolitics, and Eastern European and Baltic politics and security.



V. ADM. J. T. ANDERSON

Commander, Sixth Fleet and Task Force Six, US Navy; and Striking and Support Forces, NATO

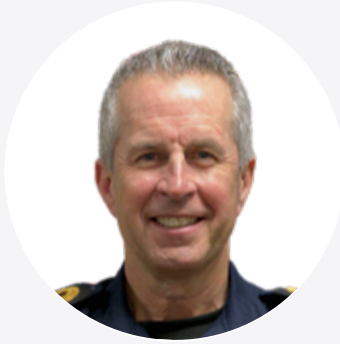
V. Adm. J. T. Anderson is Commander of Sixth Fleet and Task Force Six in the US Navy, and Commander, Striking and Support Forces in NATO. His previous positions include Deputy Director for Political-Military Affairs, Asia Joint Staff; Commander, Carrier Strike Group Three; and Director for Joint Operations, US Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM). He has also served in multiple naval aviation fighter squadrons, including in command roles.



PROF. JOHN BEW CMG

Professor, King's College London

Prof. John Bew CMG is Professor in History and Foreign Policy at the Department of War Studies, King's College London. From 2019 to 2024, he was Special Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Policy, leading in the production of the 2021 Integrated Review and 2023 Integrated Review Refresh. In 2021, he was appointed to represent the UK in the NATO Secretary General's Reflections Group, and in 2025, he assisted in drafting the National Security Strategy.



ADM. SIR KEITH BLOUNT KCB OBE

NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe

Adm. Sir Keith Blount KCB OBE is NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR). He has commanded three warships: HMS Anglesey, HMS Somerset and HMS Ocean. He was Iraqi Maritime Task Group Commander during Operation TELIC, and the UK's Maritime Component Commander during operations in Syria and Iraq. Between 2015 and 2019, he served as professional Head of Aviation in the Royal Navy.



GEN. SIR GWYN JENKINS KCB OBE ADC RM

First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff

Gen. Sir Gwyn Jenkins KCB OBE ADC RM is the first Royal Marines officer to be appointed First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, having begun this role in May 2025. Prior to this, he served in Afghanistan; commanded 3 Commando, a tri-service organisation; served as Vice Chief of the Defence Staff; and has held strategic defence adviser roles, including civilian appointments to 10 Downing Street and the Cabinet Office.



PHIL SIVETER

Chief Executive, Thales UK

Phil Siveter is Chief Executive of Thales UK, a position he has held since October 2024. He has strong experience in defence, and public sector and enterprise markets, as well as in delivering critical services. He advocates for the power of technology, has recently been appointed to the Defence Industry Joint Council (DIJC) as co-chair of the Skills and Training Working Group, and is a board member of the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain.



HMS Prince of Wales conducts first Mojave trials, 2025, MOD Crown Copyright News

Panel 2

Leading in the Euro-Atlantic

Given the priorities laid out in the Strategic Defence Review and the National Security Strategy, Britain will pursue a 'NATO-first', but not 'NATO only' defence posture. The Euro-Atlantic will be a vital area of operations for the Royal Navy, and it is through the concept of the 'Atlantic Bastion' that it will lead in the maritime domain in this region. This panel will outline what Atlantic Bastion is and how it will develop, as well as how industry will contribute to securing British interests and where collective defence efforts with key allies will bolster it.



CHAIR: JAMES ROGERS

Co-founder (Research), Council on Geostrategy

James Rogers is Co-founder (Research) at the Council on Geostrategy, where he specialises in geopolitics and British strategic policy. He has pioneered work on Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific connectivities and strategic advantage, and has previously held a range of positions at leading think tanks and academic organisations, including the Baltic Defence College and the European Union Institute for Security Studies.



V. ADM. PAUL BEATTIE CBE

Second Sea Lord, Royal Navy

V. Adm. Paul Beattie CBE is Second Sea Lord of the Royal Navy, having been appointed in September 2025. He joined the Royal Navy in 1989, and has served as Operations Officer on HMS York and HMS Edinburgh, and Executive Officer on HMS Westminster and HMS Daring, as well as commanding HMS Arun and HMS Manchester. He has also held a number of shore positions, including as Director of the Naval Staff.



R. ADM. OLIVER BERDAL

Chief of Navy, Royal Norwegian Navy

R. Adm. Oliver Berdal was appointed Chief of the Royal Norwegian Navy in October 2023. Prior to this, he was Chief of the Norwegian Coast Guard from February 2020 until October 2023. Previously, he commanded the submarine HNoMS Utsira, beginning in 2004, and was appointed programme manager for the Royal Norwegian Navy's work on new submarines in 2016 before taking command of the submarine arm in 2019.



AMELIA GOULD

General Manager, Maritime, Helsing

Amelia Gould is General Manager, Maritime at Helsing. She served as an Engineering Officer in the Royal Navy for 11 years before becoming an Enterprise Architect for digital transformation. She then joined BAE Systems as Technical Authority, Chief of Staff to the CEO, and later led the Maritime Combat Systems business. She is a WISE Woman in Industry Award winner, a Chartered Engineer and non-Executive Director on the Maritime UK Solent Board.



R. ADM. SØREN KJELDSSEN

Chief of Navy, Royal Danish Navy

R. Adm. Søren Kjeldsen is Chief of the Royal Danish Navy, having been appointed in December 2024. He graduated from the Royal Danish Naval Academy in 1995, and has held a number of positions in the Danish Navy, including commanding inspection vessels HDMS Vædderen and HDMS Thetis, and in the Danish Ministry of Defence, including as Director of the Capacity Division; of the Department of Governance; and of the Implementation Division.



V. ADM. ANGUS TOPSHEE CMM MSM CD

Commander, Royal Canadian Navy

V. Adm. Angus Topshee CMM MSM CD is Commander of the Royal Canadian Navy, having been appointed to the position in May 2022. With a naval career spanning over three decades, he has served as Commander of HMCS Algonquin from 2009 to 2010; Commander of the Canadian Pacific Fleet from 2018 to 2021; and Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific and Joint Task Force Pacific from 2021 until his current appointment.



Submarine service breaks radio silence to reveal mission milestone, 2017, MOD Crown Copyright News

Panel 3

Fighting to deter (Q&A session)

Russian aggression in Europe and proliferation of armed conflict elsewhere in the world has shown that as the capabilities and boldness of adversaries grow, deterrence will come under increasing pressure. It is vital that the Royal Navy, alongside like-minded allies and partners, in its doctrine, its capabilities, and through its people, is able to stay ahead of the threats. This session will explore how deterrence is evolving, how industry contributes to our ability to fight and how the renewal of the UK's alliances across the globe supports deterrence.



CHAIR: SIR SIMON LISTER KCB OBE

Naval Ships Managing Director, BAE Systems

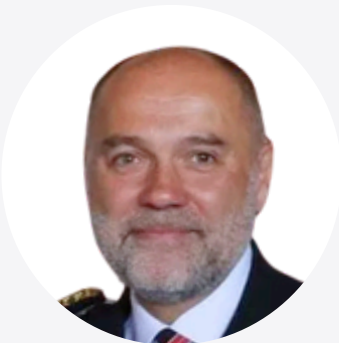
Sir Simon Lister KCB OBE is Naval Ships Managing Director at BAE Systems. He first joined in 2017 as Managing Director of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance before becoming Chief Operating Officer of BAE Systems Maritime and Land in 2020. Since joining BAE Systems, he has been a member of the Maritime and Land UK Board. Previously, he served in the Royal Navy, concluding as a Vice Admiral, Member of the Navy Board, Chief of Materiel (Fleet) and Chief Naval Engineer.



V. ADM. MARK HAMMOND AO

Chief of Navy, Royal Australian Navy

V. Adm. Mark Hammond AO is Chief of Navy in the Royal Australian Navy, having been appointed in July 2022. In this role, he is principal naval adviser on strategic affairs and provides advice to the Chief of the Defence Force and Secretary of the Department of Defence. Previously, he commanded the submarine HMAS Farncomb, and served as Deputy Chief of Navy followed by Commander of the Australian Fleet.



V. ADM. STEVE MOORHOUSE CBE

Fleet Commander, Royal Navy

V. Adm. Steve Moorhouse CBE is Fleet Commander of the Royal Navy, having been appointed in September 2025. He first joined the Royal Navy in 1991 and has commanded multiple warships, including HMS Clyde, HMS Lancaster, HMS Ocean and both of the Royal Navy's aircraft carriers; HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Queen Elizabeth. He commanded the UK's Carrier Strike Group 2021 and Combined Maritime Task Force 150 (CTF-150) in the Indo-Pacific.



BEN SHORT

Head of SONAC, Ministry of Defence

Ben Short is Head of the Secretary of State's Office for Net Assessment and Challenge (SONAC). He played a leading role in writing both the 2021 Integrated Review and the 2023 Integrated Review Refresh. Previously, he served as Senior Russia Analyst in the Joint Intelligence Organisation. Throughout his career, he has held positions in the Ministry of Defence, NATO and Standing Joint Force Headquarters.



CHRISTOPHER SWEENEY

Vice President, Sustainment Strategy and Growth Initiatives, Lockheed Martin

Christopher Sweeney is Vice President, Sustainment Strategy and Growth Initiatives at Lockheed Martin. Before this, he held positions in the US Office of the Chief of Naval Operations as Director of Warfare Development and Director of Integrated Warfare. He has held roles as Commander of Carrier Strike Group 11 and Destroyer Squadron 15, and served as Deputy Director for Strategy, Plans, Posture and Capability in US European Command.



NATO standing maritime groups with Carrier Strike Group, 2025, MOD Crown Copyright News

Panel 4

How we win (debate)

In an era of significant change, what does success look like? The Royal Navy does not stop evolving, so how it will define what winning means – and how it will measure progress – will be a key part of the transition to warfighting readiness. This session will explore the debate on the Royal Navy's theory of victory from multiple different perspectives, including capability, innovation, collaboration and operational, as well as the ongoing activities of adversaries in comparison.



CHAIR: SAMIRA BRAUND

Defence Director, ADS Group

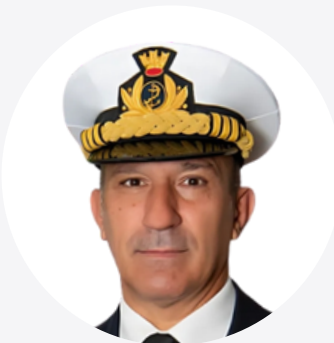
Samira Braund is Defence Director of ADS Group and a member of the ADS Executive Team. She is also Defence Growth Partnership Programme Lead. Previously, she was Chief Executive of UK Defence Solutions Centre (UKDSC). She led on ADS Group's Strategic Defence Review and Defence Industrial Strategy submissions, and coordinated the Defence Investment Plan engagement as part of her Market Engagement Industry co-chair role.



GEN. (RTD.) SIR RICHARD BARRONS KCB CBE

Co-author, Strategic Defence Review 2025

Gen. (rtd.) Sir Richard Barrons KCB CBE co-authored the Strategic Defence Review 2025. He is Co-chair of Universal Defence and Security Solutions and Senior Consulting Fellow at Chatham House. He has served in multiple military roles, including Chief of Staff of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps; Assistant Chief of the General Staff; Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff; and Commander, Joint Forces Command (now Cyber and Specialist Operations Command).



ADM. GIUSEPPE BERUTTI BERGOTTO

Chief of Staff, Italian Navy

Adm. Giuseppe Berutti Bergotto is Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy, having been appointed in November 2025. Prior to this, he served as Deputy Fleet Commander, beginning in December 2021. With a naval career spanning almost four decades, he has served as Force Commander for the EU's 'Operation SOPHIA', as well as roles including Head of the General Affairs Department at the Navy General Staff and Director of the Navy Personnel Directorate.



SIR NICK HINE KCB

Chief Executive, Marine, Babcock International Group

Sir Nick Hine KCB is Chief Executive of Babcock's Marine Sector, having been appointed in September 2024. Prior to this, he led Babcock's work on AUKUS, collaborating with partners in the UK, US and Australia. Before joining Babcock, he served in the Royal Navy, commanding nuclear submarine HMS Talent, patrol vessel HMS Blackwater and Type 23 frigate HMS Westminster, and was Second Sea Lord between April 2019 and January 2022.



MAJ. GEN. PAUL MAYNARD OBE ADC RM

Assistant Chief of Naval Staff

Maj. Gen. Paul Maynard OBE ADC RM is Assistant Chief of Naval Staff, having been appointed in February 2025. He was commissioned into the Royal Marines in 1999, and was made Commanding Officer of 40 Commando in 2017. In 2022, he was appointed Deputy Commander UK Strike Force, and from 2022 to 2023, he led the Royal Navy's efforts to support Ukrainian maritime forces against Russia's full-scale invasion.



PROF. ALESSIO PATALANO

Professor, King's College London

Prof. Alessio Patalano is Professor of War and Strategy in East Asia in the Department of War Studies, King's College London, and leads the King's Japan Programme in the Centre for Grand Strategy. He is also an Adjunct Fellow at the Council on Geostrategy; Director of the Asian Security and Warfare Research Group; and a Research Associate at the King's China Institute. Since 2006, he has been a Visiting Lecturer at the Italian Naval War College, Venice.



HMS Glasgow touches the water for the first time, 2025, MOD Editorial Licence

Geopolitical atlas launch event

The Council on Geostrategy is proud to be launching *Britain's world: The strategy of security in twelve geopolitical maps* at the International Sea Power Conference 2025. Edited by James Rogers, our Co-founder (Research), and Andrew Young, Fellowship Officer at the Royal Navy Strategic Studies Centre, the atlas contains 12 maps focusing on the UK's geopolitical position in the 21st century, built around the centrality of the maritime domain to British national and global power. 24 experts have contributed detailed annotations for each map, elevating the significance of the atlas as a visual companion to analyses of British strategy-making.

The atlas launch takes the form of a discussion about the rationale behind the maps included, and the importance of providing such a work as the UK looks ahead to the second half of the 2020s.



CHAIR: WILLIAM FREER

Research Fellow, Council on Geostrategy

William Freer is a Research Fellow in National Security at the Council on Geostrategy, where he co-leads the Strategic Defence Unit. He is also an Associate Fellow at the Royal Navy Strategic Studies Centre, and holds a BA in War Studies from King's College London. Prior to joining the Council on Geostrategy, he worked as a consultant, focusing primarily on bid writing for government procurement, including in the defence sector.



PAUL MASON

Adjunct Fellow, Council on Geostrategy

Paul Mason is an Adjunct Fellow at the Council on Geostrategy, and an independent author and journalist. Previously, he was Economics Editor at *BBC Newsnight* and later at Channel 4 News, reporting on issues from strikes by the People's Republic of China's migrant workforce to the Arab Spring. He writes frequently for *The New European*, *Frankfurter Rundschau* and *Social Europe*, as well as contributing a weekly column for *The New World* magazine.



JAMES ROGERS

Co-founder (Research), Council on Geostrategy

James Rogers is Co-founder (Research) at the Council on Geostrategy, where he specialises in geopolitics and British strategic policy. He has pioneered work on Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific connectivities and strategic advantage, and has previously held a range of positions at leading think tanks and academic organisations, including the Baltic Defence College and the European Union Institute for Security Studies.



ANDREW THOMIS

Chief Executive, Cohort Plc

Andrew Thomis is Chief Executive of Cohort Plc; a position he has held since May 2009. As a freelance consultant in 2005, he was involved in the creation of Cohort, and served as its Finance Director from September 2005 to March 2006, followed by Corporate Development Director until May 2007. From 2007 until 2009, he was Managing Director of MASS Consultants Ltd. Before his consultancy career, he worked in the Ministry of Defence from 1987 to 1996.



CDRE. TOBIAS WAITE RN

Head of Naval Staff, Royal Navy

Cdre. Tobias Waite RN is Head of Naval Staff at the Royal Navy. Prior to joining the Naval Staff, he held the position of Captain, Navy Plans in Finance and Capability, at the Ministry of Defence. A surface warfare officer, he previously commanded HMS Sabre before serving as Executive Officer on HMS Westminster. He was promoted from Captain to Commodore in May 2024, and specialises in underwater warfare.



HELEN WALKER-FLEMING

Deputy Head Strategy, National Security Secretariat

Helen Walker-Fleming is Deputy Head Strategy of the National Security Secretariat in the Cabinet Office. Previously, she has held positions as Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Croatia, Private Secretary to the Minister of State, Head of the Egypt Team, Speechwriter to the Foreign Secretary and Desk Officer Zimbabwe. From 2012 to 2015, she led British work on human rights at the United Nations Headquarters.

Britain's world: The strategy of security in twelve geopolitical maps

Edited by:
James Rogers
Andrew Young



SG-1 + LURA

Underwater Autonomous Mass



First Sea Lord's Essay Competition 2025

The Council on Geostrategy was delighted to hold the First Sea Lord's Essay Competition for the third year in a row. The winners are invited to the International Sea Power Conference 2025, where they will receive a prize presented by the First Sea Lord. Entrants were asked to write an essay of 800–1,000 words answering one of the following questions:



1. What if one of the 'CRINK' – China, Russia, Iran or North Korea – cut data cables to the UK?
2. What if the British government commits to increase defence spending to 3.5% of GDP by 2030, or 4.0% by 2035?
3. What if the UK has to defend the North Atlantic alone?

To be considered for the prize, entrants were asked to explain what might happen, and how Britain should use and/or alter the Royal Navy in response.

The winning essays will be published on the Council on Geostrategy's online platforms as part of the International Sea Power Conference 2025.



DR EMANUELE MAGGIOLI

Gold

'The possibility that the UK is left alone in defending the North Atlantic is remote, although the Royal Navy should be prepared. It can do so by reorienting its priorities and resources towards the North Atlantic, and by forging new strategic partnerships with key players in the area.'



FRANCESCO CANOSSO

Silver

'Ultimately, Britain must recognise that undersea cables are no longer just critical infrastructure – they are contested strategic terrain. The response to threats in this domain must be equally multidimensional.'



MATTHEW PALMER

Bronze

'A significant increase in defence spending to 3.5% or 4.0% of GDP would come with a commensurate increase in responsibilities. The Royal Navy could expand and modernise, but would also be expected to carry a far greater burden of European and global security.'

Roundtable

Tuesday, 9th December

THE ROYAL NAVY'S HYBRID FORCE DESIGN

Invitation only

This closed-door, off-the-record briefing will explain future priorities for capability development and potential industry opportunities. Attendees will hear first-hand the Royal Navy's priority needs; see how open, interoperable systems, AI-enabled decision-making and mission management, and rapid experimentation will move capability from concept to deployment more quickly; and learn how their organisations can partner at every stage of development.

The Royal Navy is inviting companies – including major contractors, SMEs and the finance community – to help accelerate innovation, scale production and build an export-focused industrial base which outpaces modern threats to the UK's security.

Future Maritime Leaders' Simulation

The Future Maritime Leaders' Simulation was co-hosted by the Council on Geostrategy and scholars from King's College London on 12th May 2025 at The Rag (Army and Navy Club). It was designed as a policy game aiming to build a close-knit network of young professionals working on maritime affairs and foster a broader community of practice.

This year's simulation explored Britain's maritime options in responding to multi-theatre aggression from the People's Republic of China (PRC), Russia, Iran and North Korea – the 'CRINK' nations. This stemmed from an important question starting to arise in policymaking circles: 'What if the CRINK work together to disrupt the rules-based international order?'

Drawing on emerging geostrategic trends and the deployment of Carrier Strike Group 2025 (CSG2025), participants from across the defence, government and expert communities examined policy choices in the context of an unfolding crisis scenario involving the CRINK.



Future Maritime Leaders' Simulation 2025



The Fleet, Reimagined.

Seamless integration of advanced aircraft, crewed ships and autonomous systems gives the Royal Navy unprecedented situational awareness, speed and reach — shaping the fleet of tomorrow. **Connected. Capable. Combat ready.**



Head-to-head

Is the New Hybrid Navy a return to the Nelsonian approach?

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Defence Review, published in June 2025 amid an increasing volatile geopolitical stage, recommended that the Royal Navy should ‘continue its transformation in the skills, equipment and ways of operating needed for the 21st century maritime domain’. In expanding upon the ideas laid out in ‘Atlantic Bastion’, Gen. Sir Gwyn Jenkins, First Sea Lord, outlined what this will mean in practice at DSEI 2025. It includes a ‘move to a dispersed, but digitally connected fleet of crewed, uncrewed and autonomous platforms that will redefine maritime military power’. The First Sea Lord went further, stating that ‘this is not an aspiration for some distant point in the future. It is a necessity now’.

In this debate format article, two experts in maritime power explore whether the ‘New Hybrid Navy’ is a return to a more ‘Nelsonian’ approach to British naval power.



WILLIAM FREER

Research Fellow (National Security), Council on Geostrategy

Horatio Nelson (1758–1805) did not see a great deal of technological change in the maritime domain over the course of his lifetime. Naval battles in 1805 used much the same technology as those fought one hundred years prior. Although pioneering efforts were underway in the background, it took time before they were adapted for military use. The first steam-powered ships were trialled in the 1780s, but the first military steamships did not enter service until the 1820s. This is far different from the situation today, where a number of technological developments in the naval arena are happening at an incredible pace.

It is therefore difficult to say whether or not embracing technological change is a key feature of – and a return to – a ‘Nelsonian’ approach. Nelson was far more typified by his focus on the application of naval power, and the doctrine and tactics employed to maximise the geopolitical impact of the employment of naval forces. He pursued decisive engagements through the concentration of force, which sought to destroy the naval power of adversaries to establish command of the sea.

In many cases, Nelson’s adversaries in fact brought more capable warship designs to the battles he fought. At the Battle of Trafalgar, the ship with the most firepower, at least on paper, was the Spanish Navy’s *Santísima Trinidad*, with her 116 guns – HMS *Victory* with 104 guns was the most heavily armed British ship present. Indeed, more often than not, French ships were designed with superior seakeeping qualities (and usually pressed into Royal Navy service when captured).

Nelson relied instead on the superior fighting ability of Royal Navy ships’ companies and the initiative of his officers. Success came not from technology, but from relentless training to out-think and out-fight enemies. Thus, despite often holding fewer guns, the British warships could fire faster and deliver more firepower on their targets.



CHARLOTTE KLEBERG

Vera Laughton Mathews Adjunct Fellow, Council on Geostrategy

While Nelson may not have seen great technological change, he was a great innovator in other ways, which reflect the adoption of the New Hybrid Navy. What set Nelson apart from his contemporaries was an ability to innovate strategically and tactically. He introduced a more aggressive and flexible naval doctrine; a dynamic, decentralised model which prioritised surprise, speed and force concentration to overwhelm opponents.

Much like the New Hybrid Navy, this innovation did not replace what came before wholesale, but built on its foundations. While Nelson may have employed and combined battle tactics in an innovative way, such as dividing the fleet into divisions, cutting the line and ‘pell-mell battle’, these all contained elements from his predecessors.

Where the greatest innovation can be found, however, is in leadership style. Nelson pioneered what can be referred to as ‘intent-based command’, communicating intent clearly and then trusting his captains to act independently to achieve his goals. V. Adm. Lord Collingwood’s comment during the Battle of Trafalgar – ‘we all know what we have to do’ – encapsulates the essence of Nelsonian leadership.

Innovative and adaptive approaches to battle characterised Nelson, allowing the Royal Navy to manipulate momentum and position to gain strategic advantage. This adaptability helped to ensure resilience in the face of constant conflict and challenge. It demonstrates an awareness of the interplay between naval success and the economic and political dimensions of maritime power, which in turn helped to shape the operational environment long before the first cannon shot was fired.

WILLIAM FREER

Given that concentration of force was so central to Nelson’s application of naval power, it could be argued that a Nelsonian approach would instead favour a greater number of ‘capital’ ships. In the modern sense, this would mean focusing investment on expanding the Royal Navy’s fleet of frigates, destroyers and nuclear-powered attack submarines – assets which shoulder the brunt of peer naval conflict duties.

Nelson’s premier tool was his ‘ships of the line’. Without a line of battle able to be drawn up in sufficient numbers, at the correct location and point in time, Nelson would not have been able to wield naval power in the manner which he did.

Concentration of capital ships was not always easy. They were in high demand across several theatres, and fulfilled a number of competing duties. At Trafalgar, Nelson commanded 27 ships of the line, yet over 100 were available to the Royal Navy at the time. The problem was that many of these were concentrated in different theatres, such as the fleet guarding the Home Islands, and a significant proportion were dispersed across the globe fulfilling other duties which related to British interests, such as the protection of friendly commerce and the disruption of hostile commerce.

Much like in Nelson’s day, the Royal Navy today faces an enormous list of tasks set by the government. Given Nelson’s recognition of the value of frigates, without greater numbers of ‘capital’ ships, or force multipliers, it may prove challenging to concentrate force in a Nelsonian manner.

CHARLOTTE KLEBERG

Nelson's famous quote over the 'want of frigates' was not simply about hull numbers, but also reflected his understanding of the importance of situational awareness. Frigates were essentially the eyes and ears of the fleet – indispensable assets for the purposes of scouting, monitoring and shadowing enemy fleet activity. This dispersal of frigates may be likened to today's push for autonomous surface and underwater systems. The lack of such information constrained his decision-making, as seen before the 1798 Battle of the Nile. Nelson's use of scouting elements foreshadowed modern concepts of integrated intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance as prerequisites for action in contested environments.

Nelson's fleet was not composed solely of 'capital ships', but relied on a layered mix of frigates, brigs, cutters and merchant vessels. Smaller platforms were critical enablers and lifelines of British maritime power – patrolling key trade routes, imposing blockades, escorting convoys and scouting ahead of the battlefleet. This force structure, with overlapping roles and missions, provided the Royal Navy with strategic resilience and flexibility. Variety also opened increased operational and tactical options. At the Battle of the Nile, it was the utility offered by several smaller warships which enabled Nelson to use shallow waters to envelop the static French line and achieve firepower superiority.

Two centuries later, this emphasis on information advantage, force adaptability and force multipliers which a hybrid navy promises to unlock remains strikingly relevant to contemporary debates on force design.

WILLIAM FREER

Perhaps even more so than platforms, of the greatest importance to Nelson was mariners. Without their superior training, morale, and ability to take and hold the initiative while simultaneously understanding their role within the battle plan, a Nelsonian approach would not have been possible. Expert British seamanship was one of those key advantages, which meant that when entering any engagement, a ship from the Royal Navy could expect to outperform any adversary.

It was these factors which helped to enable the Nelsonian approach to naval warfare. Seeking out an enemy and dealing a decisive defeat required Royal Navy crews not only to master their enemies, but also to master the elements. This is a constant in naval warfare: no matter how far technology develops, the conditions in which naval platforms must operate can be incredibly trying.

One of the key challenges in adopting the New Hybrid Navy will be ensuring uncrewed platforms are not only able to operate satisfactorily in tough maritime conditions, but that the support is in place (including at sea) to repair them when components inevitably fail, lest they become more of a burden than a force multiplier. As the UK once more gears up to focus its naval strength on the North Atlantic and the Wider North through Atlantic Bastion, rough seas and cold weather will be as much of a challenge to Royal Navy platforms and personnel as the risk of Russian action. Without operational presence at the time and place needed, a Nelsonian approach is simply not possible.

CHARLOTTE KLEBERG

The concept of a New Hybrid Navy represents a response to the range of conditions which complicate efforts to rebuild naval power rapidly over the short term. These include fiscal

pressures and shipyard capacity constraints on the one hand, and increasing operational complexity and commitments on the other. It is a model which seeks to optimise the capabilities of existing platforms, alongside integration with new platforms such as uncrewed systems.

As Britain still maintains a global naval presence, conventional means alone cannot deliver at the level demanded by modern operations. The current climate demonstrates the need to combine modernisation efforts and advanced technologies with conventional platforms and weaponry.

A New Hybrid Navy does not imply a fully autonomous force, but rather a combination and optimisation of platforms and assets. Crewed platforms will remain indispensable for fixing issues which may arise to ensure resilience in unpredictable conditions. Complex missions will still require human decision-making and oversight.

Combining crewed and uncrewed platforms boosts mass, reach, response capacity and flexibility – all while managing costs. Ultimately, modernisation efforts must go hand-in-hand with leveraging existing assets, personnel and partnerships innovatively and creatively in order to meet evolving threats in challenging environments.

CONCLUSION

Nelson was a product of his time, and making comparisons to the 21st century is challenging. A Nelsonian approach is more related to how naval power is employed, rather than how it is tied to embracing technological developments. At its core, Nelson's approach was to seek out and destroy the naval forces of peer adversaries to ensure command of the sea as effectively as possible.

With the New Hybrid Navy, the existing ships of the Royal Navy will be supplemented with a variety of platforms capable of expanding reach, boosting punch and enhancing resilience. Although it can be debated how exactly Nelson might have viewed such an approach, the New Hybrid Navy reflects a return to Nelsonian values of a balanced, integrated and innovative fleet composition, persistent presence, and practical adaptation.

Although things were done differently in his day, Nelson would have appreciated the Royal Navy's return to a focus on 'warfighting', and the domain awareness and ability to concentrate firepower – within the existing fiscal, industrial and chronological constraints – which the New Hybrid Navy promises to bring.

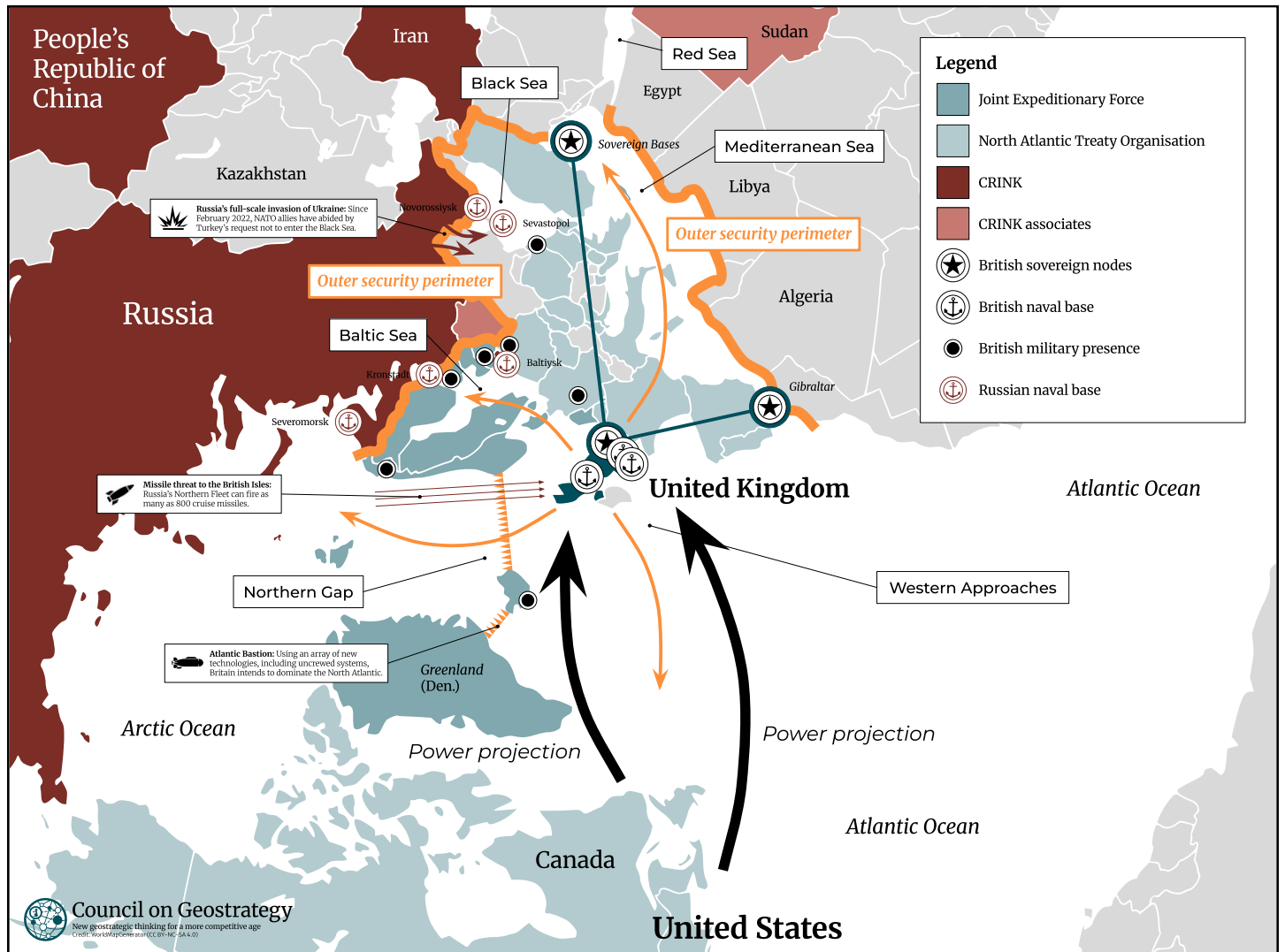


Flotilla of uncrewed boats shadow warships in milestone Royal Navy trials, 2025, MOD Crown Copyright News

Maps

If visualised properly, maps can portray complex information in a way which the human brain can process and understand in seconds. This is why the Council on Geostrategy produces maps to depict geostrategic developments and phenomena, especially from a British vantage point.

These maps from the Council on Geostrategy's *GeoAtlas* display the UK's maritime position, both in the immediate Euro-Atlantic region in relation to the 'Atlantic Bastion' concept and further afield, particularly in the Indo-Pacific with the deployment of Carrier Strike Group 2025.

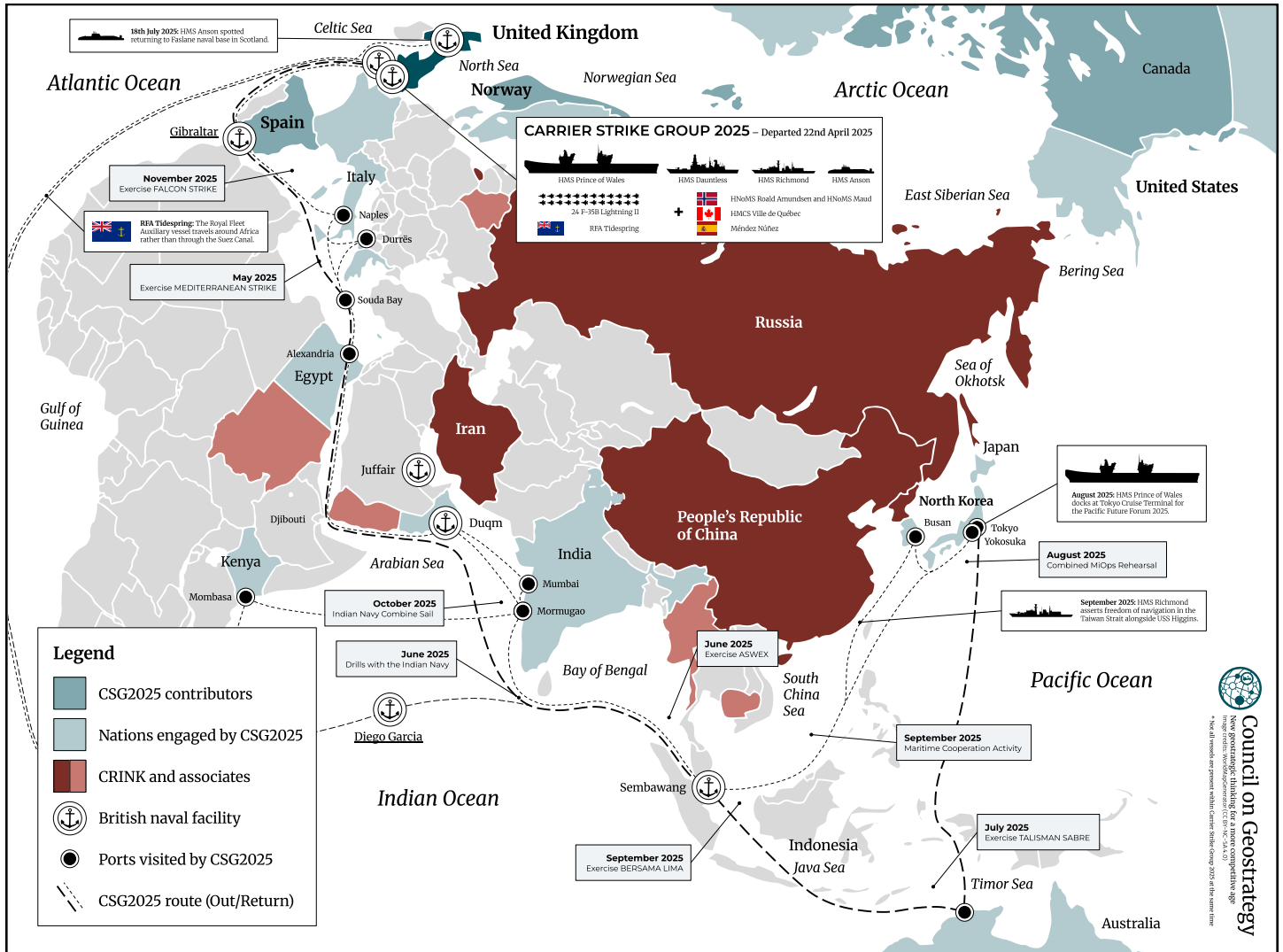


BRITAIN: PIVOTAL TO THE EURO-ATLANTIC REGION

The UK has long seen itself as critical to the Euro-Atlantic order. Not only is it geographically central to the North American and European continents, but it also acts as the nodal point in the geopolitical system it played a key part in creating.

Given that NATO has historically depended on conveying the awesome strength of North America to Europe, British sea power remains central to preventing hostile forces from assuming dominion over the North Atlantic and surrounding areas. With the looming threat from Russia's Northern Fleet, the UK regains geopolitical significance as the country best located to dominate North Atlantic waters. As the map above shows, new concepts, technologies and tactics – developed in tandem with the Atlantic Bastion concept – should assist with this endeavour, helping NATO to maintain a robust defensive perimeter.

Maps



THE CARRIER STRIKE GROUP IN ACTION

In April, the commencement of Operation HIGHMAST saw the Royal Navy-led Carrier Strike Group 2025 (CSG2025) leaving Portsmouth to begin its tour of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions. This was the largest deployment of British naval power in over 40 years. CSG2025 comprised a fleet of British, Norwegian, Canadian and Spanish warships, submarines and auxiliaries, with naval vessels from other allies and partners of the UK joining and leaving the group along the way.

CSG2025 visited India, Australia and Japan, as well as a plethora of other nations, to build capacity and interoperability as well as upholding freedom of navigation in international waters. During the deployment, it conducted a series of joint military exercises with allies and partners on land, at sea, and in the air and cyber domains, demonstrating the Royal Navy's high readiness as well as its ability to protect British interests and underpin global security. As a flexible force, CSG2025 stood ready to respond to any contingency.

The UK's ability to assemble a carrier strike group with international participation not only confirms its convening power, but also its global reach and its strategic indispensability. The Royal Navy's two Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers provide Britain with real strategic advantage, which can be mobilised at a moment of the country's choosing to deter aggression, or intervene to repress hostile or revisionist forces.

1SL VISION

Our Main Effort is — and must be — **enhancing our warfighting readiness across the Navy with urgency.**

Our adversaries are challenging our reach, probing our resolve, testing our resilience and contesting our advantage at sea, in the air, across cyber, and into space. The pace of competition is unrelenting, but we will respond without hesitation and deliver decisively with what we have now. Over the next 4 years, we will be ready to **warfight with what we have whilst prioritising what we need.**

This multi-year strategic plan is our blueprint - setting out how we will **lead, fight, and win together**. It defines our priorities, our approach, and the actions we will take to ensure the Navy is ready to operate with confidence today and evolve decisively towards the Hybrid Force of the future. It is iterative, dynamic, and agile, allowing us to focus on what matters most, learn rapidly, and act decisively where it counts.

WARFIGHT WITH WHAT WE HAVE

We will deliver this together through 5 key pillars:

Nuclear. Assure the continuous at-sea deterrent as the cornerstone of national security. Sustain and strengthen its credibility, safety, and resilience every day while preparing for its successor to guarantee enduring strategic stability.

Hybrid Forces. Transition to a Hybrid Navy that is both capability and mindset: adaptable, connected, and lethal. Deliver autonomously enabled, sustainable warfighting forces for NATO, creating constant dilemmas for adversaries and reinforcing our Atlantic Bastion posture.

People. People remain the Navy's greatest capability. Leadership, character, and competence underpin warfighting excellence. Prepare the workforce through targeted skills, career agility, human-machine teaming, and greater utilisation of reserves, ensuring resilience begins with trust, welfare and wellbeing.

Training. Excellence is trained, not assumed. Prioritise realistic, frequent, and demanding live and synthetic training, mandating warfighting realism and filling operational gaps, so confidence and skill become second nature.

Organisation. Restructure for agility in battle and clarity in authority. Drive out unnecessary bureaucracy, empower leadership at every level, and focus the Organisation on generating lethal warfighting forces, ready to transition to war at speed and then sustain it.

PRIORITISING WHAT WE NEED

By 2029,

the Royal Navy will deliver a **ready and resilient conventional and nuclear deterrent**, able to **fight and win against peer adversaries as part of an integrated NATO force**, while safeguarding the UK homeland, critical national infrastructure, and Overseas Territories. Front-line focused and leader-driven, we are trained to fight with streamlined processes and an organisation built for operational excellence.

Everyone has a role to play. We will rise to the challenge and, with confidence in our exceptional people, collectively drive the Navy forward. The Royal Navy will be different by necessity and, together, we will deliver a Navy that embodies grit, ingenuity, and purpose; a Navy that is ready - not in theory, but in fact - to fight and prevail.

To our allies: We will be a force you can rely on. A Royal Navy that is modern, credible, and resolute. We will help shape the global maritime order: secure at home and strong abroad.

The seas ahead will not be calm — but they are ours to master.



General Sir Gwyn Jenkins
First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff

Council on Geostrategy

Since its official launch in March 2021, the Council on Geostrategy has established itself as a leading think tank dedicated to generating a new generation of geostrategic thinking for a more competitive age.

Our non-profit organisation focuses on shaping British strategic ambition in an international environment increasingly defined by geopolitical competition and the environmental crisis, so that the United Kingdom is best able to succeed and prosper in the 21st century.

Become a member

Join us to gain exclusive access to our cutting-edge geostrategic thinking, interact with our research programmes, experts and network, and contribute to the realisation of our mission.

We offer six membership packages for those who wish to become our closest partners.



Scan for membership

Britain's World

Britain's World is the Council on Geostrategy's online magazine for discussion of the UK's international posture, how the world sees and affects Britain, and how Britain sees and affects the world.

Get expert insights presented in multiple formats delivered directly to your inbox every week.



Scan for Britain's World

DEFENCE TALKS

Defence Talks: Securing UK Advantage is a podcast presented by the Council on Geostrategy, in partnership with trade association ADS Group and sponsored by industry powerhouse BAE Systems. It explores key themes in British defence in the context of an increasingly contested international security environment. The podcast considers how the UK can shape the international agenda, focusing on how technology, innovation, skills and defence strategies help to advance Britain's interests, as well as those of its key allies and partners.



Scan for Defence Talks

Sea Power Laboratory

The Sea Power Laboratory is the Council on Geostrategy's research and engagement programme to generate maritime thinking. It fosters a systemic approach, comprising political, policy, industrial and other stakeholders, to achieve strategic understanding of how the UK can mobilise and deploy sea power to promote national prosperity and protect its interests. The Sea Power Laboratory tests new ideas, generates innovative policy recommendations, convenes key stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, nurtures a next-generation maritime community and disseminates maritime discourse to the wider public.

Latest research

Sealift: Commercial shipping's potential in military logistics

PRIMER

Charlotte Kleberg, our Adjunct Fellow, highlights the need for commercial shipping solutions to mitigate critical vulnerabilities in logistical supply chains, and how such solutions can ensure effective sea-based support for the Royal Navy.



Scan for research

Events and engagements

The Sea Power Laboratory convenes key stakeholders through a programme of events. Exclusive dinners enable the conversation with a diverse group of stakeholders on the key maritime issues.

The Sea Power Series of roundtables hosts key figures from naval and defence attachés to discuss key developments in their seas, their work with the Royal Navy, and common challenges and opportunities. The Sea Power Series is kindly sponsored by Honorary Chair Dr Carl Stephen Patrick Hunter OBE.



Scan for events

The Broadside

The Broadside is the Council on Geostrategy's online magazine, exploring maritime affairs in the 21st century, the impact of technological innovation on navies worldwide, lessons from maritime history and more.

It offers insights from both established experts and newer voices, hailing from Britain as well as its allies and partners, to share ideas and fresh thinking on maritime challenges and their solutions.



Scan for *The Broadside*

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Generous support from the industry leaders enables us to organise a high-level event and discussions which enable the Royal Navy and navies of our allies and partners to uphold their competitive edge, develop an international seapower ethos fit for an era of intensifying geopolitical competition, and preserve global stability, security and prosperity. We would like to thank our sponsors sincerely for their important contribution.

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www.geostrategy.org.uk/sea-power-conference-2025/