

News story: Royal Navy and Royal Marines train alongside partner naval forces

Around 60 Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel exercised with their counterparts from other countries during the five-month annual French naval deployment to the Indian Ocean and Far East, including the first ever four-part maritime exercise involving France, Japan, the UK and US.

The two-staged exercise named Forager Deux and Arc 17 took place in the sea and in the skies near to Japan, Guam, and Tinian, with the purpose of enhancing joint operating between the UK and international partners and deepening Defence cooperation.

In addition to UK maritime personnel, the exercise also included two Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopters from the UK's Commando Helicopter Force, which as part of a week-long practice assault moved 330 French, Japanese and American troops to and from Tinian.

UK forces have been on board French assault ship FS Mistral since March as part of the Jeanne d'Arc 2017 French task group, which has visited Singapore, Sri Lanka, Japan, Guam, Australia and Vietnam.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mark Lancaster said:

Working shoulder-to-shoulder with French forces, as well as personnel from other partners' navies, shows the flexibility of our world class Armed Forces.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines play an important role carrying out Britain's commitment to international maritime security, as well as protecting our own shores.

Several instalments of training and Defence Engagement have taken place as part of this deployment.

This week, UK personnel worked alongside French and Egyptian armed forces when the Jeanne D'Arc task group arrived in Egypt to take part in Exercise Cleopatra. The cross-decking exercise, which saw UK Merlins land on the Egyptian warship ENS Nasser, was the latest in a series of multilateral amphibious exercises that the UK has taken part in throughout the five month deployment.