

Press release: Navy vessel to be sent to the Channel

HMS Mersey will support Border Force and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in their efforts to patrol the stretch of water, keep the UK border secure and prevent loss of life.

The Navy vessel was tasked to the Channel this evening following discussions between the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence. The cost of the ship's deployment will be met by the Home Office.

Commenting on the redeployment, Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

My focus continues to be on protecting the UK border and preventing loss of life in the Channel. For these reasons, the Government has decided to deploy a navy vessel, HMS Mersey, to support our existing efforts. This will be an interim measure while the two Border Force cutters I have redeployed from abroad make their way back to UK waters.

It is vital that we are working on all fronts to tackle this ongoing situation and I am grateful to Border Force and other agencies for the tireless work they have done in response to this activity.

Border Force has 5 cutters and 6 coastal patrol vessels (CPVs) and their deployment is kept under constant review. 2 Coastal Patrol Vessels and 2 cutters, HMC Vigilant and HMC Searcher, are currently deployed in the Channel working as part of an enhanced patrol rotation.

3 cutters, HMC Valiant, Protector and Seeker, are abroad. HMC Protector and Seeker will be returning to the UK shortly. The UK will continue its commitment to the FRONTEX humanitarian mission by retaining a cutter in the Aegean.