



# Future Navy Vision

2006





## The Future Navy

Britain is pre-eminently a maritime nation whose people will continue to rely on the unhindered use of the sea for their security, prosperity and well-being.

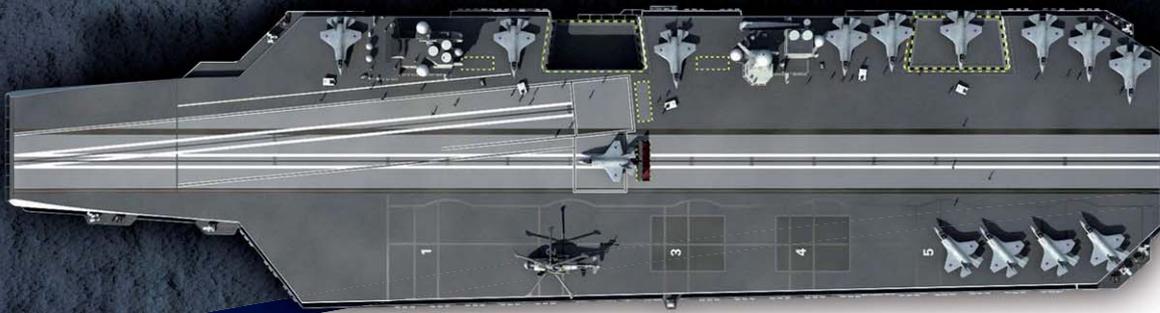
The world faces an uncertain, rapidly changing and competitive global environment in the early decades of the 21st century.

My vision envisages a Royal Navy that in supporting the UK's Defence Aim will contribute vitally and decisively to the security of the UK, to the preservation of international order at sea and to the promotion of our national values and interests in the wider world.

## Strategic Context

We have already entered an era shaped by the rapid globalization of every aspect of human activity, by accelerated technological development and by the prospect of geo-strategic changes of unprecedented scale and complexity. Current trends suggest that terrorism, climate change, demographic shifts, religious tensions and increased competition for resources of all kinds will lead to crisis, confrontation and conflict. These threaten global, regional and national prosperity, stability and security and may strengthen the hand of those who oppose the liberal trading values of the international order on which we depend. Accordingly nations like ours will have to manage the consequences of crises and shocks, both natural and man-made, in a geo-political landscape characterised by volatility, complexity and surprise.

We in the UK, while wishing to maintain a leading role, will continue to work with our established NATO allies, our European partners and our friends in the wider world to contain crises and mitigate risk. Accordingly, the sea, as the indispensable medium for trade and access to areas of strategic interest, remains crucial to our economic vitality and our ability to protect our country and our friends. Early in crisis in particular, when host nation support and basing or over-flight permission cannot be guaranteed, maritime forces will be the principal means by which political and diplomatic influence and, if necessary, decisive force can be applied - and at acceptable levels of risk and without the need for long term commitment or an extended engagement.

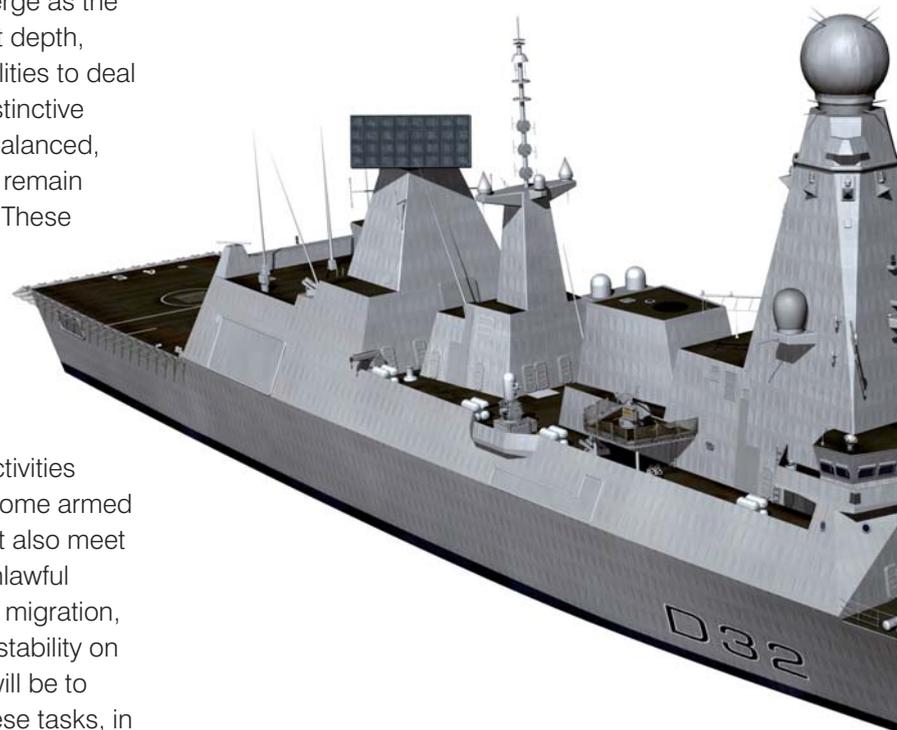


## Strategic Vision

In our inter-connected world, the UK, with its global interests and diverse security concerns, will continue to need expeditionary military forces as a powerful expression of national power and influence. Our ability to exploit the lawful use of the sea means that maritime forces, uniquely, are able to intervene at a time and place of political choice and to project power both at sea and against the land.

I envisage that our Navy will face a variety of challenges, both familiar and unfamiliar. We will continue to deploy the national Strategic Deterrent in our ballistic missile submarines to deter potential aggressors and to dissuade those who might threaten us with weapons of mass destruction. The possibility of inter-state conflict, although reduced, still exists and more extensive conventional, regular threats may re-emerge as the years go by. To that end, we should retain sufficient depth, resilience and expertise in our conventional capabilities to deal with these challenges. I am determined that our distinctive ethos, preparedness for war-fighting and broadly balanced, world class conventional combat capability should remain the distinguishing characteristic of the Royal Navy. These benchmark qualities will enable us to maintain our standing in the world, to defeat threats decisively at any level and to prevail in the most demanding situations.

However, we will also need to deal effectively with the threats posed by the proliferation of irregular activities undertaken by terrorists, criminals or insurgents - some armed with sophisticated systems and weapons. We must also meet the challenges associated with failed states and unlawful activities at sea, mostly associated with illicit trade, migration, trafficking and piracy, since these too threaten the stability on which world trade depends. Most important of all will be to identify and prevent emerging crisis or conflict. These tasks, in particular, will increasingly demand flexibility and adaptability in our people, platforms and skills if we are to prove effective in support of the UK's and the international community's global security and stability needs. Finally, at all times we must be ready to provide humanitarian and disaster relief. All of us - Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Reserves and the civilians who directly support us - will need to understand the nature of the challenges that we face and can expect to be trained and empowered to deal with these complex situations.



## Operational Context

I anticipate that our operational context over the coming years will feature:

Continued Strategic Deterrence.

Progressively integrated Joint operations at national and multinational levels.

Increased cooperation with other instruments of international and national power.

Strategic partnership and interoperability with the US.

Continued leadership within NATO and Europe.

Contributions to UN mandated forces.

More operations in coalitions of the willing and with less familiar partners in the wider world.

Maintenance of global treaties, agreements and commitments.

## Future Navy Capability

Our future capability will be structured to deliver:

**Maritime Force Projection** - the deliberate employment of military power or influence at sea and against the land in support of the realisation of a range of effects and outcomes in Joint, Combined and Inter-Agency situations.

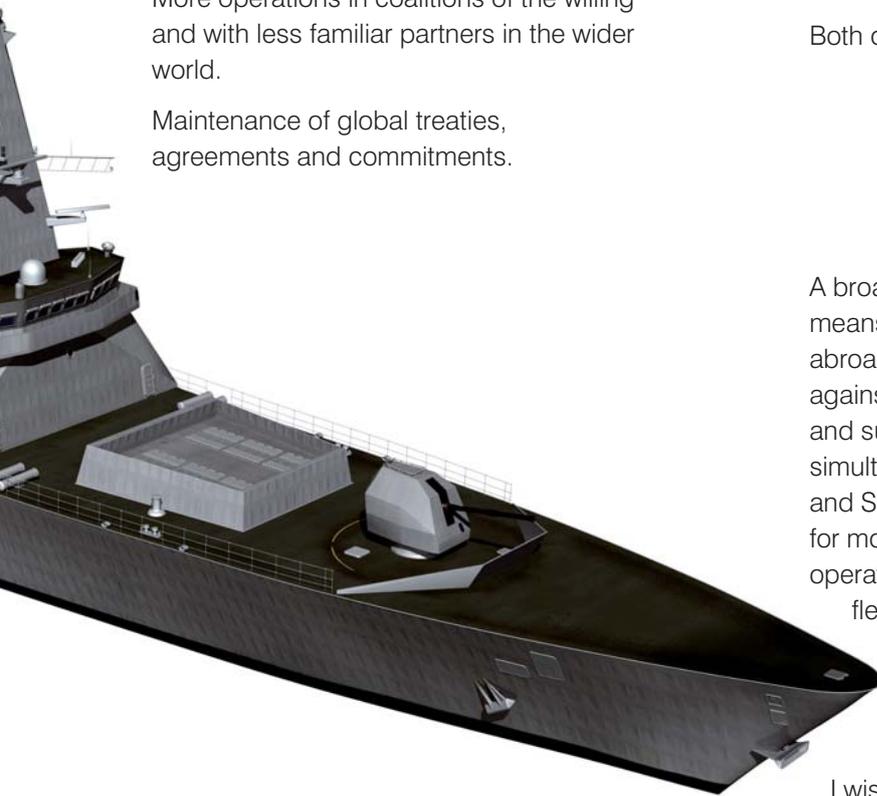
**Maritime Security** - the level of presence, assurance and capability that is required to defend the UK homeland and sovereign territories, at range where necessary; to preserve the free, safe and lawful use of the high seas; and to protect Joint, Allied and coalition forces in oceanic and littoral areas.

Both of these strategic outputs will be enabled by:

**Maritime Manoeuvre** - which represents our ability to use the unique access provided by the sea to apply force, presence or influence at a time or place of political choice.

A broadly balanced Fleet represents the most effective means of delivering this capability, both at home and abroad, as well as providing a reasonable assurance against the unexpected. This means that we will project and sustain Amphibious and Carrier Strike Task Groups simultaneously, configured for the most likely Medium and Small Scale operations, but with the surge capacity for more demanding, but less frequent Large Scale operations. Equally, our Fleet should have sufficient flexibility and size to deploy single ships and submarines on sustained, independent tasks on a routine basis, with the potential and capacity to switch quickly to combat and group operations

I wish to see us further improve our capacity for Joint, expeditionary and maritime security operations. Our aircraft carriers, deep-strike aircraft, specialist amphibious shipping and landing forces must be complemented by





increasingly versatile surface combatants, submarines and rotary wing assets. Our reach and sustainable presence, both in the deep ocean and the littoral, will continue to be enabled by specialist replenishment and support ships. When configured as a Joint sea base, which will reduce the logistics footprint ashore and provide a measure of force protection, these will increasingly be able to support Joint and Allied formations.

To take best advantage of new technologies and techniques as they become available and be better able to adapt to changing circumstances we should build versatility, capacity and agility into our platforms and systems. We must similarly invest appropriate skills and flexibility in our people by means of realistic through-life training and continuous education. Moreover, we will need to continue to harness the benefits of networked and automated systems and seek to employ innovative, pragmatic solutions, consistent with affordability, the demands of the environment and optimal through-life capability management. Progressively, we must exploit robotics, unmanned vehicles and loitering systems - to assist with command and control and to support intelligence, surveillance, precision attack and Special Forces missions - together with more sophisticated mine-warfare, and environmental support. In order to heighten the initiative in these areas, we must be more active in exploring the boundaries of what is achievable by rigorous experimentation and applied research.

Our people remain our most potent and flexible asset. Taut manning, the demands of expeditionary operations and the operation of complex systems are all very demanding of our people. Therefore, in the face of what is still a challenging life at sea, we will only attract and retain high quality personnel if we provide a sense of vocation, interesting employment and attractive prospects. The reasonable

expectations of work/life balance will only be satisfied by strong leadership at all levels, responsive management and appropriate training and education, all linked to flexible career structures and opportunities, and underpinned by appropriate conditions of service, remuneration and care for families. Above all, in line with its unique heritage, the Royal Navy will continue, when necessary, to go in harm's way to deter and defeat both the regular and irregular threats to our and other nations' security and well-being. In this technologically enabled and fast-changing world, only our people can make this happen.

## Implementing the Vision

This vision will be articulated in greater detail and implemented through:

**The Naval Strategic Plan** - which will guide the decisions of senior Commanders and Maritime Headquarters staffs.

**The Future Maritime Operational Concept** - which will describe how the Royal Navy will operate with other Joint capabilities, Allies and partners within the Maritime Environment.

Admiral Sir Jonathon Band KCB ADC  
First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff



Within the context of the Future Navy, the Royal Navy Strategic Communications Plan has been agreed and, in the interests of presenting an informed and unified message, all Royal Navy personnel should be familiar with the following Strategic Communications Themes:

## “RN Strategic Communications Themes”

**Modern and Relevant  
Capable and Resilient  
Top Class Employer of Top Class People**

These are supported by a range of statements in the Royal Navy Strategic Communication Plan, which reflect the RN's ethos and capabilities, including:

**A safeguard for the UK's interests world-wide.**

**A unique combination of land, air and sea capabilities merged into a single, flexible and dynamic force.**

**A modern and capable force which can operate across the full spectrum of defence activity, and with constantly improving equipment.**

**Operates in harmony with the other two Armed Services, Other Government Departments and other nations.**

**Manned by resilient, well-trained and adaptable people, offering a wide range of employment opportunities.**

**A professional and innovative Service that seeks to develop individual potential.**

**A responsible organisation, sensitive to social and environmental issues.**

**Managed with a firm sense of direction, seeking efficiency yet responsive to change.**

