

# Royal Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel HMS Spey visits Solomon Islands

Since December 2021, HMS Spey has travelled from the UK via Hawaii, conducting a number of engagements along the way. In January the ship delivered water and medical supplies as part of the international response to the Hunga-Tonga volcanic eruption and in February deployed a medical team to deliver COVID booster vaccinations and dental treatments to the people of Pitcairn Island.

British High Commissioner Tom Coward said:

I am delighted to welcome HMS Spey to Solomon Islands. During its time here I hope that HMS Spey is of huge value to Solomon Islands supporting maritime surveillance and fisheries protection. I most of all hope this visit will mark the establishment of a close relationship between HMS Spey and Solomon Islands and further strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two countries.

One of the greenest ships in the fleet, Spey has also worked with regional partners to carry out environmental and hydrographic surveys as well as water sampling to aid studies on climate change. Her recent work in support of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) has seen the ship contribute to the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported fisheries activity.

HMS Spey Commanding Officer, Commander Mike Proudman, said:

It is a privilege to be able to support Solomon Islands through EEZ patrols and visible presence. As part of our mission in the Indo-Asia Pacific, we are building understanding of some of the challenges facing the area, and this is an important task that will help to safeguard their natural resource as well as contribute to maritime security.

HMS Spey is on a five-year mission to the Indo-Pacific region alongside her sister HMS Tamar. The mission so far has seen the ship visit Hawaii, Tahiti, Pitcairn, the Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu.

While transiting Solomon Island waters, HMS Spey will work closely with Solomon Islands RSIPF Maritime Wing and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), including on matters of maritime and fisheries surveillance.

This visit will observe all COVID protocols in force in Solomon Islands and involve no direct personal contact between those onboard and onshore staff.