

Press release: UK maritime forces complete French naval deployment

Two Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopters were also embarked as UK and French maritime personnel trained together across the Asia Pacific region.

Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Lancaster, said:

From fighting Daesh in the Middle East to jointly operating in Estonia as part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, our enduring defence partnership with France is stronger than ever as we work together to tackle global threats.

This deployment has demonstrated the ability of our world class Royal Navy and Royal Marines to operate alongside our French allies and international partners as Britain delivers on its commitment to global maritime security.

The annual French deployment Jeanne d'Arc included port calls at Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Japan, Guam, Australia and Egypt as well as various multinational amphibious exercises.

Throughout the deployment, UK personnel worked closely with international partners to strengthen defence cooperation in the region. British troops participated in the first ever four-part maritime exercise involving France, Japan, the UK and US, where as part of a week-long practice assault, the two Merlins moved 330 troops from the four nations to and from the island of Tinian.

UK troops also met with the Vietnam People's Navy in Ho Chi Minh City to compare national maritime operating procedures and exchange experiences, and during a port call to Egypt, British forces took part in a cross-decking exercise alongside French and Egyptian Armed Forces.

Through the 2010 Lancaster House Treaties, the UK and France are continuing to strengthen an ever closer bilateral defence and security relationship. As well as fighting side by side as allies in NATO and the Global Coalition, the two nations are working together as partners in defence equipment and capability programmes such as the [UK-France Future Cruise/Anti-Ship Weapon programme](#).