

# News story: UK government ministers attend first maritime trade mission in China

A first of its kind, 27 of the UK's leading maritime companies, including MJM Group and Survitec Group are expected to attend the forum which will include a UK maritime showcase.

With the UK maritime industry directly supporting 500,000 jobs and contributing £22.2 billion to UK GDP the visit will be an opportunity for the UK government to strengthen maritime trade links between the UK and China and establish new partnerships between UK and Chinese companies.

As the government's champion for the maritime sector, Shipping and Ports Minister John Hayes will lead a number of events at the forum including the visit on board RMS Queen Mary 2 which is in Shanghai and promoting UK excellence in the maritime industry.

The Department for International Trade is working with Maritime UK and Pudong local government to identify new maritime trade and investment opportunities for both the UK and China and, in partnership with Maritime UK, the Maritime Minister will take the opportunity to highlight the UK as the world's maritime centre providing a complete package for the industry's businesses.

Maritime trade is central to the Belt and Road Initiative and the UK strongly supports its vision of a more interconnected world. UK companies are already working with their Chinese counterparts to deliver Belt and Road Initiative projects in third countries.

International Trade Minister, Mark Garnier, said:

The UK's maritime industry is world leading, generating an impressive £22 billion for our economy. China has ambitious plans to develop its marine sector and UK businesses have the skills, expertise, people and infrastructure to help them achieve their objectives.

As the UK leaves the EU, we are determined to take advantage of the opportunities opening up and will work with our thriving marine sector to develop stronger trade links with China and secure our place as a global trading nation.

Maritime Minister, John Hayes, said:

The UK is a world class maritime centre that provides a strong and resilient backbone to our economy. We are excited about continuing

our strong trading relationship with China and to celebrate the growing link between our 2 nations.

This week will again highlight that the UK is a fantastic location for Chinese maritime firms to invest in, while also highlighting our world-leading expertise.

The International Trade Minister will also visit the International Investment and Trade Fair in Zhengzhou, Henan. Henan is China's third most populous province and aspires to become Asia's largest rail transport hub.

Over 400 delegates and groups visited the trade fair last year with more than 20,000 domestic and foreign exhibitors in attendance. The local government has invited the UK to be the 'Country of Honour' at the trade fair providing an opportunity for government and businesses to strengthen UK-Henan links.