



HM Government

# National Strategy for Maritime Security

CP 724





# National Strategy for Maritime Security

Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for Transport  
by Command of Her Majesty

August 2022



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Image: A laden container ship approaching docks in fair weather at either dusk or dawn.

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# Foreword

As an island nation with significant global interests, the importance of the maritime sector to the United Kingdom is unquestionable. It has been, and will continue to be, the lifeblood of our nation's economy.

Published just over a year ago, the Integrated Review reaffirmed that the first duty of any government is to protect our people, our homeland, and our democracy. From a maritime perspective this is about protecting our ports, shipping routes and subsea infrastructure to ensure the free flow of goods and information that support our economy. It is about securing the waters of the UK and our Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, particularly the UK Marine Area (UKMA) at home, which encompasses both our Territorial Sea and the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that surrounds it. We will protect the maritime domain and use our world-leading capabilities to monitor the seas and ocean, acting whenever and wherever we need to.

This strategy is being published at a time of increased global tension, Russia's illegal war on Ukraine has demonstrated the UK's pivotal role in supporting an international order based on rules and principles. The barbarism and war crimes being committed in Ukraine are the kind of acts that had been consigned to the history books. The UK will develop our security and economic partnerships to deter and tackle aggression, coercion, and, oppression wherever it may appear.

The UK will merge hard security and economic security, while building stronger global alliances to bring to bear the full range of our capabilities in championing the values that underpin our society. This puts Global Britain into action, working with international partners and institutions to uphold the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea including freedom of navigation, maintaining the international order and building a global network of liberty.

Leaving the European Union has given us the ability to develop policies and strategies that represent the priorities and values that matter most to the British people. The National Strategy for Maritime Security captures this. It clearly defines maritime security and what this means for the UK, recognising the far-reaching impacts from sources of insecurity on the British people and our global interests.

It sets strategic objectives and commitments that government will implement over the next five years and sets out how the implementation of the strategy will be monitored.

This strategy looks at how the UK can continue to strengthen the defences of the maritime sector, setting out robust, whole system approaches to emerging threats. Using our strength in security and diplomacy, our economic heft and our will and agility to lead the way in tackling some of the most challenging problems facing the international order. It will look forward to identify and mitigate future threats; from, in, and under the water. It draws on a rigorous evidence base from the UK Maritime Risk Assessment and incorporates input from industry, academia, and our global partners.

Maritime Security is a whole of government endeavour, but as the five Secretaries of State responsible for the majority of this activity we are delighted to present this strategy which sets out the huge range of work planned to ensure the protection of our nation's maritime interests.



**Rt. Hon. George Eustice**  
Secretary of State for  
Environment, Food  
and Rural Affairs



**Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps**  
Secretary of  
State for Transport



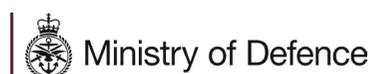
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the Home Department



**Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss**  
Secretary of State for  
Foreign, Commonwealth  
and Development Affairs



**Rt. Hon. Ben Wallace**  
Secretary of  
State for Defence



# United Kingdom



**95%**

95% of all goods by weight were imported or exported by Sea in 2020<sup>1</sup>



**70%**

70% Of all UK tonnage traffic was handled by 10 UK ports, accounting for 301 million tonnes<sup>3</sup>

## UK Energy

Maritime is crucial to the UK energy market

Liquid bulk - of which crude oil in the biggest subgroup - accounts for 39% of port freight tonnage in 2020<sup>4</sup>



Facilitates offshore oil and gas as well as renewable wind and tidal



Offshore wind farms produced 27% more electricity in 2020 compared to the previous year. Offshore wind has seen higher levels of new capacity in recent years with almost half being installed since 2016.<sup>5</sup>

**27%**



**99%**

Approximately 99% of the UK's and global telecoms traffic is transmitted via subsea cable<sup>2</sup>



**440 million TONNES**

UK Ports handled 440 million tonnes of cargo in 2020<sup>6</sup>

## The MCA<sup>7</sup>

2,208 UK civilian search and rescue helicopter taskings



1,226 People rescued



232 People assisted



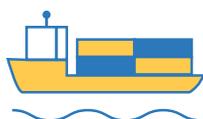
## International

**\$3 trillion**

\$3 trillion predicted value of the global ocean economy<sup>8</sup> by 2030<sup>9</sup>

**4th**

The UK maritime industry is 4th against EU countries in terms of total tonnage handled as of 2019. The UK's two largest ports, London and Grimsby & Immingham rank 16th and 17th respectively in terms of tonnage handled against all EU ports.<sup>10, 11, 12</sup>



Around 80 per cent of global trade by volume and over 70 per cent of global trade by value are carried by sea and are handled by ports worldwide.<sup>13</sup>



UK registered trading fleet was 24th largest in the world (in DWT, 2020). The Crown Dependencies were 17th.<sup>14</sup>

**10th**

If taken as a group, the Red Ensign group would have the 10th largest registered trading fleet in the world at the end of 2021. The UK accounts for 21% of the Red Ensign Group's deadweight tonnage, whilst the Crown Dependencies (effectively the Isle of Man) account for 45% and the Overseas Territories account for 34%.<sup>15</sup>



Defence: 74 Ships at sea across all 7 continents.<sup>16</sup>



The Royal Navy will increase by 50% in tonnage by 2030 compared to 2015.<sup>17</sup>

Image: The sea crashing against rocks taken from above from a heliport.



# Executive summary

1. As an island nation with global interests, the UK has a deep, historic connection to the seas and the ocean. For centuries, the maritime sector has played a critical role in the growth and prosperity of the UK by supporting trade and securing the vital supply routes to keep our nation running. Today, 95% of all goods by weight are imported or exported by sea<sup>18</sup> and 99% of the UK's international communications are carried through subsea fibre optic cables.<sup>19</sup>
2. It is vitally important that the maritime domain<sup>20</sup> is secure. The globally interconnected domain consists of infrastructure and essential supply chains. Considerations of security need to remain at the fore of maritime policy. Protecting the functions of the supply chain networks are vital to ensuring that impacts are not felt by people in their daily lives.
3. The National Strategy for Maritime Security sets out the current and future issues facing government and the maritime sector. It draws on expertise and capabilities from a range of government departments and sets out clear strategic objectives and commitments over the coming five years to create a more secure, prosperous, and sustainable maritime sector.
4. Presenting the important issues and our objectives publicly will support industry, the public, academia, and our international partners in understanding the breadth and depth of work being undertaken to improve global maritime security.
5. In March 2021, the government launched 'Global Britain in a Competitive Age: The Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy' (the 'Integrated Review'). It describes the government's vision for the UK's role in the world over the next decade and the action it will take to 2025. It identifies significant new changes to the international order and the UK's place in the world. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated the intensified competition between states over competing interests, norms, and values. This is being demonstrated through disruption of essential shipping lanes, disputes over maritime boundaries, or the use of hard and soft power by states to achieve narrowly focused objectives.

6. The government's primary responsibility is the protection of our people, our homeland, and our democracy.<sup>21</sup> From the maritime perspective this means the protection of our borders and essential trade routes, working with international partners to uphold the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), including ensuring freedom of navigation and adherence to the international order which supports our continued way of life.
7. Government is committed to deploying the full range of capabilities in tackling these emerging challenges, through the use of hard security and economic security we will take a whole of government approach. We will work with partners and build new global alliances to challenge states and non-state actors that threaten the maritime sector and the international order.
8. To support our whole of government approach the UK has created a broad, simple definition for maritime security, this ensures all maritime security interests can be properly considered, assessed, and planned for. This strategy defines maritime security in terms of **upholding laws, regulations, and norms to deliver a free, fair, and open maritime domain.**
9. Over the next five years, government will work towards five Strategic Objectives to further develop our world-leading approach to maritime security. These Strategic Objectives are interconnected and form the basis of this strategy document.
  - 1: Protecting our homeland
  - 2: Responding to threats
  - 3: Ensuring prosperity
  - 4: Championing our values
  - 5: Supporting a secure, resilient ocean

Maritime Security is about upholding laws, regulations, and norms to deliver a free, fair, and open maritime domain.



## Protecting our homeland

Delivering the world's most effective maritime security framework for our borders, ports and infrastructure

## Responding to threats

Deploying a whole system response to bring world-leading capabilities and expertise to bear in responding to new and emerging threats

## Ensuring prosperity

Ensuring the security of international shipping, the unimpeded transmission of goods, information and energy to support continued global development and our economic prosperity

## Championing values

Championing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas are carried out

## Supporting a secure, resilient ocean

To work towards an ocean that is effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse.





Image: Close-up aerial view of the bow of a ship moving through the open ocean.

# Overview

## The UK's Approach

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1. Following the publication of the Integrated Review, the time is now right to publish a new National Strategy for Maritime Security. The government published its first strategy for maritime security in 2014, setting out an approach to maritime security based around integration and collaboration both domestically and internationally. The 2014 strategy set the scene for a number of developments in the UK's approach, which have been highly successful.
2. In particular, government has strengthened the UK's maritime security capabilities by establishing the Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) in 2019. The JMSC is at the centre of our response to maritime security. It works with stakeholders across government to develop a 'Whole System Response' to maritime security threats. Through the provision of a common understanding of maritime risk and threat, the JMSC enables government to tackle new challenges. It works across government to develop robust, well exercised multi-agency frameworks for responding to new and emerging threats.
3. The JMSC's ability to cohere and augment the responses of UK agencies to complex maritime incidents both at home and abroad has demonstrated the value of a single coordinating maritime security body within government.
4. Published in 2019, Maritime 2050 – Navigating the Future sets a long-term vision for the UK over the coming 30 years. This document has been pivotal in setting an agreed position between government and industry on the future direction of the maritime sector over the coming decades. This strategy sets out our plan for the next five years to get us closer to the security ambitions set-out in Maritime 2050.
5. Government has also continued to work with international partners to tackle Serious and Organised Crime (SOC), piracy, terrorism, and other security threats. We will maintain a constant global security presence, with more ships, submarines, sailors, and marines deployed, protecting shipping lanes and upholding freedom of navigation. This work involves collaboration with the shipping industry and our international partners.

Image: HMS Trent at sea undertaking joint anti-piracy exercises with the Nigerian Forces.



6. In developing this strategy, the expertise and experience from strategy, policy and operational teams across government has been utilised. Harnessing science and technology and utilising subject matter experts, our approach has been robust, and evidence based. We have worked with academia and industry to understand a range of perspectives and ensure the most current thinking is included in the strategy.
7. Our five Strategic Objectives set out the approach government will take in delivering the activity required to protect the UK, the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.



Image: Royal Marine Boarding team continues to conduct Alongside Assurance operations from HMS Trent. In the background is a small fishing vessel that was visited to observe fishery patterns to gain more understanding of regional activity.

**Table 1- Strategic Objectives and Statements of Intent.**

<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Statement of intent</b>
<b>Protecting our homeland</b>	<p>Delivering the world's most effective maritime security framework for our borders, ports and infrastructure, government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure the security of our borders, ports and maritime infrastructure with Devolved Administrations, Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.</li> <li>• Support the maritime sector to be resilient against cyber attack and other threats with resilient systems and networks to protect data.</li> <li>• Set out the standards and requirements for border infrastructure and facilities, in partnership with industry, to support investment to speed up and secure the passage of people and goods.</li> </ul>
<b>Responding to threats</b>	<p>Deploying a whole system response to bring world-leading capabilities and expertise to bear in responding to new and emerging threats, government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further develop and effectively utilise world leading Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities.</li> <li>• Create a secure environment which limits the ability of terrorist and organised criminal groups to operate.</li> <li>• Develop comprehensive approaches to defend the integrity of our maritime interests from state threats.</li> <li>• Continue to develop and establish strong working relationships, partnerships, and alliances with International Partners, such as the continued commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the announcement of the AUKUS partnership.</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring prosperity</b>	<p>Ensuring the security of international shipping, the unimpeded transmission of goods, information, and energy to support continued global development and our economic prosperity, government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with international partners to tackle Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs), piracy and other forms of criminal activity which threaten global prosperity.</li> <li>• Monitor chokepoints and strategic seaways to ensure the free movement of goods and trade.</li> <li>• Create a robust, secure, and diverse system to protect essential subsea infrastructure.</li> </ul>

Strategic Objective	Statement of intent
<b>Championing our values</b>	<p>Championing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas are carried out, government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uphold and promote compliance with the rights and obligations of UNCLOS including freedom of navigation.<sup>22</sup></li> <li>• Work with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to maintain a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.</li> <li>• Lead by example to champion free trade and global cooperation to limit instability on the world's ocean.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting a secure, resilient ocean</b>	<p>To work towards an ocean that is effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse, government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion sustainable governance of the ocean, developing maritime security approaches which enforce environmental regulations.</li> <li>• Consider changes to our climate as integral to supporting a mature maritime security approach.</li> <li>• Work with allies and partners to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment.</li> </ul>

8. In defining maritime security in terms of *upholding laws, regulations, and norms to deliver a free, fair, and open maritime domain*; government will tackle the range of issues facing the UK and our international partners in the maritime domain.
9. The UK will continue to take a collaborative approach to solving problems. We will continue to use new technologies and scientific understanding to support the national and global maritime industries in combatting well known and emerging risks, and also seize opportunities to secure a Global Britain with a competitive advantage.

Image: BIOT patrol vessel patrolling British Indian Ocean Territory waters.



## The UK's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

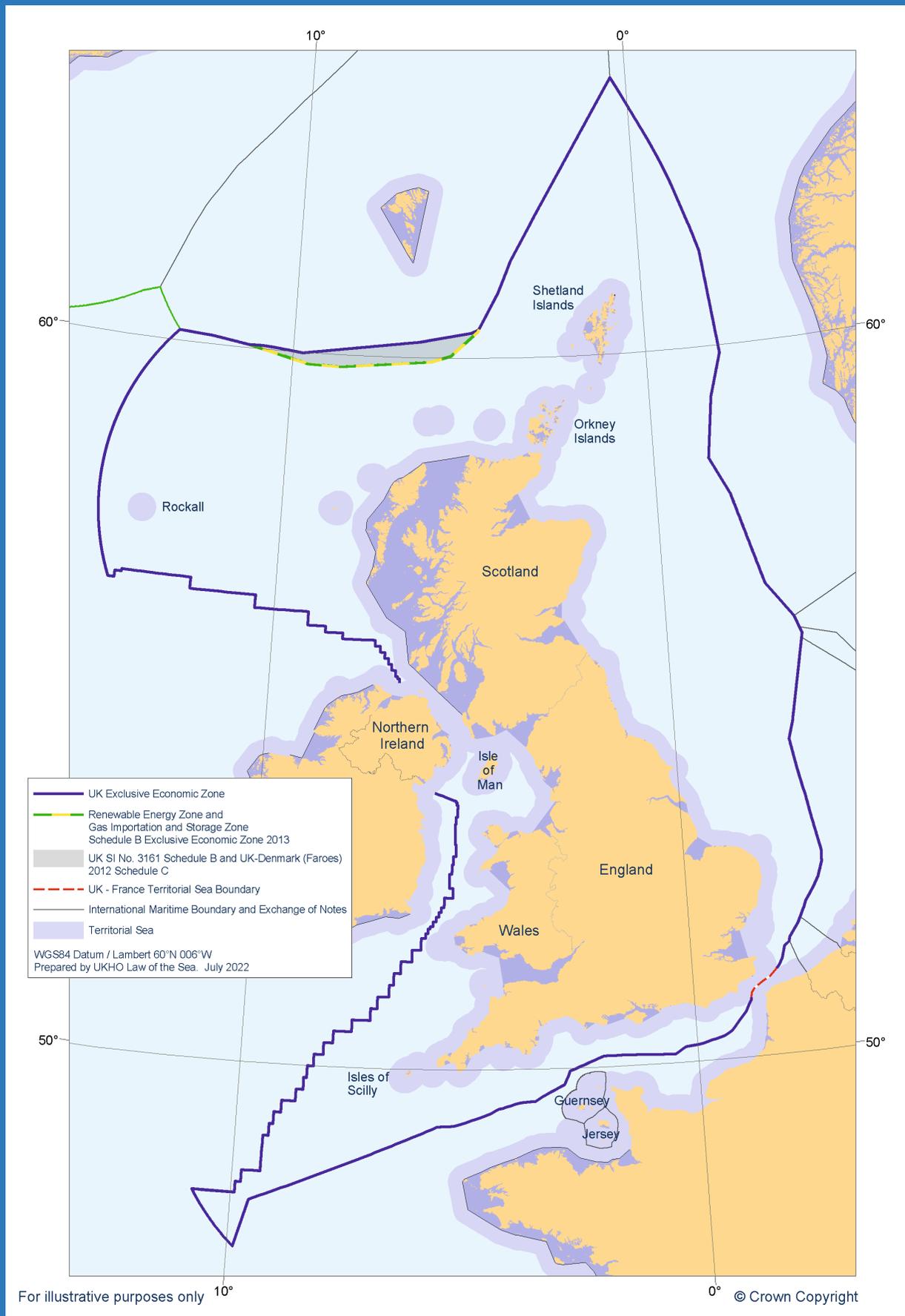
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10. The ocean is one of the most contested and complex global arenas, with a wide range of civil, military, and paramilitary actors.
11. The Integrated Review sets out the UK's absolute commitment to upholding UNCLOS in all its dimensions, as an essential enabler of global prosperity, security, and a healthy planet. UNCLOS is the cornerstone of international law on ocean-related issues and the framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas, including those described in this strategy, must be conducted.
12. UNCLOS sets out rights and obligations on a wide range of issues including: shipping, fishing, seabed mining, conservation, cable-laying, freedom of navigation and the right to establish maritime zones such as the Territorial Sea, Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf.
13. We support, defend, and uphold international law by developing and delivering UK maritime policy that recognises the central role of UNCLOS. UNCLOS is critical to the UK's economic, environmental and security interests. By upholding UNCLOS, we aim to ensure that all nations abide by the same clear rules, making international relations more predictable and peaceful.

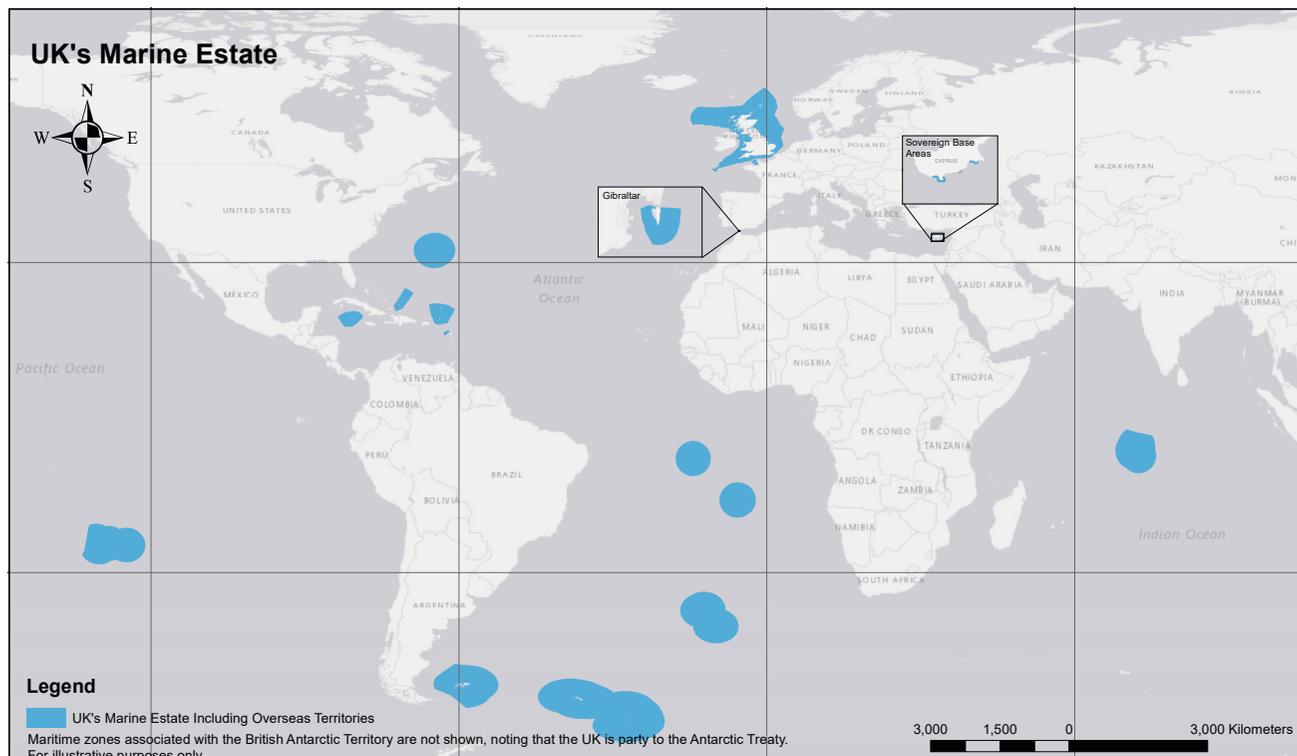
## The Physical Maritime Domain

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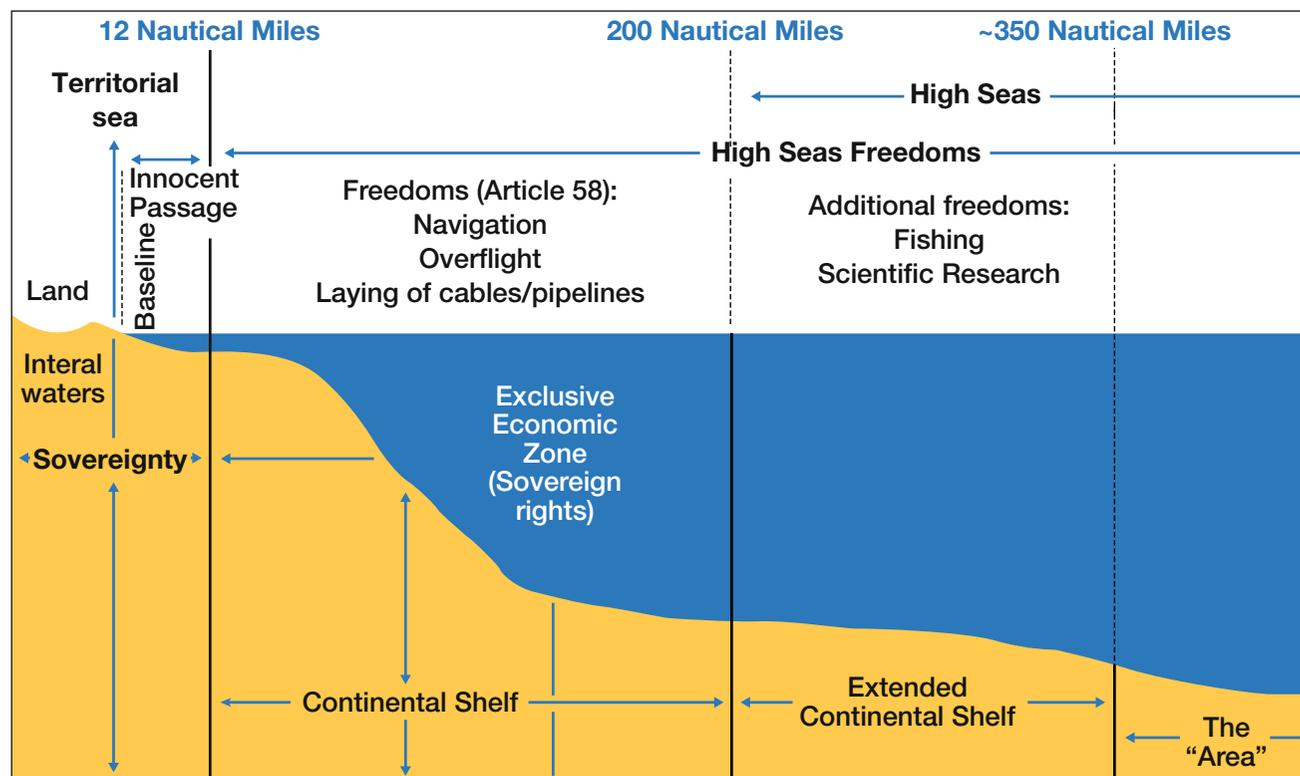
14. To understand maritime security, it is essential to outline the maritime domain in its entirety. This contributes to our understanding of the arena in which maritime security actors operate. UNCLOS sets the geographical limits of maritime zones and establishes rights and responsibilities of coastal states and flag states.
15. Accurate geospatial data is needed to officially calculate the legal maritime limits and boundaries of coastal states. Therefore, marine science critically underpins our authority under UNCLOS to claim, administer and lawfully prosecute infringements in our waters.
16. The UK's marine estate, including the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, is vast and constitutes the 5th largest in the world. The metropolitan UK's marine area (UKMA) encompasses both the Territorial Sea and the Exclusive Economic Zone around the UK. The challenge is, at present only around 20% of the world's seabed and only 10% of the UK's global marine area has been mapped to modern standards, partly caused by challenges with data collection, access, standards, and coordination.
17. However, as highlighted in the Integrated Review, the world is entering the 'informational age' and this strategy recognises the ocean as the next frontier to be opened up by advances in technology driven by the ever-increasing demand for more accurate and reliable marine geospatial information by the public and private sectors of all nations. Therefore, government has established the UK Centre for Seabed Mapping hosted by the UK Hydrographic Office. As a centre of excellence, it will coordinate cross-government and industry collaboration in order to increase the quantity, quality, and availability of data in the marine domain, which will inform government to support security, prosperity, and environmental objectives.



**Figure 1:** Map showing the UK Marine Area, including the marine area of the Crown Dependencies of the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey.



**Figure 2:** Map of the UK marine estate including Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. Note maritime zones associated with the British Antarctic Territory are not shown, noting that the UK is party to the Antarctic Treaty. Maritime space is illustrative only as at 1 August 2022. It is without prejudice to future limits and boundaries.



**Figure 3:** Overview of UNCLOS Maritime Zones.<sup>23</sup>

- **Baseline:** The normal baseline for measuring the breadth of the territorial sea is the low-water line along the coast as marked on large-scale charts officially recognised by the coastal state.
- **Internal Waters:** Covers all water and waterways on the landward side of the baseline. The UK is responsible for setting laws and regulating the use of these internal waters.
- **Territorial Sea:** From the baseline up to 12 nautical miles (nm). The UK is responsible for setting laws and regulating the use of these waters, subject to the right of vessels from other states to exercise innocent passage or transit passage (where the waters constitute an international strait). A further 12 nm beyond the territorial sea, a State can establish a Contiguous Zone, in which it can continue to enforce laws in four areas: customs, taxation, immigration and pollution, to prevent breaches of these laws within its territory or territorial sea or to punish infringements of these laws in its territory or territorial sea.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** This extends from the edge of the territorial sea up to 200 nm from the baseline. Within this area, coastal states have sovereign rights with respect to exploring and exploiting, conserving, and managing natural resources and jurisdiction with regard to marine scientific research, the protection and preservation of the marine environment and the establishment and use of artificial islands, installations, and structures, as well as some other rights provided by UNCLOS. The UK EEZ is the area within which the UK is responsible for enforcing fishing measures. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have their own zones within the EEZ in which they are responsible for fisheries enforcement.
- **Continental shelf:** Coastal states have a continental shelf as of right, extending to at least 200nm from their coastal baselines, subject to the rights of States with opposite or adjacent coasts. Subject to certain conditions, the continental shelf may extend beyond 200nm. The coastal state has exclusive sovereign rights for exploring, exploiting, and conserving the natural resources on the seabed in this zone, as well as some other rights.
- **High Seas:** The high seas are all parts of the ocean not included in the internal waters, territorial sea, EEZ or archipelagic waters of a state. The high seas are open to all states, who have various freedoms including navigation and overflight, laying of submarine cables and pipelines, construction of artificial islands and other installations, fishing, and scientific research. As a general rule, states have exclusive jurisdiction over their flagged vessels on the high seas.
- **The Area:** The Area is the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. Exploration and exploitation of the mineral resources of the Area are managed by the International Seabed Authority as the common heritage of mankind.

## Other Challenges Impacting on Maritime Security

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18. The National Strategy for Maritime Security 2014 outlined the most pressing challenges to maritime security at the time. This included terrorism, disruption to vital maritime routes, attacks on maritime infrastructure and shipping, transportation of illegal items by sea, people smuggling and human trafficking. This strategy recognises that these challenges are still current and seeks to address these. However, there are also new and emerging challenges impacting on maritime security such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, degradation of the marine environment and state-based threats.
19. The global COVID-19 Pandemic has demonstrated the highly connected world we live in. Responding to it has highlighted the importance of collaboration, multilateralism, and has shown that, in fighting the pandemic, 'no-one is safe until everyone is'.<sup>24</sup> The pandemic has highlighted the importance of protecting global supply chains and shipping routes, and how they can impact on the domestic stability of states. In recent years, we have seen how instability in countries can be used by terrorists and criminals to affect the global system.
20. Climate change presents a significant threat to our way of life. The changes we will see over the coming years and decades will continue to challenge the international order. They will also give rise to a wide range of new risks and opportunities to the maritime sector as a whole. This includes the opening of new trade routes through the Arctic or High North alongside increased global instability which may in turn create new forms of terrorism or criminality. Alongside this, the depletion and changing distribution of fish stocks may result in challenges for countries managing fish stocks and may spur Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.
21. There has been a resurgence of state-based threats, intensifying wider state competition and the erosion of the rules-based international order, making it harder to build consensus and tackle global threats. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has served to both demonstrate the threats to the international order while demonstrating the ability for global consensus and collaboration in the face of illegal actions.
22. Additionally, malicious cyber activity knows no international boundaries and has grown in terms of intensity, complexity, and severity. The UK's mitigation of risks against cyber threats within the maritime industry is more important than ever and will continue to be critical as the industry evolves with increasing automation.

23. Alongside this, Serious and Organised Crime continues to present a sustained threat to UK maritime security and prosperity in a range of areas. Organised crime groups engage in piracy, in smuggling illicit commodities such as controlled drugs and firearms, in people smuggling and in human trafficking – in doing so, putting lives and communities at risk to make a profit.

## Maritime Risk Assessment

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24. The strategy is informed by a comprehensive, cross-government Maritime Risk Assessment (MRA) to ensure all key risks are addressed. The MRA is reviewed regularly and informs the National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA). The likelihood and impact of particular risks are used to support wider government policy decisions and direct funding where appropriate. The MRA also supports our strategic objectives of protecting our homeland and responding to threats.
25. The key maritime security risks from the latest MRA are presented here in no particular priority order:
- Terrorism affecting the UK and its maritime interests, including attacks against cargo or passenger ships.
  - Disruption to vital maritime trade routes resulting from war, criminality, piracy, or changes in international norms.
  - Attack on UK maritime infrastructure or shipping, including cyber-attack.
  - The transportation of illegal items by sea, including weapons of mass destruction, controlled drugs, and arms.
  - People smuggling and human trafficking.

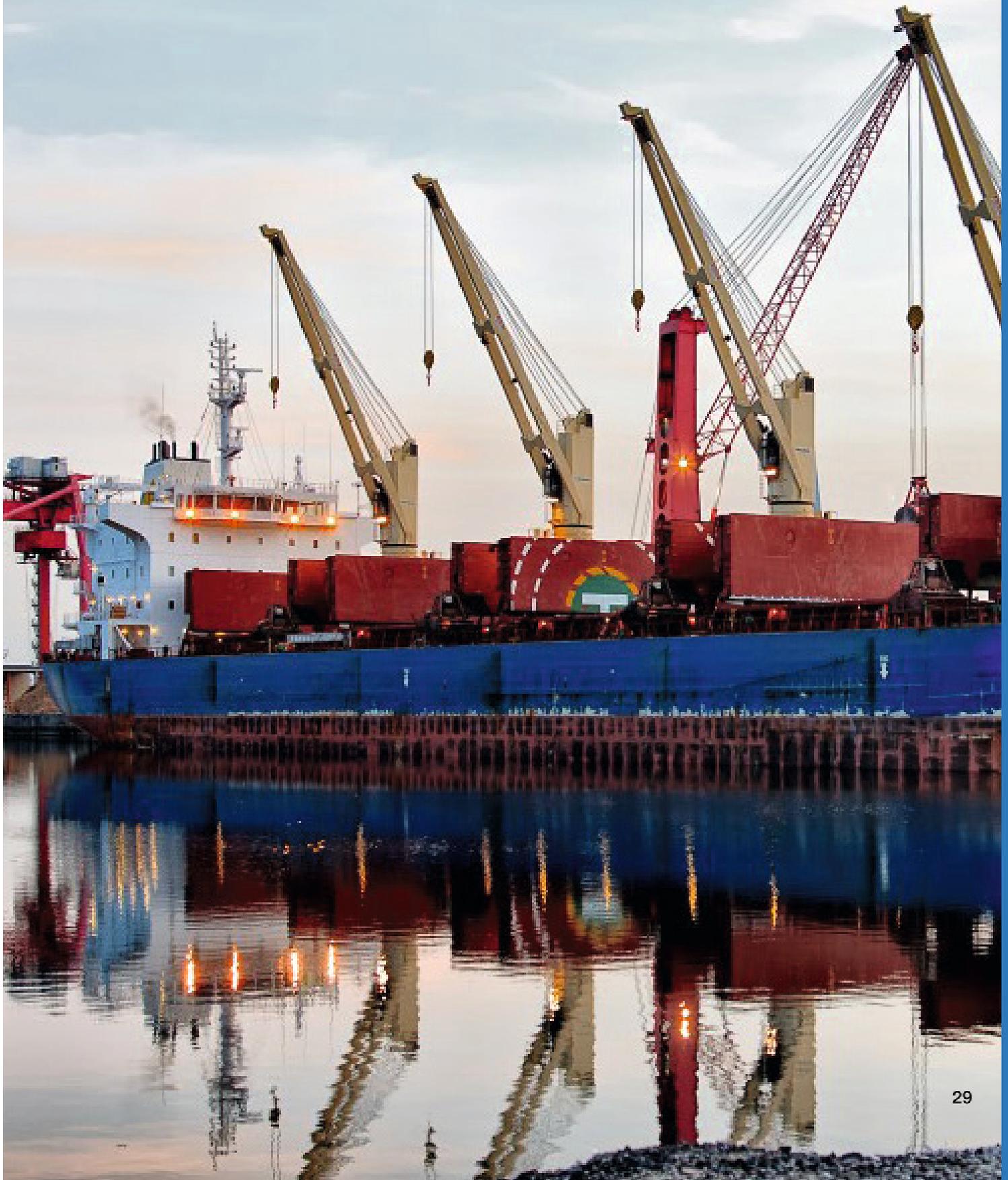
# Objective 1: Protecting our homeland

Delivering the world's most effective maritime security framework for our borders, ports and infrastructure, government will:

- Work to ensure the security of our borders, ports and maritime infrastructure with Devolved Administrations, Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.
- Support the maritime sector to be resilient against cyber attack and other threats with resilient systems and networks to protect data.
- Set out the standards and requirements for border infrastructure and facilities, in partnership with industry, to support investment to speed up and secure the passage of people and goods.

1. In protecting our homeland, we are ensuring the safety of people and goods as well as the security of the UK's marine estate. Maritime security can therefore be seen as an extension of the homeland or 'UK border'. This includes the maritime assets of the UK, Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and involves physical and digital protection of our ships, port facilities, and key maritime infrastructure. Our foreign policy rests on strong domestic foundations.
2. Government also has a responsibility to protect our underwater cultural heritage, with over 5500 sites of cultural significance globally. We will focus on in-situ preservation alongside safety and environmental management. This involves a number of government departments and agencies who focus on protecting military remains, cultural heritage and preventing illegal salvage activity of our historic and sensitive underwater sites.

Image: Bulk Carrier docked in Port of Bristol.



## Border Security

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3. The maritime domain provides a layer of deterrence and detection contributing to creating an effective border. Alongside the maritime domain there are ‘hard’ physical intervention points at ports and along our borders. The UK’s border is a vital asset for our safety, prosperity, and global reputation, it provides a unique intervention point to detect, disrupt, and respond to a range of security threats while enabling the travel and trade that underpin our way of life.
4. Border security is about facilitating the movement of legitimate trade and travellers, while ensuring the right measures are in place to deter hostile actors and prevent illicit cross-border movements of people and goods. Government takes a ‘layered’ approach to securing our borders with surveillance, control, and intervention matched to the most appropriate point.
5. In December 2020, government published the UK Border Strategy 2025 which sets out the vision for the UK border over the next five years as embracing innovation, simplifying processes for traders and travellers, and improving the security and biosecurity of the UK. Key amongst these transformations is to establish resilient ports of the future at border crossing points.
6. Border Force is the main agency responsible for securing the UK border, with Defence coordinating HMG’s operational response to countering small boat migration in the English Channel. Border Security is achieved by carrying out immigration and customs controls for people and goods entering the UK, with officers working at ports around the UK and the Crown Dependencies, at sea, inland, and overseas with our international partners. Border Force deploys its officers on an intelligence-led basis using both land and sea-based resources, maintaining a permanent presence at larger recognised ports catering for ferries, commercial cargo vessels, and cruise liners. To help improve the intelligence picture even further, **Border Force will introduce a new digital system to gather Advance Passenger Information from pleasure craft arrivals for the first time.** It is anticipated that further mandatory electronic reporting schemes will follow on.
7. Border Force Maritime Command’s fleet of Cutters and Coastal Patrol Vessels also plays a central role in reducing crime, tackling illegal migration, protecting the vulnerable, enabling the legitimate movement of people and goods to support economic prosperity, while reducing the risk from terrorism to the UK. This capability is also an integral part of the UK’s whole system approach to border security.



Image: Royal Marine Commandos from HMS Trent undertaking joint boarding exercises with Nigerian forces.

## Case Study – Motor Yacht KAHU, 2021

The Jamaican flagged MY KAHU was initially detected because of suspicious activity in the North Atlantic following her departure from Barbados. This suggested an intention to on-load an illicit cargo at sea. Enquiries established that the vessel had been under both FBI and the AFP (Australian Federal Police) suspicion of drug trafficking. Further, one of the crew on board was linked to a drugs OCG in the UK. The NCA subsequently coordinated a multi-agency operation.

Border Force Maritime Command were tasked to detect and interdict the KAHU as soon as possible due to the high probability that the drugs would be off-loaded as the vessel approached Northern Europe. Permission was sought and secured from the Jamaican authorities to interdict the vessel on the High Seas. In the meantime HMC Searcher and CPV Alert were deployed to east of Ushant to identify and monitor the KAHU.

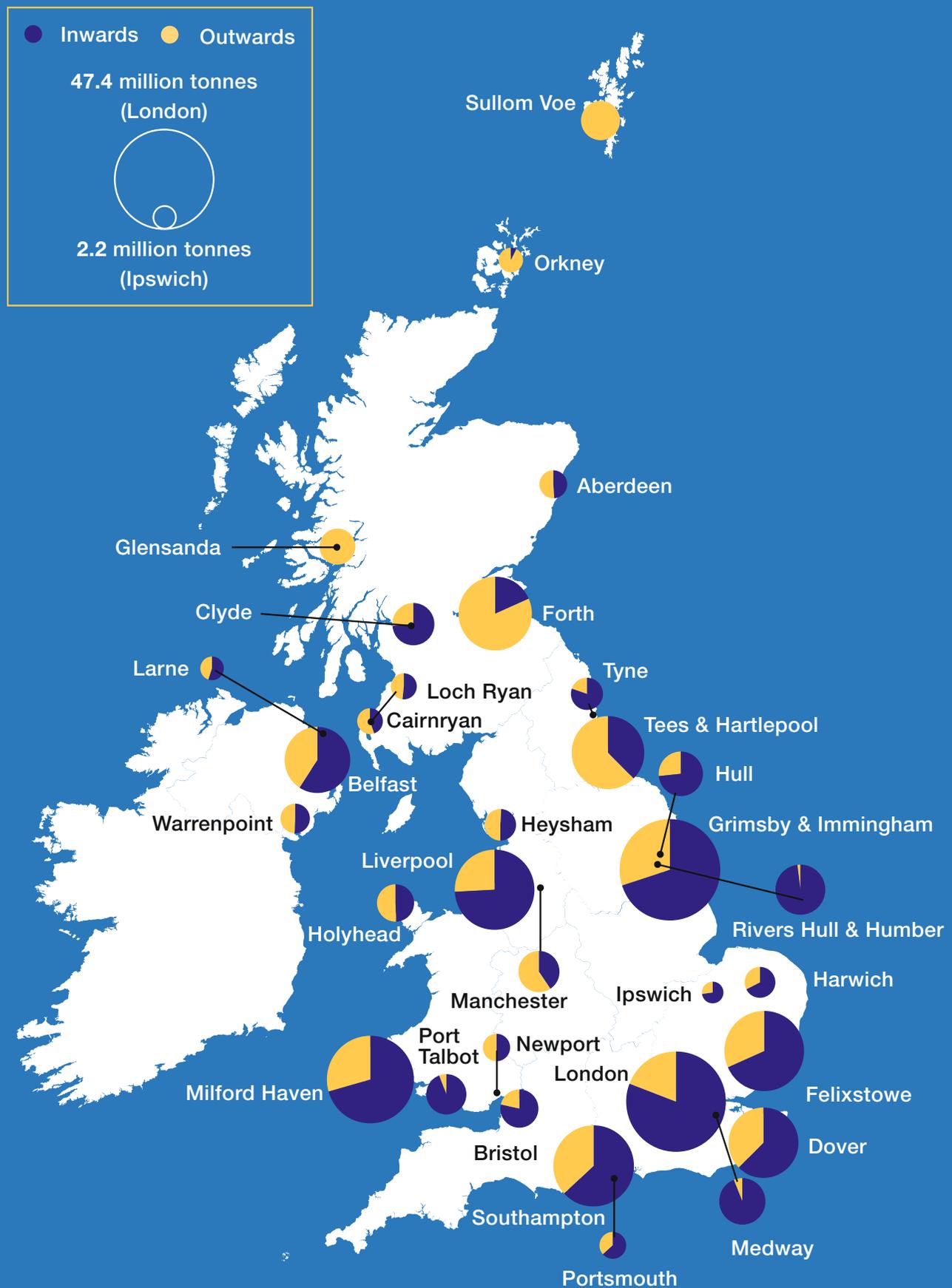
The MY KAHU was detected moving eastbound up the English Channel. Once authority was granted, HMC Searcher and CPV Alert carried out the interdiction on the High Seas, just to the east of the Casquets. Once aboard, the boarding team found six crewmen, who were arrested in relation to Drug Trafficking offences. Numerous dry bags suspected to contain cocaine were discovered below decks, clearly made ready to offload. Once in harbour, Border Force confirmed that there was a gross weight of 2370kg of cocaine within the vessel – the largest ever UK cocaine seizure from a pleasure craft.'

8. Crucially, Maritime Command ensures that security at ports is not undermined through the diversion of OCG activity elsewhere along our coast. **Government will procure a new fleet of Cutters and Coastal Patrol Vessels to maintain and further enhance Border Force's integral role in the UK's law enforcement and border security effort.**

## Port Security

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9. Maritime ports are our gateway to the ocean and trade routes of the world. As a result, ports are naturally attractive targets to those seeking to facilitate or perpetrate crime or terrorism. Robust port security complements border security, making our ports and coastline less attractive to those who wish to exploit the UK. It covers a wide range of threats, from trespassers and petty theft, through to counter terrorism, state sponsored cyber-attacks and smuggling by OCGs.
10. We have seen in the past that protestors can interrupt the operation of key national infrastructure, including ports, through low-level and civil offences which can cause serious disruption to the public. **Government is looking at options to prevent interference with the operation of key transport infrastructure.**
11. The protection of port facilities is conducted through preventative measures to deter and detect unlawful acts, primarily addressing physical security, access control and application of security procedures. As the maritime security regulator, government is responsible for the implementation of the International Shipping and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) and ensures its delivery through a robust maritime security compliance function.
12. Government will act as a regulator that our port sector can trust, continuing to provide Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs) with expert advice and guidance. In striving for continuous improvement, government will also utilise bilateral relationships with maritime authorities in other nations to ensure shared objectives on port security are understood.



**Figure 4:** Map of UK ports by tonnage and direction, for major ports over 2 million tonnes in 2020.<sup>25</sup>

13. Security at ports in the UK, Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies will continue to require assessment of risk and implementation of security measures according to legislation, instructions, and guidance. **Government will work with industry to accurately assess risk, encouraging close working between ports, government partners and subject matter experts to enable advice and guidance.** For example, PORTSAFE is an initiative between the police and port operators which aims to enhance security awareness within commercial maritime ports, providing a hostile environment for maritime criminal activity.
14. Collaboration between port facilities, Port Security Authorities and providers will enable us to share best practice and embed common approaches to security across the sector. **Government will continue work with industry to support the development of security procedures at our borders and ports.**
15. Staff and seafarers remain the sector's biggest asset, undertaking the work essential to maintaining global trade and prosperity. Their roles give them privileged access to facilities and systems which can be misused for illicit or illegal purposes. These personnel are vulnerable to coercion by criminal and terrorist organisations, to undertake malicious activity in return for personal gain. Government will continue to support the maritime sector in understanding the risks from the insider threat. The Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) publishes a range of guidance and public tools which support owners and operators to improve their protective security.
16. **To improve collaboration between government and industry, a dedicated maritime security portal will be created to provide timely and effective industry engagement.** This will enable quick, reliable, and up to date communications with secure access for sharing documents covering both policy and compliance.

## Security of Freeports

17. In 2019, government announced plans to establish a number of freeports across the UK. Freeports are areas where businesses will benefit from more generous tax reliefs, simplified customs procedures, and wider government support. This will bring investment, trade and jobs addressing regional inequalities and levelling up the UK. The government remains committed to establishing a freeport in both Wales and Northern Ireland, and two green freeports in Scotland as soon as possible.<sup>26</sup>
18. While freeports do not change UK border security measures, it will be important to address any new security implications that affect freeports and ensure support to legitimate business activity.
19. Freeports are commonly used across the globe, and the Government has learned from these examples to build upon its current expertise and ensure cross-border illegal activity is thwarted.



**Figure 5:** Map showing the eight successful English freeport locations to progress to the next stage of freeport designation.

20. Working alongside UK Law Enforcement, operators of freeports will need to put in place measures to ensure the security of their sites and effectively manage access. This will include providing the necessary infrastructure, both digital and physical, to ensure compliance with UK and international regulations. Government will continue to support and assure the proper implementation of all freeports security procedures.

## Cyber Security

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21. Alongside the robust protection of our physical assets, government continues to support the maritime sector to build resilience against a range of cyber threats including cyber espionage, cyber-crime, hacktivism, and ransomware.
22. In some areas, the UK maritime sector is already making the most of technological advances. In the management of ports, logistics, supply chains, the rollout of 5G networks and the consideration of autonomous shipping, the UK has made great progress.
23. As a consequence of a spike in the volume of incidents globally, the maritime sector has experienced a growth in ransomware attacks. Improvements in understanding the threat and taking appropriate mitigations will reduce the impact of successful cyber-attacks.

Our vision is that the UK in 2030 will continue to be a leading responsible and democratic cyber power, able to protect and promote our interests in and through cyberspace in support of national goals.<sup>27</sup>

## Case Study: Ransomware Attacks in 2020-21

According to Open Source, there were a number of ransomware attacks on the maritime sector throughout 2020 and 2021.

- In March 2020, Operators of CL0P ransomware posted online files allegedly belonging to EV cargo. In June 2020, FireEye identified a CL0P ransomware sample able to target Overseas Territories related processes which could result in extended downtime for an organisation.
- In April 2020, Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) reported a data centre outage that affected their website and networks. They subsequently reported that this was a result of malware which targeted a software vulnerability
- In September 2020, French Shipping giant – CMA CGM were the victims of a Ragnar Locker ransomware attack, which affected e-commerce services, as well as company emails.
- Australian logistics company Toll Group found themselves a victim of ransomware attacks twice in 2020.
- In July 2021, South African ports, and rail company Transnet was targeted and forced to halt operations in a number of ports. Whilst operating systems were not directly affected, a terminal operating system was turned off as a precaution. It is likely that the cyber actor involved in the South Africa ports wished to extort money from the South African company.



Image: Container ship and General cargo ship alongside a port at night

24. Government can support organisations to build their resilience by continuing to provide advice and guidance on cyber best practice and to consider what further support can be made available. This can be done by seeking to understand the means by which efficient and effective screening measures can be made more agile to quickly meet the demand of any changes to emerging threats.
25. The Network and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations came into effect in 2018 to support organisations who provide a critical service, including those in the maritime sector, in building a stronger foundation of cyber security and resilience. The Department for Transport (DfT), as the competent authority for the regulation of the maritime sector, adopted the use of the National Cyber Security Centre's (NCSC) Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) to ensure operators manage the security of their network and information systems to ensure continuity of their essential services. DfT will continue to work with organisations to improve their cyber security post-CAF. **Government will use the NIS Regulations 2018 to drive up standards of cyber security and help the sector become more resilient.**
26. Government has recently published a new National Cyber Strategy, which sets out plans to cement the UK's position as a responsible and democratic cyber power and strengthen cyber security and resilience across the country. A key objective of the Strategy is to ensure that government, Critical National Infrastructure (CNI), organisations and citizens understand the cyber risks they face and their responsibilities to manage them. Increased understanding of cyber security risks should help industry better assess and manage their own risk and improve their resilience and ability to prepare, respond and recover from cyber incidents.
27. The NCSC provides advice and guidance on risks through information sharing platforms and technical assistance in the event of a cyber incident. Organisations can access a range of free cyber security tools and services which NCSC provides as part of their Active Cyber Defence programme. Resources include tools such as 'Early Warning' which helps organisations spot malicious activity on their network, 'Logging Made Easy' which helps organisations install basic logging capability on their IT estate, and 'Exercise in a Box' which helps organisations test and practise their response to a cyber incident. Many more tools and services are available through the NCSC.
28. In their capacity as national technical authority for cyber threats, NCSC offer a range of services to support risk and threat management which are available to the sector. Government will work collaboratively with a wide spectrum of partners to further warn, inform, and advise.

29. In light of the changing threat landscape, government will update the 2017 Cyber Security Code of Practice for Ships and work with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to agree international standards and agreements. The Cyber and Information Security section contained within the Port Facility Security Instructions will also be updated and will include links to NCSC guidance, including how to report cyber incidents.
30. Increased cyber incident reporting by the maritime industry will help the NCSC and government advise the sector on how to mitigate against existing and new threats and improve their resilience. There must also be consideration on securing legacy-based systems and making new systems 'secure by design' by building cyber security and resilience in at the start of the project. The challenges on the horizon are varied; rapid technological change and digital advances are reshaping the way we work and do business, with more and more organisations seeking to rely upon automated systems and network controls to complete the most complex of tasks.
31. Government will remain committed to developing excellence in its workforce, including specialist cyber skills and maritime thematic knowledge for those engaged on these programmes of work.
32. Government will implement the new National Cyber Strategy to ensure that the maritime industry is aware of the cyber risks it faces and their responsibilities in managing them.



Image: HMS Queen Elizabeth the next generation aircraft carrier enters Portsmouth, United Kingdom.

# Objective 2: Responding to threats

Deploying a whole system response to bring world leading capabilities and expertise to bear in responding to new and emerging threats, government will:

- Further develop and effectively utilise world leading Maritime Domain Awareness capabilities.
- Create a secure environment which limits the ability of terrorist and organised criminal groups to operate.
- Develop comprehensive approaches to defend the integrity of our maritime interests from state threats.
- Continue to develop and establish strong working relationships, partnerships, and alliances with International Partners, such as the continued commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the announcement of the AUKUS partnership.

1. The UK coastline benefits from some of the world's most advanced capabilities to respond to and protect against a wide range of threats, from tax evasion to terrorism and drug trafficking. The UK operational response to these threats includes capabilities from the Border Force, Police, Her Majesty's Coastguard and Royal Navy ships among others. Our capabilities allow us to respond to current and ongoing challenges but also prepare us for new and emerging threats over coming years.



Image: RNLI Boat and HM Coastguard Helicopter undertaking at sea exercises.

2. The UK continues to build upon these capabilities. The UK's shipbuilding industry supports skilled jobs and a vast supply chain around the country in both the civil and defence sectors and delivers world-leading capabilities for the Royal Navy. With the appointment of the Defence Secretary as the National Shipbuilding lead and champion, the Government's ambitions for the shipbuilding sector have grown and there has been a renewed drive across Government to reinvigorate the sector. As detailed in the National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh, the Government and industry's shared vision is to create a globally successful, innovative, and sustainable UK shipbuilding enterprise by 2030.
3. Our ambition is to have a shipbuilding enterprise that is at the forefront of technological and environmental innovations, and which is globally competitive in key market segments, including design, build, integration, test and evaluation and repair. Moreover, decarbonisation, digitalisation, and autonomy represent the opportunity for a radical reboot of the commercial shipping industry.
4. On 31 January 2020, the UK left the European Union. The UK's departure from the EU means that we will need to consider threats in new ways as a sovereign state. The UK will continue to cooperate closely with the EU, its member states and other international partners through a variety of existing and new mechanisms, including bilateral and multilateral agreements.
5. Government must consider maritime threats in different ways:
  - **Threats on the water:** where a threat actor uses the sea to cause an incident on the sea. This includes and is not limited to illegal fishing, blockading of ports, or theft.
  - **Threats from the water:** where a threat actor uses the sea as a means to achieve goals on land. This includes and is not limited to the smuggling of drugs, weapons, or people.
  - **Threats under the water:** where a threat actor uses the sea for illicit, illegal, or threatening purposes, including intelligence gathering, threatening subsea infrastructure or hostile intent.
6. In these definitions, the response required varies considerably. The personnel, equipment and plans used are based on a solid understanding of the maritime domain, comprehensive exercising, and world-leading intelligence capabilities. Science and technology play a key role in supporting the understanding of, preparing for, and responding to, threats in maritime.

7. Government works with NATO, our allies and other global alliances to tackle new and emerging threats. We will continue to be the leading European ally within NATO, bolstering the Alliance by tackling maritime security threats jointly and committing our resources to collective security in the Euro-Atlantic region. This has been demonstrated in the UK's robust and comprehensive approach to Russia's illegal invasion in February 2022.
8. We will continue to exceed the NATO guideline of spending 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) on defence, and to declare our nuclear and offensive cyber capabilities to Allies' defence under our Article 5 commitment.

## Maritime Domain Awareness

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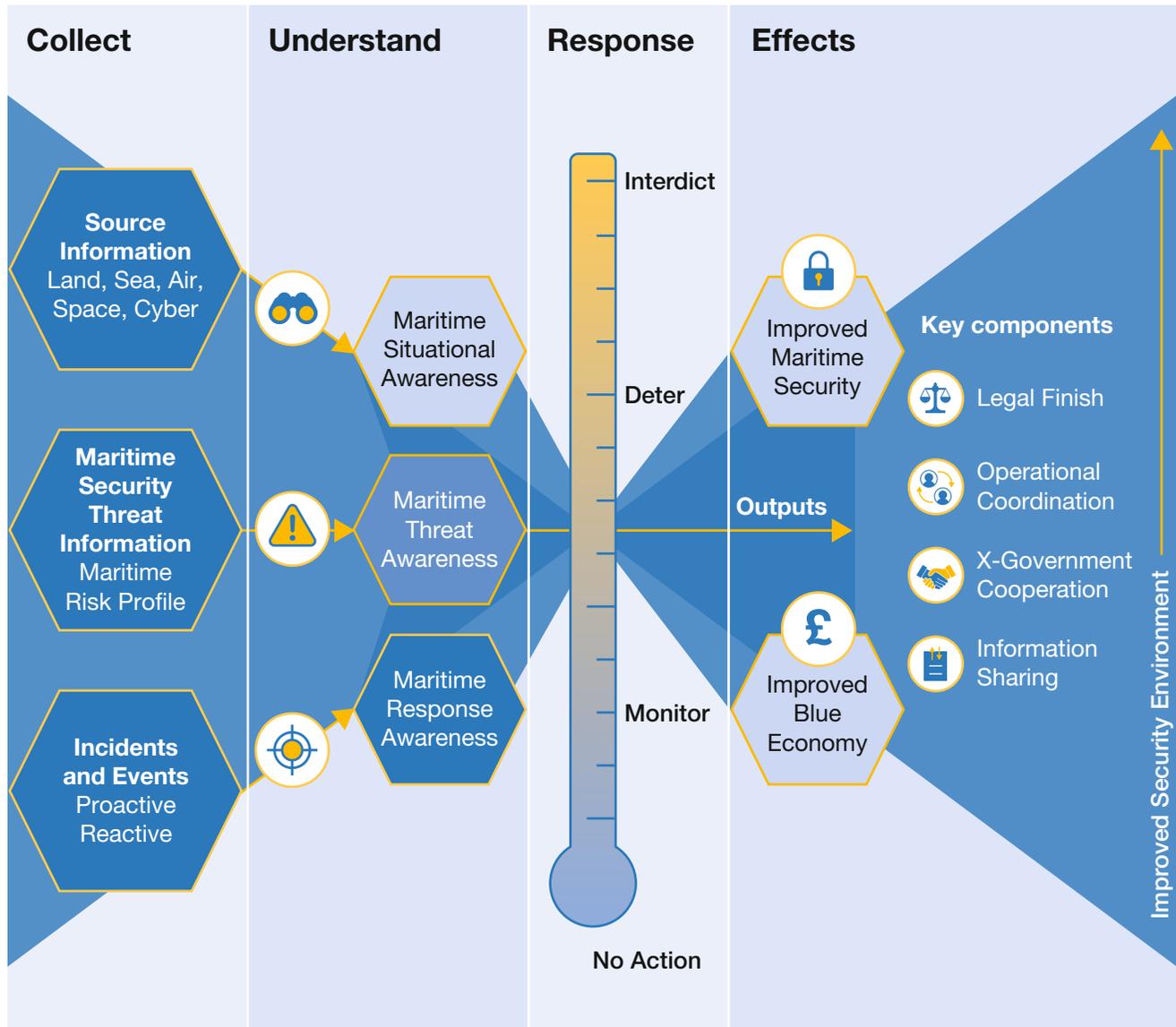
9. Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is defined by the IMO as the effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact security, safety, the economy or the environment.<sup>28</sup>
10. The UK has world leading capabilities and expertise to effectively monitor the sea surrounding it, and the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. This means government can respond to incidents that could impact upon the security, safety, prosperity, or environment, rapidly and in a coordinated manner.
11. MDA is a critical component of our multi-layered maritime defence approach. The numerous agencies involved in MDA and the Royal Navy MDA Programme use a wide range of tools to provide up to date, accurate information to senior leaders and key decision makers. They collect and process vast amounts of data from all aspects of the maritime domain. This is achieved through a variety of primary data collection activities and situational awareness tools including surveillance software, the use of coastal radars, aviation operations, space-based reconnaissance, and government vessels.
12. The UK has a well-established status as a world leader in transforming data to support other maritime activities including claims of sovereignty, economic development, security and defence, scientific research, safety of navigation and environmental protection. As security requirements change and new technologies become available, it will be essential to adapt the current MDA model to provide the best available picture.

13. Government works with national, regional, and international partners to support MDA capacity building across the globe. Comprehensive understanding of the international system provides a common operating picture for maritime security actors. Government will continue to develop our MDA both domestically and internationally.



Image: Next generation aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth and Nimitz-class USS Ronald Reagan in the foreground with its carrier strike group and support vessels in the background, sailing in the Philippine Sea, undertaking quad carrier exercises with USS Carl Vinson and JS ISE (not pictured).

**Outputs/effectiveness are very Capability Dependent**  
 All are required to ensure a secure and safe maritime environment



**Figure 6:** The UK Maritime Domain Awareness model.

## The UK's Whole System Response

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- 14.** In recognition of the wide range of threats to maritime security, the UK has worked towards strengthening its maritime security capabilities over the past seven years. There are a number of organisations and departments which contribute to the UK's maritime security system, and which together maintain a range of capabilities, including high-readiness air and maritime assets, to deter and respond to threats to the UK. We will continue to maintain and strengthen these capabilities as well as to enhance interoperability and coordination of our capabilities and structures to ensure they can be deployed and leveraged to best effect against the full range of current, new, and emerging threats.
- 15.** At the heart of the 'Whole System Response' has been the creation of the JMSC as the government's centre for maritime security coordination. The JMSC is a national organisation, supporting all agencies to deliver the maritime security objectives of the government, the Devolved Administrations, and the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. As a multi-agency organisation, the JMSC ensures that the government, military, and law enforcement agencies, have a developed understanding of maritime security threats and risks in our own waters and across the globe.
- 16.** Since its formation, the JMSC has provided a mechanism for the UK's maritime and law enforcement focused organisations to fuse intelligence, data, and capabilities. This maximises operational impact at home and abroad. The JMSC's Operations Centre utilises cutting edge technology to provide 24/7 monitoring of UK waters. Staffed by personnel drawn from across government, it is well placed to swiftly identify maritime security incidents and enable the effective coordination of the UK's aerial and at-sea assets to respond. The JMSC holds and develops the playbooks to counter the range of threats and assures multi-agency exercising of response scenarios.



**Figure 7:** Partners involved in delivering the UK's Whole System Response to maritime security.

**Operation STONEMOSE:** The “End of Transition Period” (Brexit) marked a coming of age of the JMCS where the structures laid out in the text allowed the JMCS to co-ordinate the whole of Government Preparations. The Maritime Threat Group met weekly and reported up to the NMCS(O) which in turn provided the higher-level governance of the whole system approach and acted as the single briefing to the MSMSG. This ensured that the Ministerial intent was understood and translated downward and that the MSMSG and thus XO Committee (now “Global Britain (Operations)”) were informed of the response intentions, preparedness, and risks from the perspective of the entire UK Maritime Security System. This collaborative approach best utilised all of government assets to achieve a common aim with complimentary use of resource ensuring efficiencies, synergies and gaps were identified, mitigated where possible and explained.

## Illegal Migration and the Threat from Organised Immigration Crime

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17. As global instability increases through social and political unrest, the movement of people across borders, including via maritime routes and the seas, is likely to become a greater challenge. Those seeking a better life for their families or fleeing oppression are using established land and sea routes to enter Europe. Some will attempt secondary migration journeys to reach the UK and we can expect this to continue over the next five years and beyond.
18. In recent years, OCGs have increasingly taken advantage of the most desperate in society. These groups exploit vulnerable people and offer to smuggle them into the UK via a range of methods, with the number of crossings via small boats increasing significantly over the last couple of years. Groups also traffic vulnerable people to be sold into modern slavery.
19. In support of Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the UK’s maritime response regularly rescue people on unseaworthy boats not suitable to make the crossing across the English Channel. To strengthen our current efforts the MOD have taken primacy for our operational response within the Channel (Operation ISOTROPE). There is a significant risk to life from these crossings and it is therefore essential that we take a whole of route approach. Government works with international partners

and using technology and intelligence to target and disrupt the criminal gangs facilitating migrants' journeys, protecting lives, while also supporting SOLAS operations if controls are evaded.

20. In this context, we are committed to working closely with our near neighbours, including France. UK funding has enabled France to significantly increase the numbers of French law enforcement officers deployed along the coast. We are investing in a range of technology and capability enhancements to ensure those deployed can quickly detect and respond to migrants prior to embarkation. Intelligence sharing is being increased to support operational activity and bilateral work through the Joint Intelligence Centre (JIC) established in July 2020 continues to build opportunities for investigations against those facilitating crossings. To date, 21 organised crime groups have been dismantled and over 500 individuals arrested as a result of JIC activity.
21. Innovative technologies are being identified and employed to support the UK response. Development of UK sovereign capabilities such as aerial surveillance assets, will ensure that all small boats to the UK are identified and interdicted. We are also investing in maritime assets to respond quickly and effectively to crossings and improve our awareness of facilitators' activity in the Channel. We continue to evaluate and test a range of safe and legal options to find ways of stopping small boats making this dangerous and unnecessary journey.
22. Without these continued efforts, illicit migration would risk our sovereign border control, a loss of public confidence, and greater threat to life at sea. The UK 2025 Border Security Strategy sets out our commitments to saving lives and ensuring fair immigration policies. In the maritime environment, it is essential we have the capability to understand our environment through world leading MDA which will enable us to respond to those in need.

## Threats from Terrorism

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23. Terrorists continue to pose a threat to maritime security. The terrorist threat varies significantly across the globe and is highly dependent upon how permissive a region is for terrorists to plan and conduct attacks. Terrorism will remain a major threat over the coming decade, with a more diverse range of material and political causes, new sources of radicalisation and evolving tactics.
24. Government's work on Maritime Counter Terrorism (MCT) looks to deliver the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) which has the strategic objective of reducing the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism, so that our people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.
25. As well as being able to identify and respond to the recent diverse, low sophistication attack methodologies the UK must also remain prepared for complex or highly destructive attacks. To date we have worked to ensure that no major maritime terrorist incidents have occurred in or near UK seas. However, the UK must continue to prepare for a range of scenarios.
26. MCT is a whole of government endeavour, requiring contributions from a range of departments and operational partners, including Police, Counter Terrorism Policing, Defence, the Maritime and Coast Guard Agency, the emergency services and Border Force. Our MCT efforts are coordinated to ensure a collaborative approach to using shared expertise and capabilities to best effect.
27. **Government will continue to refine, exercise and improve response plans for terrorist incidents at sea.** We will be informed by robust science and technology and engage with industry to raise awareness of risks from terrorism, counter terrorism protective measures, and associated response plans, including among companies operating both UK and internationally flagged vessels. Government will continue to work closely with maritime neighbours and other European partners to establish and build on agreements to ensure we minimise the risk of terrorist activity near to UK shores – such as the UK-France Maritime Security Treaty which was signed in July 2021, to work closer together, share expertise and intelligence and conduct exercising. Government will continue working to ensure we can maximise the opportunities delivered by the UK-France Treaty once it is ratified.
28. Counter terrorism is a reserved matter but there are elements of the government's MCT work which require collaboration with Devolved Administrations. We will continue to work closely with our colleagues in the Scottish, Welsh, and Northern Ireland administrations to ensure the specific interests and structures in those areas are appropriately reflected.

## State Threats

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29. As the Integrated Review sets out, we are seeing the move to a more competitive and multipolar world; one in which there is an intensification of competition between states and with non-state actors. States are becoming increasingly assertive in how they compete to advance their objectives and, in their willingness, to undermine ours.
30. State threats are persistent and take many forms including espionage, sabotage, cyber operations, and intellectual property and data theft. An increasing number of states now have the capability to undertake isolated attacks or use a range of threats to interfere with our security, economy, and society.
31. In the maritime domain, states may look to sabotage our key infrastructure, disrupt logistical and economic supply chains, or obstruct freedom of navigation. Recent state-backed attacks on commercial shipping have shown the challenges faced by the maritime industry in protecting both ships and seafarers. The attack on the MV MERCER STREET in July 2021 was attributed to Iran and demonstrates some of the capabilities available to states and non-state actors to target commercial shipping, risking the lives of seafarers.
32. **Government will work with allies in relentlessly pursuing attribution and exposure of evidence in response to unacceptable state threats. The Royal Navy will deter state aggression by, for example, shadowing vessels transiting our territorial sea to ensure they comply with international law.** The UK will continue to work with international partners to manage the risks posed by state actors. The UK is a key player in the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) which operates in the Gulf and reassures commercial shipping, provides deterrence against malign activity, and promotes freedom of navigation. We will continue to work with our allies and like-minded partners to collaborate and promote our mutual interests, so that together we are more resilient, and our collective response is greater than the sum of its parts.

## The International Maritime Security Construct

The International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) and Coalition Task Force (CTF) SENTINEL, was established in July 2019 in response to a heightened threat to freedom of navigation and free flow of trade in the Middle East. The UK has played a pivotal role in the formation and sustainment of IMSC using naval assets based at the Naval Support Facility in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the provision of Royal Navy staff, including a 1\* Commander. In the IMSC, the UK is partnered with Albania, Estonia, Lithuania, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, and the US.

The IMSC Mission provides reassurance to shipping and deters state sponsored malign activities, paying particular attention to the two strategic maritime choke points of the Bab Al Mandeb (in the Southern Red Sea) and the Strait of Hormuz. The IMSC's state-facing posture sets it apart from other maritime security initiatives and task forces in the region, and it has built a considerable rapport with the global shipping industry and regional coalition members. Ultimately, the IMSC aims to preserve freedom of navigation and uphold the rule of law, to support free flow of trade on which our economy depends.

Image: The Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan in the foreground escorting a tanker through the Strait of Hormuz. HMS Duncan is supported by HMS Montrose in escorting the tanker.



## Foreign Direct Investment

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33. The UK has a world-leading reputation for being an attractive place to invest, in large part due to the openness, transparency, and stability of our economy. Whilst both the UK and our foreign partners enjoy the mutual benefits of international trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into UK infrastructure and assets (including intellectual property) also has the potential to expose the UK to increased national security risk. Through investment, foreign states may be able to influence decision-making within key transport assets in ways that may run contrary to the UK's national security.
34. In order to address risks posed by certain FDI, the National Security and Investment Act 2021 (NSI) seeks to protect the public whilst bolstering the UK's status as an attractive place to invest. The NSI Act provides more efficient clearance processes for relevant acquisitions and greater certainty and transparency for investors and businesses. The Act also grants the Business Secretary 'call in' powers, allowing transactions to be reviewed – and if necessary blocked - on the basis of national security. The Act commenced on 4 January 2022, granting the Secretary of State with retrospective call-in powers for any relevant transactions completed on or after 12 November 2020.
35. The government is committed to developing a resilient and sustainable maritime sector, able to manage and mitigate malign foreign interference and hostile behaviour in all forms.

### **The Maritime Sector and the National Security and Investment Act**

A healthy and secure maritime sector is essential to keep the country moving and therefore the government has ensured that critical UK port and maritime infrastructure are protected under the new NSI Act. In particular, investment into ports and harbours that handle at least one million tonnes of cargo per year will be in scope of the Act's 'mandatory notification' regime – meaning any new acquirer(s) within this sector will have to inform the government of the details of the acquisition, if statutory thresholds are met. Should national security concerns regarding the acquisition come to light, the legislation allows the government to impose conditions or block or unwind acquisitions.

# Objective 3: Ensuring prosperity

Ensuring the security of international shipping, the unimpeded transmission of goods, information, and energy to support continued global development and our economic prosperity, government will:

- Work with international partners to tackle Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs), piracy and other forms of criminal activity which threaten global prosperity.
- Monitor chokepoints and strategic seaways to ensure the free movement of goods and trade.
- Create a robust, secure, and diverse system to protect essential subsea infrastructure.

1. UK and global prosperity depend on the safe and secure international passage of goods, information, and energy moved by sea. Reliable and timely importation processes form the bedrock of the UK's national economy and national security.

Image: Front view of laden container ship moving at sea.



2. Government is committed to using agility and speed of action to enable us to deliver for our citizens, enhancing our prosperity and security. We will continue to transform the way government collects and uses border data to improve the security and resilience of the border and at our ports. This work will ensure improved data is used to contribute to a cross-Government performance framework that will allow for more effective monitoring of threats and risks to the border over time.
3. To support the prosperity of global trade routes we will use this data and the range of our capabilities to tackle the threats facing the essential transnational networks.

## Ship Security

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4. Ships are conveying the vast majority of UK trade and many of our vital resources. UK ships, along with international shipping fleets, are strategic assets in maintaining domestic and international trade. The UK considers protection for ships at home and abroad and provisions of maritime security measures will enable us to strengthen and extend UK's prosperity, security, and resilience.
5. Through the implementation of ISPS code in UK law, protection of ships is maintained by providing a standardised, consistent framework for evaluating risk. This enables the Government adopt develop new procedures and guidance as threats change.
6. Government will continue to support shipping communities in implementing the ISPS code for all UK-registered ships, making security inspections of foreign vessels in UK ports, handling ship security alerts, and approving and auditing the training providers for Ship Security Officer (SSO) and Company Security Officer (CSO) courses.
7. As the international security risks evolve, the Government, through regular evidence-based guidance, will help ship owners, operators (companies), masters and seafarers understand the risks posed by piracy, armed robbery, and other acts of violence against merchant shipping.

## Preventing Maritime Crime

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8. SOC will continue to have a significant impact on UK citizens, with the scale and complexity of the issues facing government continuing to change. OCGs will continue to be transnational, with criminals from overseas sourcing illicit goods, exploiting the vulnerable and defrauding UK citizens and businesses.
9. Maritime routes continue to be some of the most attractive opportunities for OCGs to undertake a range of criminal activity. Without the use of the ocean OCGs would be unable to operate in the way that they do, and the vast profits that they make from illegal activity would be greatly reduced.
10. In order to traffic commodities between continents, OCGs purchase specific vessels or exploit legitimate cargo vessels. Yachts, fishing vessels and semi-submersible vessels are also all used to traffic across the ocean. Drugs, firearms, and tobacco will be hidden within containers, in void spaces, or specially constructed concealments within the vessels. These highly sophisticated operations can involve drugs being handed over at sea, well outside of the Territorial Sea to avoid detection by law enforcement.

Image: Container ship docked at port.



An aerial photograph showing a large container ship, heavily laden with multi-colored shipping containers, being manoeuvred in a narrow waterway. Two tugboats are positioned around the ship, one in front and one to the side, assisting with its movement. The water is a deep blue-green color, and the ship's shadow is cast onto the water to its right. The ship is oriented vertically in the frame.

Image: Aerial photograph of laden container ship manoeuvring at the dock side with the assistance of tugboats.

## Case study: Project Latitude

Smuggling by sea is recognised as a key threat within the National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime and is a consistent part of the maritime threat and response. Work undertaken jointly by the Home Office and National Crime Agency, in countering this threat has resulted, since January 2019, in the seizure of over 60t of cocaine from a total of 25 tasked jobs/ships. Of the seized cocaine, 40t were from commercial vessels whilst 14.8t were from pleasure vessels. 5 out of 25 interdicted vessels listed were UK flagged.

These operations highlight the significance of countering maritime crime, as many of the seized goods would have been destined for the UK and ending in the hands of OCGs. Additionally, given the flagging of the vessels and the ability of law enforcement to seize and detain, ships facilitating illicit activities, further highlights the importance of international cooperation and partnerships in tackling maritime crime.

## Case study: SY G.SIRO

As the result of a joint operation involving the Portuguese, Spanish, UK and US authorities, the Portuguese deployed a navy surface asset and successfully located and interdicted the SY G.SIRO (Spanish flag), 23.44 metre sailing yacht approx. 350nm West of Lisbon, with 3 crew members aboard and a total of 5.2 tonnes of cocaine found aboard.

It is likely that a proportion of the drugs destined for Europe would end up on UK shores and in the hands of OCGs. This highlights the importance of international cooperation and partnerships in tackling International Maritime Crime.



Image: HMS Tamar and HMS Spey offshore patrol vessels alongside at HMNB Portsmouth.

11. The trafficking of drugs, people, and other illicit commodities in the maritime domain is often linked to corrupt crew members who are vulnerable to exploitation, port workers and others involved in the maritime industry to facilitate its entry into the UK and international ports.
12. Government works closely with neighbours and international partners to tackle SOC in the maritime domain. Our collaboration involves disrupting national security threats such as drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, people smuggling and human trafficking through working with the Maritime Analysis Operations Centre-Narcotics, EU SEACOP<sup>29</sup> and other bilateral or multilateral organisations. **Government will continue to explore new opportunities to work with international partners to tackle SOC.**

## Countering Piracy and Armed Robbery

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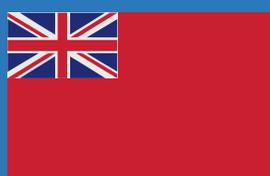
13. Piracy<sup>30</sup> impacts global prosperity by disrupting the flow of goods and people by sea. Piracy is generally associated with less developed or unstable coastal nations which may have suffered civil strife or conflict. Such conditions are breeding grounds for OCGs who take advantage of vulnerable local communities to undertake a range of criminal activities.
14. In 2011, Somalia was the focal point for global piracy with 300 piracy incidents occurring in that year alone. The UK played a leading role in the international effort to suppress piracy from Somalia. While incidents have greatly reduced, we believe OCGs have focused on other types of crime. The current global hotspot for piracy is in the Gulf of Guinea where pirates use firearms to attempt to kidnap crew and hold them to ransom, hijack vessels, or take their cargo. In South East Asia and the Gulf of Mexico, piracy takes the form of petty theft from ships close to the shore. These incidents can have a serious impact on the operations of a vessel and the livelihoods of seafarers.
15. Government's approach to counter piracy focuses on a combination of detection via improved global MDA and a concerted international naval response to disrupt the criminal networks. This sits alongside diplomatic engagement to support international institutions and frameworks. Government will continue to engage in the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and other international fora.

16. **Government will work multilaterally and bilaterally to support regional countries in the fight against cross-border maritime crime and piracy with a focus on legal frameworks to facilitate prosecutions, development of Maritime Domain Awareness, and capability building for navies and coastguards.**
17. **Government will take a leading role in developing multilateral engagement. For example, through our Dialogue Partner Status of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and in the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea.**



Image: Aerial view of HMS Lancaster moving through open ocean in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of West Africa.

**Proportion of all UK Flagged vessels travelling through the straits between Jan 2019 - 2020.<sup>31</sup>**



The Straits	UK Flagged Vessels	
	To UK port	From UK port
Malacca Strait	6%	3%
Mandeb Strait	4%	3%
Hormuz Strait	19%	8%
Bosphorus Strait	29%	25%
Oresund Strait	1%	1%

**Top 10 countries handling goods with the UK, ordered by total tonnage handled, including the proportion of traffic that are critical goods.<sup>32</sup>**



**Top 10 countries**

Country	Total Tonnage (millions)	% Critical
Netherlands*	53.0	81%
Norway*	49.7	90%
United States	31.8	72%
Germany*	27.9	52%
Ireland*	27.1	53%
Belgium*	20.3	60%
China	16.1	51%
France	15.9	63%
Russian Federation	15.1	86%
Qatar	7.4	99%

\*countries include traffic to/from the respective country's continental shelf (offshore platforms, etc.)

## Chokepoints and Strategic Sea Ways

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18. Chokepoints constitute narrow channels along widely used global sea routes; some are so narrow that restrictions are placed on the size of the vessel that can navigate through them. Restrictions may be placed upon vessels by the channel operators (e.g. Suez Canal) or by governments whose territorial seas the route intersects (e.g. Strait of Hormuz).
19. Strategic seaways such as Gulf of Guinea and Cape of Good Hope are also essential trade routes. Congested channels and operational restriction can reduce the speed or manoeuvrability of vessels transiting, making them vulnerable to attack from pirates, terrorists, state threats, or OCGs.
20. While most chokepoints can be circumvented, this normally leads to significant additional transit times. In some cases, such as the Strait of Hormuz, no practical alternatives are available.
21. To ensure global trade routes and chokepoints are freely navigable, the UK will work to ensure compliance by other states with UNCLOS. We will work with international partners to maintain and build consensus for an open and stable maritime domain.
22. Government is committed to supporting the maritime sector transiting through the High-Risk Area (HRA).<sup>33</sup> The work of the UK Maritime Trade Organisation (UKMTO) delivers timely maritime security information and supports engagement with military forces in the region.
23. As the ice melts in the seas of the High North, new shipping routes emerge. As the North-East and North-West passages become more traversable, potential trade and shipping lines once thought impassable will open up. These new routes will require government action, taken in accordance with UNCLOS, to provide security, alleviate SOLAS concerns, ensure navigational rights are upheld, and address risks to the fragile marine environment.
24. The UK will enhance its understanding of the reliance of international shipping on chokepoints and strategic seaways, and work with partners to keep these supply routes open.



### 1 Panama Canal

The 44nm Panama Canal links the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and avoids the hazardous Cape Horn route around the tip of South America. Around 15,000 vessels transit each year through the system of locks which make up the canal.

### 2 Strait of Gibraltar

The Strait of Gibraltar separates the Mediterranean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean and, at its narrowest point of 7nm separates Europe from North Africa.

### 3 Strait of Bosphorus (Turkish Strait)

The Turkish Strait, which includes the Bosphorus and Dardanelles waterways divides Asia from Europe and links the Black Sea to the Mediterranean carrying 48,000 vessels per year. It is an important transit corridor for oil exporting countries in the Black Sea (c. 2.4M barrels pe day).

### 4 Suez Canal

The Egyptian-controlled Suez Canal links the Mediterranean Sea with the Arabian and Indian Oceans. It is a key transit corridor for global trade – especially energy shipments between Europe and North America and the Middle East Europe. It also links manufacturing Asian economies with Europe.

### 5 Strait of Hormuz

The Strait of Hormuz links the Arabian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and is the world's most important energy chokepoint with 30% of all seaborne-traded oil (and products) and 30% of natural gas transiting through. The Strait is 21nm wide at its narrowest point and encroaches into Omani and Iranian waters.

### 6 Strait of Bab al-Mandab

The Bab el-Mandeb Strait connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. It's 15nm wide at its narrowest point and sees 21,000 vessels annually pass through and 4.6M barrels of oil/day.

### 7 Cape of Good Hope

The Cape of Good Hope lies on the tip of Africa and is an important transit route for Global shipping. It can serve as an alternative route for the Suez canal but adds around 15 days for European transits and 8-10 for the United States.

### 8 Strait of Malacca

The Strait of Malacca is the main shipping channel between the Indian and Pacific Ocean, linking the major economies of Asia. It is also a key arterial route between Europe and the Far East. Approximately 60% of the world's maritime trade transits this corridor.

**Figure 8:** Map showing some strategic seaways and chokepoints around the world, taken from Integrated Review: The defence tilt to the Indo-Pacific.<sup>34</sup>

## Case Study – The MV EVERGIVEN disruption to a strategic chokepoint

The EVERGIVEN was loaded with c17,600 containers, carrying roughly \$1 billion worth of cargo, when it went aground in the bank of Suez Cana in March 2021. The ship was unable to free itself and an operation was taken to free the ship and open the Suez up to traffic. By the end of the first day, 185 vessels were anchored nearby at the terminations of the Canal, unable to commence their transit. Amongst their diverse cargoes, these vessels were carrying electronics, cement, water, millions of barrels of oil, and several thousand head of livestock. It was estimated that US\$10 billion worth of marine traffic per day was piling up. After six days the EVERGIVEN was freed but clearing the shipping backlog took a further six days. The time for some ports to resume normal operations took more than a month following the clearance of the EVERGIVEN.

Between 10-12% of global trade passes through the Suez Canal with more than 50 vessels transiting it a day.

A prolonged closure of Suez risked a cascade of delays that would be felt in day-to-day commerce by millions of people. A vessel missing its scheduled arrival at a terminal in New Jersey, for example, would not just create a problem for the American companies waiting for its cargo. It would also mean a backlog of all the containers the ship was supposed to pick up for export. Meanwhile, factories in China relying on the same vessel to pick up their goods weeks later, would require alternative options-which, given the disruption, might not exist.

While this incident was not as a result of a security incident, the resulting delays to maritime trade from the EVERGIVEN incident highlight the vulnerabilities of strategic chokepoints to the security and resilience of the global supply chain.

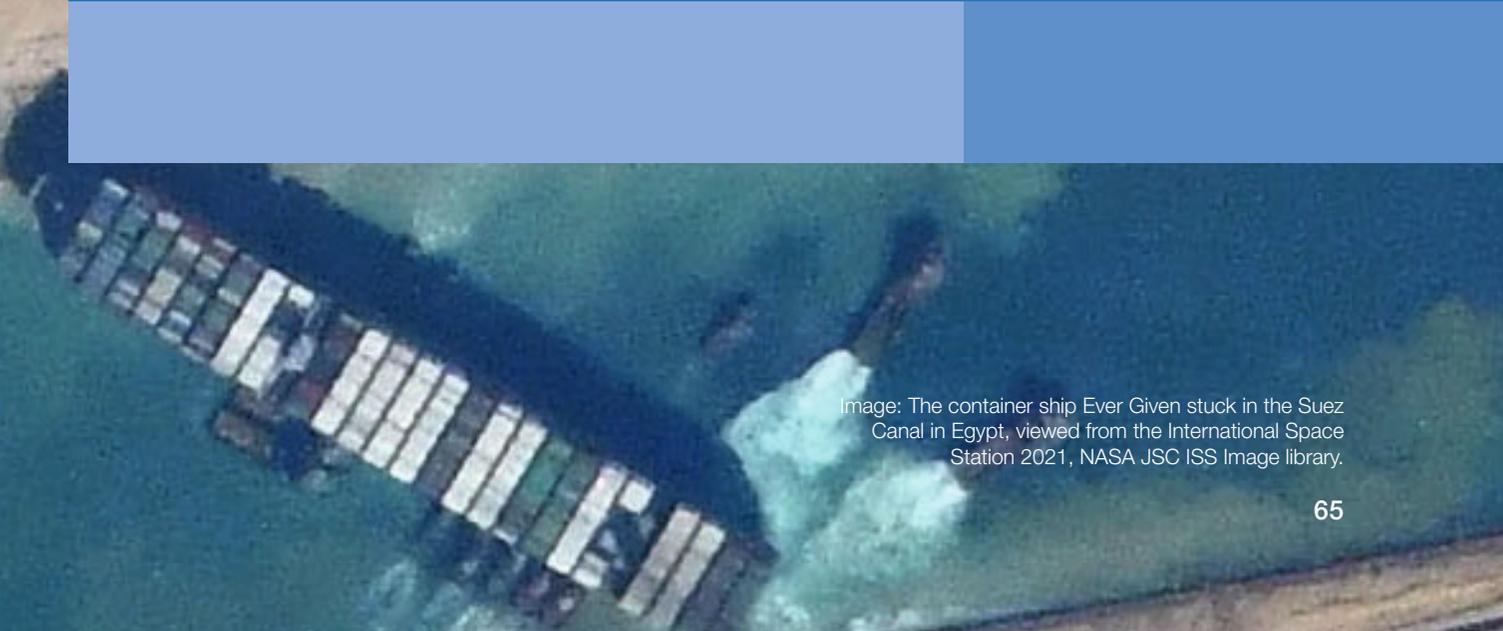
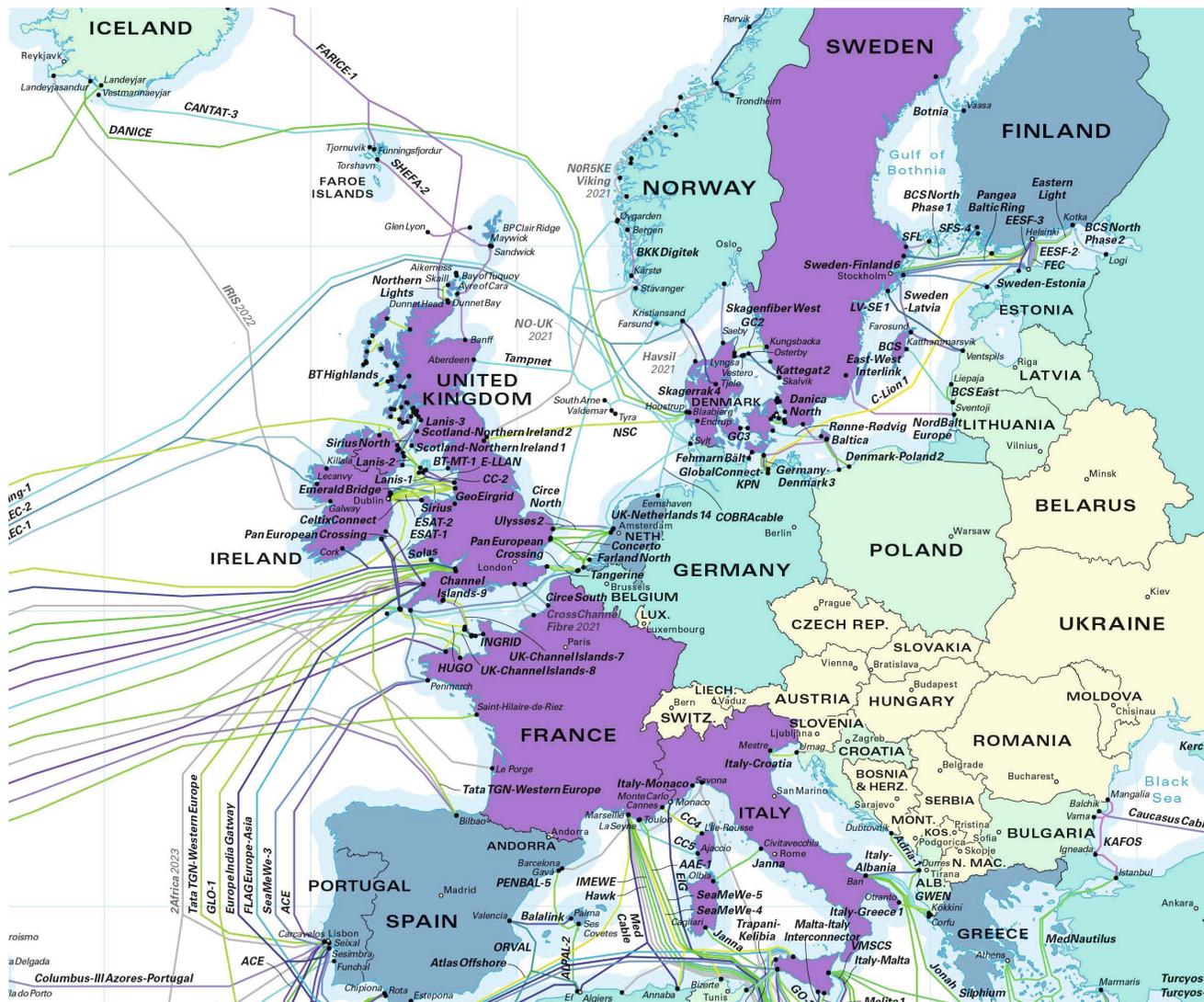


Image: The container ship Ever Given stuck in the Suez Canal in Egypt, viewed from the International Space Station 2021, NASA JSC ISS Image library.

# Protecting Subsea Infrastructure

25. Chokepoints, strategic seaways, and congested waterways do not just affect surface traffic. Traditional maritime choke points, such as the Suez Canal, create similar constraints for subsea communication cables. Cables are further constrained geographically due to the limited number of suitable landing points.



**Figure 9:** Cropped section of the Submarine Cable Map 2021, showing the intercontinental subsea cables connected to the UK and North Western Europe.

26. Subsea cables are essential to our modern way of life, providing communications that support the internet and energy connectivity which distributes electricity across markets. Both essential functions support our modern industries and global connectivity and contribute towards Net Zero. £545 bn of Gross Value Added (GVA) per annum is associated with UK exports relying on subsea cables.

27. Whilst subsea communications cables are privately owned and operated, the government regards UK linked cables as part of the UK's critical international connectivity and infrastructure. Accidental damage caused by fishing, particularly trawling and other seabed-disturbing activities, remains the primary threat to subsea cables. The importance of cables to our way of life also requires security awareness against concerns of potential disruption by malign actors. A significant loss of subsea cables could be felt by everyone in the UK. The impact would directly affect the UK's communications and internet-based services, as well as financial traffic.

**99%** of all global communications transmitted via subsea communication cables.<sup>35</sup>

**\$1.9 trillion** of foreign exchange cross-border trading takes place per day using the UK's subsea fibre optic cables.<sup>36</sup>



A transatlantic telecommunications cable using the latest technology has a capacity of 250 million Megabits per second.<sup>37</sup>

28. To ensure the UK is well-positioned to provide a secure yet attractive hub for subsea data cables and retain expertise to support the modern digital economy, **Government will re-evaluate its regulatory framework to support the continued security, resilience, and integrity of critical UK communications.** This will include our ability to deploy timely maintenance and repairs of our subsea infrastructure.
29. The new MoD Multi-Role Ocean Surveillance (MROS) programme will play a vital and versatile role in protecting the integrity of the UK's Maritime zones and critical undersea infrastructure. It will harness remotely piloted capabilities and form a key capability in managing modern subsea challenges, which continues to be coordinated at a cross-government level.
30. Government will endeavour to attract cable owner-operators by aligning strategically with key allies and markets. We will realise benefits from an effective and proportionate regulatory and legislative environment, and ensure protection to critical subsea infrastructure.

## The British Flag

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31. International law requires that every merchant ship be registered in a country, called its flag state. A ship is subject to the law of its flag state. The Red Ensign Group (REG) is the group of British Shipping Registries. Any vessel registered in the UK, a Crown Dependency or UK Overseas Territory, is a “British ship” and is entitled to fly the Red Ensign flag. The Red Ensign flag is recognised globally for the maintenance of high standards, maritime safety, and the welfare of seafarers.
32. The government is responsible for the safety and security of UK flagged vessels globally. This requires using the full range of security and defence capabilities to produce expert guidance and geographic security level information. This allows shipping operators to develop informed risk assessments and effective mitigations during operational activity.
33. Government and our international consular services support UK flagged shipping should a security situation or event occur. Our diplomatic activity continues to support the right of merchant shipping to carry out commercial activities free from violence or aggression. The Royal Navy maintains a global presence and is active in deterring malign activity in regional hotspots.

The Red Ensign flag is recognised globally for the maintenance of high standards, maritime safety, and the welfare of seafarers.

## Case Study: International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) is an intergovernmental organisation created by the mandate of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

UNCLOS plays a central role in establishing what is required of flag States. In a 2015 Advisory Opinion, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea determined that UNCLOS placed flag States under a 'due diligence' obligation to take all necessary measures to prevent illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing by vessels flying their flag. However, while the Advisory Opinion was concerned with IUU fishing, the principles it identified and applied are relevant to the responsibility of flag States more broadly.

The conclusion reached by ITLOS flowed from the obligation that UNCLOS places on flag States to effectively exercise their jurisdiction and control in administrative, technical, and social matters over ships flying their flag. In fulfilling that obligation, UNCLOS also requires flag States to take such measures as are necessary to ensure safety at sea with regard to a wide range of matters, including, for example, the prevention of collisions. When the flag State is alleged to have failed properly to exercise jurisdiction and control it must investigate and, if appropriate, take any action necessary to remedy the situation.



34. With international partners, we will continue to maintain our contribution to maritime security and freedom of navigation on a global scale wherever possible. Our national resources outside of UK waters will be focused on safeguarding Red Ensign Group flagged passenger and cargo ships and UK trade. Security compliance of the UK-flagged commercial cargo fleet is undertaken by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). As part of this security compliance programme, the MCA provides the communication infrastructure for the receipt of Ship Security Alerts and undertakes inspections of overseas ships arriving in UK ports.
35. Government also encourages other nations to adopt the highest required standards. So-called 'Flags of Convenience' is the term often used to describe Open Registries – registries that allow ship owners of other nationalities to flag and operate ships under their flag and offer commercial advantages such as an attractive fiscal regime, substantially lower administrative fees, more accessibility to the registry, and lower costs for the ship owners. The record of compliance with international conventions by vessels on open registers is not significantly worse than that of vessels on other registries.
36. Article 94 of UNCLOS requires the flag State to “effectively exercise its jurisdiction and control in administrative, technical and social matters;” many of these matters are regulated by international conventions adopted through the IMO.
37. In response to Article 94 of UNCLOS the international maritime community has established a regime known as Port State Control, whereby a country can inspect foreign flagged vessels in their waters. Several regional regimes are in place such as the Paris memorandum of understanding and the Tokyo memorandum of understanding. Under these memoranda of understanding, the Maritime Administrations check that vessels entering their ports comply with the major IMO Conventions.

38. For vessels which do not comply with these international conventions, there is potentially a significant sanction, which can ultimately lead to the exclusion of the vessel from all the ports in the region covered by the Memorandum of Understanding.
39. The IMO has a system for auditing the implementation by Member States of their obligations under the key IMO instrument. The UK will continue to support compliance of flag state obligations and port state control measures and will work closely with the IMO to encourage these high standards to prevail across all administrations. Government takes this responsibility seriously and the UK (and British Registries of the Red Ensign Group) have recently been successfully audited by the IMO.



Image: Red Ensign flag blowing in the wind.

# Objective 4: Championing our values

Championing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas are carried out, government will:

- Reinforce maritime international architecture by promoting and defending UNCLOS as the legal framework within which all activities in the ocean and seas are carried out
- Work with allies, partners, and multilateral institutions to maintain a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific.
- Lead by example to champion free trade and global cooperation to limit instability on the world's ocean.

1. While the bulk of our security focus will remain on the protection of our homeland and vital trade, the future success of Global Britain requires us to work with likeminded nations to champion the values which support our nation and the international order.
2. We will look to work bilaterally and with multilateral institutions such as, for example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote a renewed commitment by the UK as a force for good in the world. We will defend the international order, this is particularly important at a time where state based competition is increasing.



Image: HMS Protector viewed from its Quad Copter as it makes its way through ice-filled seas. HMS Protector is the Royal Navy's Ice Patrol Ship and is deployed for 330 days of the year.

3. The UK, the US, and Australia signed the AUKUS agreement in 2022 to embark on developing a nuclear-powered conventionally armed submarine capability for the Royal Australian Navy, and to enhance our Advanced Capabilities.
4. Government is prepared to be bold, taking robust action to support the UK's values and tackle coercion or aggression across the globe. In responding to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine government has implemented some of the most restrictive sanctions. Demonstrating the will to stand against those who threaten the international order and values which the UK defends.

## Supporting and Defending UNCLOS

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5. Government seeks to support, defend, and uphold UNCLOS in all its dimensions, as an essential enabler of global prosperity, security, and a healthy planet. The convention sets out the rules with which all activities must comply. Complying with the rights and obligations set out in UNCLOS can help ensure that activity on the world's ocean supports prosperity, security, and sustainability.
6. This commitment is a common endeavour of the international community as demonstrated by the establishment and membership of the Group of Friends<sup>38</sup> of UNCLOS. The Group of Friends will provide an opportunity to further the international community's joint understanding of, and commitment to upholding the Convention.
7. **Government will continue to uphold the universal and unified character of UNCLOS and reaffirm its important role in setting out the legal framework that governs all activities in the ocean and seas. We will continue to play a key role in developing and implementing Security Council Resolutions concerning maritime issues such as piracy and the enforcement of sanctions at sea. Government will continue to support the IMO and seek to provide resource and capability to its international mission.**
8. **Government will continue to play a central role in discussions on ocean issues at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and IMO, defending and advocating for UNCLOS.**



Image: The CMA CGM Corte Real container ship sailing in open ocean.

## Case Study: Maintaining the Freedom of Navigation in a Strategic Chokepoint

While threats to Freedom of Navigation commonly take the form of excessive geographical or jurisdictional claims, in relation to the world's key maritime chokepoints the threat may also be physical. The Strait of Hormuz which connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, is a key route for all shipping both in and out of the Gulf area. All ships have a right to transit passage through the Strait, in accordance with UNCLOS, along the internationally recognised traffic separation scheme. The Persian Gulf remains an economic centre of gravity with up to 20 million barrels of oil and 3.5 billion cubic feet of Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) passing through the Strait of Hormuz daily – representing over 20% of worldwide trade.

At its narrowest point with the traffic separation scheme passes through the territorial sea of Oman. For relatively little cost, transit through the Strait has previously been and could again be denied for some considerable time by state or non-state actors. Similar effects would be felt under increased tensions or in conflict, and whether the Strait was physically blocked or only threatened. Such disruption would have a profound effect on world oil and gas prices and many economies: HM Treasury analysis predicts that a 30-day closure of the Strait of Hormuz would have an impact on the global economy lasting at least four years. Consequently, it is a key strategic chokepoint, not only for the countries of the region, but globally – and freedom of navigation for all ships must be maintained.

In order to mitigate this risk, to deter attempts to disrupt the Strait, and to maintain freedom of navigation to and from the Gulf, the UK operates in the region under the non-state facing Combined Maritime Forces, the IMSC and under UK National tasking. Since 2006 the Royal Navy has maintained four forward-deployed Mine Countermeasure Vessels (MCMVs) operating out of Bahrain and, since 2019, has also forward deployed a Type 23 Frigate to the region. This expeditionary force, supported by a ship from the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Command and Control element, now housed in its own bespoke facility and built with assistance from the Kingdom of Bahrain, is part of the international effort to maintain the security of the region for all mariners, commercial or other. The success of this effort continues to be dependent on wider political engagement and whole-of-government activity across the region, including intelligence and information sharing.

## Freedom of navigation

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9. Freedom of navigation is the term given to the group of passage rights and freedoms that all states enjoy, and these rights are utilised by vessels of those states in navigating on, over, or under the world's ocean and seas. Freedom of navigation is vital to the security and economic stability of the UK. Upholding freedom of navigation facilitates global maritime trade and provides the UK military and law enforcement and intelligence agencies with the legal landscape to allow it to respond to threats to security at range.
10. These rights are set out in UNCLOS and so maintaining the integrity of the convention and its consistent implementation is central to upholding freedom of navigation. The stability of the UNCLOS regime, and in consequence maritime security, may be fundamentally undermined by excessive claims over sea areas or unlawful interferences with navigational rights and freedoms. The UK will continue to challenge attempts to limit our freedom of navigation.
11. **Government will look to support freedom of navigation through increasing our maritime presence in the Indo-Pacific region by deploying two Offshore Patrol Vessels from 2021, a Littoral Response Group from 2023 and a Type 31 Frigate later in the decade. Elsewhere, Offshore Patrol Vessels will be forward deployed to the South Atlantic and Caribbean and will maintain a presence in the Mediterranean and African Coast.**

Government will deploy our full range of capabilities to defend free trade, freedom of navigation and the International Order.

**8 Ships**

Defence: 8 Ships permanently attributed to NATO<sup>39</sup>

**4 Ships**

Defence: 4 Ships leading Baltic Protector under NATO<sup>40</sup>

**£220m**

Defence: Over £220m class A-C narcotics seized (2020-2021)<sup>41</sup>



**Royal Navy Ships crossed every single line of longitude in 2021**



**In 2021, the Royal Navy assigned: the Continuous at Sea Deterrent, a Carrier Strike Group and Littoral Strike Group capabilities to NATO (Unique amongst European NATO members)**

## Why the South China Sea matters



### Linking East and West

The South China Sea covers 1.4 million square miles, and is the main global shipping route between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, through the strategically important Straits of Malacca.



### Global Maritime Trade<sup>42</sup>

60% of all global maritime trade passes through Asia: of that, one third passes through the South China Sea. This is worth over £2.33 trillion annually, which equates to 2.5% of the entire global economy.



### Global Britain<sup>43</sup>

The UK is a maritime trading nation, with commercial interests worldwide. We are reliant upon the South China Sea for over £91 billion worth of imports & exports passing through it every year - 12% of total UK seaborne trade.

## Indo-Pacific Tilt

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12. The UK is now investing greater and enduring effort in the Indo-Pacific as part of our recognition of the importance of this region to the UK in the Integrated Review. Our goal is to be the European partner with the broadest and most integrated presence in the Indo-Pacific, committed for the long-term, with closer and deeper partnerships both bilaterally and multi-laterally.
13. The government already has strong ties to the region. There are vital trade routes from East and South East Asia which support the global economy. However, the region also contains a number of disputes over contested features, fishing, or mining rights. Government is committed to supporting freedom of navigation and for disputes to be settled in accordance with UNCLOS through established international legal routes.
14. Sustainable development and maritime security are closely linked in this region – our £500m Blue Planet Fund<sup>44</sup> will help support developing countries in the Indo-Pacific protect and sustainably use vital marine resources and help mitigate and build resilience to climate change and reduce poverty. We will promote timely information sharing and associated data exchange through our established MDA programme and liaison networks based in Maritime Fusion Centres in the Seychelles, India, and Singapore.
15. Following a Summit between Prime Ministers of the UK and India in 2021, the two countries agreed to enter into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and agreed the UK/India 2030 Roadmap. The importance of our defence and security relationship, including in maritime security, was reaffirmed by the Leaders during the PM's visit to India in April 2022. The Roadmap will increase maritime cooperation and coordination through the agreed Western Indian Ocean Partnership, a Maritime Dialogue and increase engagement with the Indian Ocean Rim Association. It also supports long-term technological collaboration, joint capability development and enhances training opportunities. The UK and India have agreed to closer maritime co-operation in the Indo-Pacific. The UK will join India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative and become lead partner for the maritime security pillar, including coordinating work with key partners in Southeast Asia. The UK shares many of the same opportunities and challenges as maritime nations in Southeast Asia. We strongly support ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific and the areas of enhanced maritime cooperation that the framework provides.
16. We will use our new Dialogue Partnership with ASEAN to further strengthen maritime cooperation in Southeast Asia and help build the capabilities of member

states through education, training and exercising. The Quad (Australia, India, Japan, and the US) has identified maritime security as one of its priorities, and the UK will seek ways to support these important partners in their maritime security activity, bilaterally, trilaterally, and potentially collectively.

17. Government will increase our capacity building and training offer to Indo-Pacific States through longer and more consistent military deployments. Building on the legacy of substantial defence engagement by the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) in 2021, the UK has permanently assigned two of the Royal Navy's newest and greenest warships, to the Indo-Pacific. These vessels will be followed by a Royal Navy Littoral Response Group in 2023, and a Type 31 Royal Navy Frigate later in the decade.

## Case Study: Defending UNCLOS in the South China Sea

A stable and secure South China Sea (SCS) is vital to the UK's interests in the Indo-Pacific. Our longstanding position is that we take no sides in the sovereignty disputes. Our commitment is to international law, in particular UNCLOS, and to freedom of navigation and overflight. We will uphold the rights and freedoms under UNCLOS, including the rights of littoral States in their EEZs.

The UK will use a range of tools to promote and defend UNCLOS. In September 2020, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) Minister for Asia put our comprehensive legal position on the SCS on public record for the first time, parts of which have been reiterated in subsequent statements, for example in a joint Note Verbale at the UN in 2020. It is important for the UK, as a leading maritime nation, to make our position clear on these issues. Where we have specific concerns, including about militarisation, coercion, and intimidation, we continue to raise them.

We are working with allies to support ASEAN partners to strengthen regional capacity on maritime law and security. This includes dialogues, training, and conferences. Before the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) deployment in 2021, five Royal Navy ships have navigated the SCS since April 2018 as part of the UK's consistent presence in the region. These deployments serve to reinforce our commitment to regional security and to upholding UNCLOS.

Image: Aerial view of next generation aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth and RFA Tidespring conducting a double replenishment at sea while transiting the South China Sea. Not pictured is the De Zeven Provinciën-class frigate HNLMS Evertsen on the starboard side of the RFA Tidespring which is also being replenished.



# Objective 5: Supporting a secure, resilient ocean

To work towards an ocean that is effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse, government will:

- Champion sustainable governance of the ocean, developing maritime security approaches which enforce environmental regulations.
- Consider changes to our climate as integral to supporting a mature maritime security approach.
- Work with allies and partners to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment.

## Environmental Challenges

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1. The effects of climate change and environmental crimes at sea pose significant threats. It is essential that these are seen as equal to more immediate, and well understood, security threats. Many of the security challenges identified in this strategy can be a consequence of, or exacerbated by, changes to our climate.
2. There are many areas of government's activity which support environmental protection, limiting global instability and supporting developing nations. This strategy considers the breaching of the laws, regulations and norms that govern our ocean.

3. Internationally, fisheries, aquaculture, and marine and coastal tourism account for 71% of employment in the global ocean economy.<sup>45</sup> These sectors and the millions of livelihoods they support, predominantly in the developing countries, are highly dependent on the marine environment. Human-caused degradation of the seas and ocean from overexploitation, climate change and pollution put these livelihoods at risk and may drive future migration, conflict, and criminal activity.
4. OCGs, among others, play a persistent role in damaging our environment. This may be through illegal fishing which reduces fish stocks and impacts on the livelihoods of those working in coastal communities. Or through the dumping of waste which pollutes the seas putting the livelihood and lives of future generations at risk. These, and many other, sources of insecurity impact on our homeland and our people in a significant way.
5. Rising sea levels through climate change bring into question the extent and location of maritime zones lawfully established under the UNCLOS, creating uncertainty over rights to exploit biological and mineral resources in the sea and on the seabed. Some actors may take advantage of this uncertainty by seeking to exploit resources in areas where there is a lack of clarity as to whether it forms part of an EEZ or can be considered part of the High Seas. Finding solutions to this issue, which are consistent with UNCLOS, is important to ensure the wider integrity of the rules-based order at sea.

Image: Mangrove tree roots, above and below the water in the Caribbean Sea, Panama, Central America.



6. The UK has some of the most stringent laws and regulations that govern our seas, providing continued protection of our interests. Government will continue to deliver the regulatory, policy and support frameworks needed to protect our marine environment at home and abroad. Government will seek to continue to build our understanding of the marine environment through investment in science and data to enable improved security.
7. Government will continue to make efforts to secure a positive outcome in UN negotiations for a new legally binding agreement under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). Such an agreement would provide for the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), which is necessary if we want to achieve protection of 30% of the global ocean by 2030 and tackle the impacts of climate change on the ocean.
8. **Government will use its £500 million Blue Planet Fund, financed from the UK Official Development Assistance Budget, to help eligible developing countries reduce poverty, protect, and sustainably manage their marine resources and address human-generated threats, including activity to tackle IUU fishing.**
9. Major pollution incidents have the potential to impact human activities at sea, people's livelihoods, and the marine environment. In turn, these impacts risk destabilising countries and diverting important security resources to support the incident. The UK has world-leading technical and scientific expertise to support other governments in managing the risk of a pollution incident and the post-incident response. **Government will establish a cross-departmental working group to strengthen the response to international pollution incidents.**

“The UK’s vision is that by 2030 the ocean will be effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse, linking resilient and prosperous coastal communities around the world.”  
Integrated Review 2021

## Case Study: FSO Safer

Current potential pollution incidents of concern include the FSO Safer, a floating oil storage and offloading vessel, anchored off the coast of Yemen. Due to ongoing conflict in the region, the vessel has received little maintenance and now poses a significant pollution risk due to deterioration of the vessel's structural integrity. If the vessel were to break apart the oil on board (estimated to be 1.14 million barrels of oil) would cause a significant impact in the waters of the Red Sea and the coastal communities that border it. As of October 2021, it has been reported that the FSO Safer is at imminent risk of sinking, fire, or explosion.

In February 2022, the UN reported that an in-principle agreement was reached to transfer oil and limit the risk the vessel posed. However until the oil is transferred the imminent risk the FSO Safer poses to the environment remains.

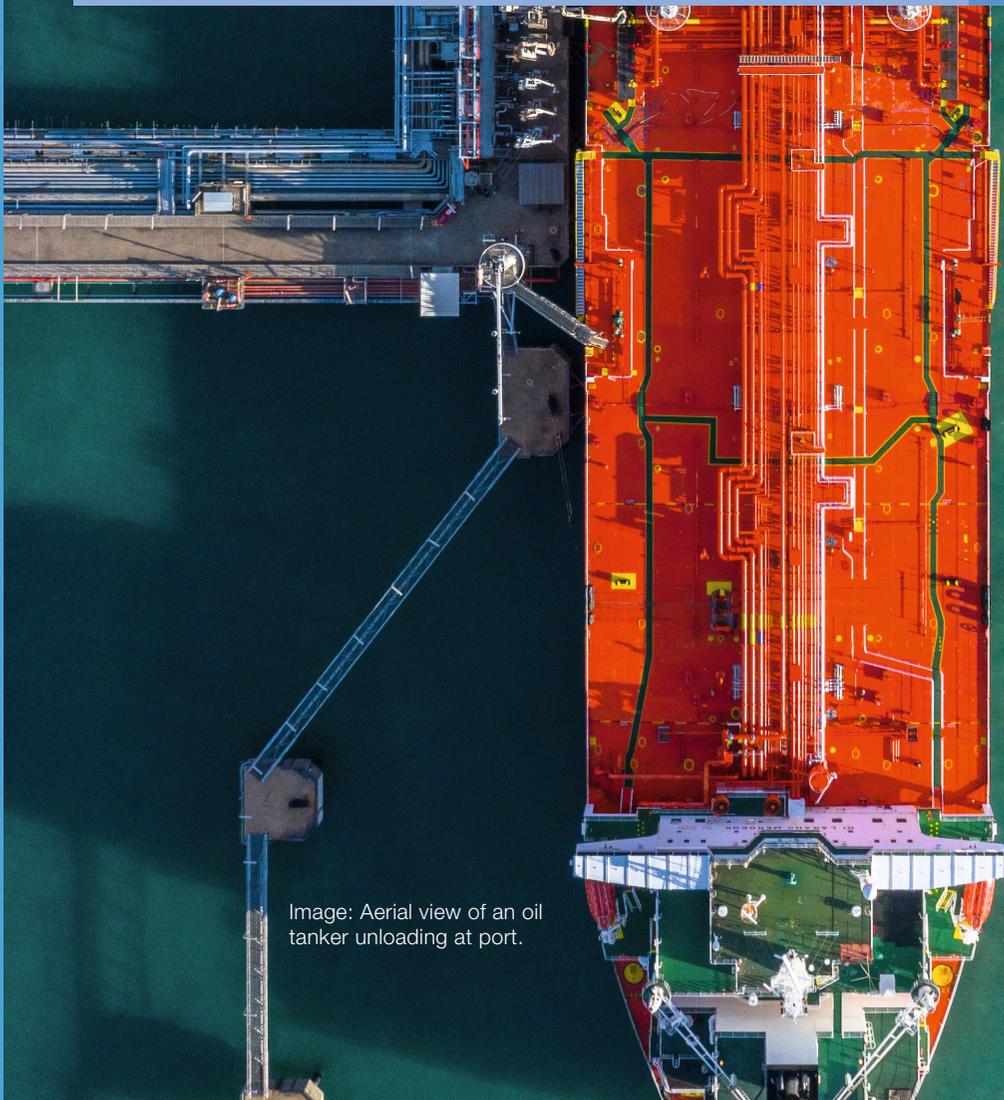


Image: Aerial view of an oil tanker unloading at port.

## Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing

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10. IUU fishing is a significant contributor to overfishing, which remains one of the most serious threats to the health of the ocean. It depletes fish stocks, distorts competition, and destroys marine habitats. It jeopardises the foundation of international efforts to promote better ocean governance, undermines efforts to manage fisheries properly and can be a key obstacle to achieving environmental sustainability, food security and social stability.
11. It is estimated that IUU fishing activities are responsible for the loss of 11-26 million tonnes of fish each year, with a global value of between \$10-23billion a year.<sup>46</sup> IUU fishing is connected to a range of unlawful activities including transnational organised fisheries crime, illicit financial activity, and human rights abuses. Fraud and lack of traceability in the supply chain are central means of enabling the laundering of illegal marine products.
12. It is imperative that measures are strengthened to tackle IUU fishing in order to support the UK's own global maritime security. Acknowledging the threat that IUU fishing poses globally, it is vital that the UK takes a strong participatory and influential role bilaterally and within international forums. Government is committed to being a world leader in the delivery of a sustainable, ecosystem approach to fisheries by working with key partners to deliver the UN's' Sustainable Development Goal 14.4 to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.
13. **Government will continue to participate in forums such as International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group (NAFIG), and the Five Eyes group to share vital intelligence towards tackling fisheries crime and supporting the UK's maritime security approach.**

## Case Study: Blue Belt Programme – combatting IUU fishing across UK Overseas Territories

The FCDO funded Blue Belt Programme protects over four million square kilometres of marine environment across the UK OT. Key to the Programme's work is ensuring that these remote and unique environments are protected from the threat of IUU fishing. This is at its highest in the remote outer edges of the UK OTs' maritime zones, where vessels in the surrounding high seas may enter and fish illegally. To prevent illegal fishing activity, a range of monitoring, compliance and enforcement techniques are employed.

A standout example of this work in action is the interception of the MV NIKA, which was suspected of fishing illegally in the South Atlantic in 2019. South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands worked with international partners, including Interpol, and were assisted by the Blue Belt team, to initiate the vessel's seizure and successful prosecution by Indonesia. It was added to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) contracting party IUU vessel list and de-flagged by Panama.



Image: A blonde fur seal coming out of the water in Stromness Bay, South Georgia, taken by crew of HMS Endurance.

14. Government will publish a new national plan dedicated to tackling IUU fishing in 2022 and implement it over the next five years.
15. Government will play an active role in Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and International Maritime Organisation to strengthen measures in preventing and deterring IUU fishing.
16. Government will continue to push internationally for the elimination of subsidies that enable IUU fishing.



Image: Trawlers leaving Brixham Harbour Devon.

## Fisheries Control and Enforcement

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17. As an independent coastal state, the UK has the ability to establish a fisheries management system which can enable our seas to flourish alongside a thriving, sustainable fishing industry. This is in line with the government's 25-year environment plan,<sup>47</sup> which aims to leave the environment in a better state for future generations.
18. The UK's natural marine capital is abundant; with fish stocks worth £1bn in revenue and a diverse range of marine ecosystems. Our fisheries control and enforcement authorities are the first, most crucial line of defence in protecting these assets from a range of threats, most notably over-exploitation.
19. Our ability to effectively control fishing activity, and take enforcement action where necessary, is critical to achieving this. In addition to existing fisheries control measures, plans to employ proven remote monitoring technologies where appropriate will enhance our ability to assure compliance with regulations and more reliably monitor stock levels. Investment in these technologies, alongside skilled and trained staff, will increase our ability to achieve a high level of fisheries control, as well as our agility in managing fishing activity at a more granular level, based on the best available evidence. This will also enable us to be more flexible and responsive to more extreme effects wrought by climate change.
20. Alongside this, our fisheries enforcement assets provide a strong deterrent and enable authorities to take decisive action where incidents of non-compliance occur. These activities are underpinned by a risk-based and intelligence led strategy, geared at supporting businesses that are fishing sustainably to thrive, whilst protecting our seas from those who would exploit it.
21. Fisheries control and enforcement is a devolved matter. As such the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and the Devolved Administrations take forward their own policies and procedures but work closely together to share information and ensure a coordinated approach to monitoring, compliance, and enforcement across UK waters.
22. Government will publish a plan dedicated to improving fisheries control and enforcement in 2022 and implement it over the next five years.

# Forward Look

1. To meet the maritime security challenges of the future, government has taken a long-term strategic approach that continues to adapt to a changing international environment. This has been underpinned by Maritime 2050, the Integrated Review, Border Security Strategy 2025 and a range of other thematic strategies.
2. This strategy has set out the UK's activity over the coming five years. During this period government will work with academia, industry and international institutions to establish a consistent approach to challenges facing the maritime sector. Government will continue to deploy hard security, economic security and our diplomacy to rally international partners and allies.
3. Maritime 2050 set out government's long term vision for a secure and stable maritime environment. This strategy forms an important part of realising that vision. In addressing the short term risks we must also prepare for the medium to long term challenges facing the UK.
4. Within 24 months, two significant, unexpected challenges have impacted the international system – COVID19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. To prepare for future threats, government will horizon scan to anticipate and prepare for new and emerging threats. This will include the shifting geopolitical tensions we have seen emerge in 2022, climate change, and the deployment of new technologies to support the maritime industry.
5. We are seeing shifts in geopolitical dynamics, from Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine to an increasing global focus on the Indo Pacific region. Elsewhere in the world, we are seeing the manifestations of civil unrest and political rivalries which the UK must continue to monitor in order to protect our maritime interests. The coming years will likely see increased attempts by states to destabilise the UK's maritime interests across the globe. The UK will continue to engage with international forums and allies to monitor and proactively manage these risks.

Image: Ice patrol ship HMS Protector undertaking ice ramming trials in the arctic circle.



6. We must be proactive in recognising and mitigating the long-term impacts of climate change on maritime security. Sea ice retreat will lead to the opening of new trade routes that will present new challenges. For example, in the High North where government is working to maintain the region as one of high cooperation and low tension, maintain a significant contribution to Arctic science, and ensure increasing access to the region and its resources are managed sustainably and responsibly.
7. The erosion of land from rising sea levels is also putting pressure on coastal communities. In Bangladesh, for example, some estimates suggest that a one-metre increase in sea level will reduce land area by 18% and could lead to 25 million refugees.<sup>48</sup> The UK will continue to support nations fighting the impacts of climate change and prevent the contributions to maritime insecurity from both a displaced population, and the catastrophic environmental impacts on the ocean that would result.
8. Climate change will also affect the abundance and distribution of marine life. Government will continue to monitor fish production projections to recognise where decreases may exacerbate existing inequalities between developed and developing nations to quickly identify where conflicts over diminished or shifting resources might arise. Against this background of dwindling and migrating fish stocks, demand for fish is increasing due to population and economic growth. This is driving some countries to subsidise their fishing industries to enable them to seek otherwise unprofitable fishing opportunities further afield. This puts further pressure on marine biomass and biodiversity in general, increases IUU fishing and potentially stokes conflict with countries on the other side of the world. The UK must ensure that the short-term commitments in this strategy are twinned with a longer-term outlook that takes these trends into account.
9. The strategy discussed how the UK will work with the maritime sector to strengthen cyber infrastructure to ensure that it is robust against potential attacks. We must also acknowledge that technology is advancing within the maritime space. This includes innovations like the use of autonomy and smart shipping technologies which could lead to fundamental change for the maritime sector, creating new trade opportunities, and a more efficient and sustainable maritime industry.

10. As the development of autonomous and remote operations technology continues, there is a need to ensure that UK law keeps pace to ensure the safe, secure, and environmentally sound operation of remotely operated and autonomous vessels. In September 2021, the Department for Transport launched the consultation 'Future of Transport regulatory review' to seek views on areas of maritime autonomy regulation that are outdated, a barrier to innovation, or not designed with new technologies and business models in mind. The government response will be published in 2022.
11. The UK will continue to monitor these issues, using science and technology to proactively research and prepare as far as possible. However, we also recognise that, as we have seen over the previous decade, unexpected geopolitical changes and unforeseen threats can emerge rapidly.
12. The maritime domain provides significant opportunities to the UK's national and international interests, however it also provides many challenges. Through collaboration and proactive engagement with partners government will continue to tackle new and emerging threats to our maritime domain. Maintaining a long-term perspective will help us navigate the path ahead.

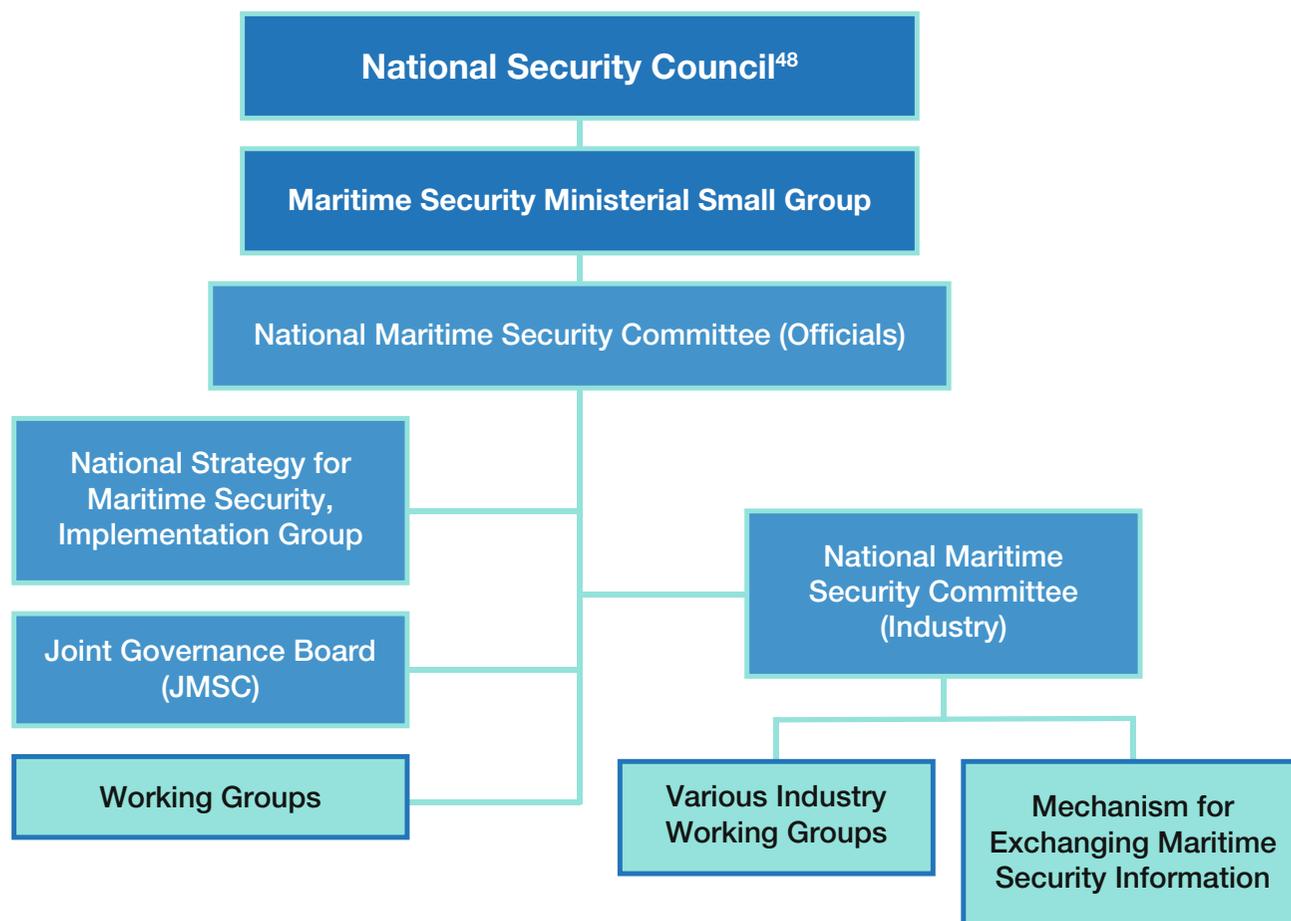
Those who think they can win through oppression, coercion or invasion are being proved wrong by this new stand on global security – one that not only seeks to deter, but also ensures that aggressors fail.<sup>49</sup>

# Government activities following publication of the National Strategy for Maritime Security

1. This strategy has set out the key issues and objectives for the UK over the next five years. The different areas of government activity are supported by the strategic objectives set out in this Strategy, within higher level Strategies such as the Integrated Review and Maritime 2050, and the strategies of individual government Departments. This strategy has taken a whole of government approach to align activity.
2. An implementation group will be formed as the vehicle for overseeing the activity set out in this strategy. This group will report to Senior Leaders and Ministers on progress.
3. Government will publish regular reports on the implementation of this strategy, taking into account changes in the risks posed to the UK's maritime sector and the global threat.

## **Maritime Security Ministerial Small Group (MSMSG):**

The MSMSG has been formed to provide strategic direction for longer term maritime security initiatives. It will also provide Ministerial oversight across a number of issues as required. These include, but are not limited to: the protection of UK waters following the end of Transition Period, the small boats migrant crisis, and the outcomes of the Integrated Review (IR) and Spending Review (SR). The MSMSG takes responsibility for providing oversight of cross-Government maritime security work led by the National Maritime Security Council (Officials) and its associated Working Groups.



**Figure 10:** Governance structure of UK Maritime Security.

**National Maritime Security Committee (Officials):**

The NMSC(O) is the cross-government senior Officials’ Committee for discussion of maritime security matters. The Committee takes responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of cross-government maritime security work by Departments and/or Agencies, including decisions taken at the Ministerial Working Group on Maritime Security. In practice, this means the NMSC(O) will maintain an overview of UK Government and Agency cross-government maritime security work streams, which together implement the future work programme set out in the NSMS.

# Annex A: UK Lead Departments with maritime security responsibilities

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This annex outlines the roles and responsibilities of departments and agencies in connection with maritime security.

**Border Force** is a law enforcement command within the Home Office. Border Force (BF) secures the UK border by carrying out immigration and customs controls for people and goods entering the UK. It checks arriving crew and passengers and regulates goods both in and out of the UK. Maritime transport can arrive and depart from the largest ports in the UK, for example Dover, through to harbours or small stretches of beach. Border Force Maritime Command's fleet includes five cutters and six coastal patrol vessels as well as niche capability in the form of tactical watercraft (TWC) and dedicated mobile RHIB capability. Border Force Vessels undertake strategic patrols, tactical surveillance, and enforcement activity in support of Border Force and other government agencies, including Defence, providing a law enforcement capability at sea and a layered approach to maritime border security.

**Cabinet Office** is responsible for supporting the Prime Minister and Cabinet. It is composed of various units that support Cabinet committees and which co-ordinate the delivery of government objectives via other departments. Additionally, the Cabinet Office is responsible for supporting the National Security Council and the Joint Intelligence Organisation, coordinating the government's response to crises, and managing the UK's cyber security.

**Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure** is an interdepartmental organisation, with resources from industry, academia and a number of government departments and agencies that provides intelligence-led and risk-based integrated security advice (across the physical, personnel, cyber and human factors disciplines) in response to industry requirements. CPNI's role is to protect national security by helping reduce the vulnerability of the national infrastructure to terrorism and other threats. In maritime this includes assessing the risks to ports, maritime infrastructure, and other key sites. It also includes providing guidance to government and the maritime industry.

**Defence Intelligence** provides strategic defence intelligence to the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces. It provides timely intelligence products, assessments, and advice to guide decisions on policy and the commitment and employment of the Armed Forces. Maritime activity takes the form of providing intelligence and reports to determine the status of risk that seafarers and the shipping industry face. Defence Intelligence works closely with intelligence, security, and law enforcement to provide detailed analysis on potential incidents that might occur in key strategic areas of the sea or within High-Risk Areas.

**Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy** is responsible for building a stronger, greener future, tackling climate change and unleashing innovation. The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is responsible for: business, industrial strategy, science, research and innovation, energy and clean growth and climate change. BEIS holds policy responsibility for the security of the UK's energy sector, which includes offshore renewable energy sources, offshore oil rigs, energy transmission networks and other offshore CNI, as well as CNI sites and civil nuclear sites on the UK's coastline.

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs** is responsible for policy and regulations relating to the natural environment, food supply/resilience, fisheries, international trade in plant and animal material, environmental protection, and pollution. DEFRA looks to improve the environment through cleaner air and water, minimised waste and thriving plant and terrestrial and marine wildlife, increase the sustainability, productivity and resilience of the fishing sector and enhance biosecurity at the border. DEFRA also works to reduce the likelihood and impact of flooding and coastal erosion on people businesses, communities, and the environment. DEFRA looks to help develop policy that provides resilience and protection for environmental security.

**Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport** is responsible for helping to drive growth, enrich lives and promote Britain abroad. The Department looks to give the UK unique advantage on the global stage, striving for economic success. The Department is the lead for department for telecommunications policy, including Subsea Fibre Optic Cable policy and the security and resilience of the UK's data networks and subsea cables.

**Department for International Trade** is responsible for striking and extending trade agreements between the United Kingdom and foreign countries, as well as for encouraging foreign investment and export trade. The Department looks to secure the UK's prosperity abroad by promoting and financing international trade and investment and championing free trade.

**Department for Transport** is the security regulator responsible for the security of ports and port facilities in the UK and the UK-flagged shipping fleets and provides an advisory role to the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. It ensures that the UK balances commercial interests with safety, security and environmental considerations while promoting a successful, safe, and sustainable UK shipping and ports sector. It encourages shipping companies to be UK registered; implements and influences international safety and security legislation; and ensures the efficient delivery and modernisation of marine aids to navigation. The DfT is responsible for the development of security policy impacting the maritime sector, such as counter-piracy. DfT works closely with other government Departments, such as Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), to identify and fund the development of maritime capacity building initiatives in coastal states. DfT enforces safety regulation and policy through the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

**Environment Agency** is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the DEFRA, with responsibilities relating to the protection and enhancement of the environment in England. This includes enhancing and enforcing environmental protection regulation.

**Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)** is responsible for coordinating the promotion of British interests overseas and projecting the UK in the world. Through our network of 280 Posts across 168 countries, the FCDO work to strengthen the international architecture and to coordinate cross government efforts overseas. The FCDO safeguard the safety and security of the UK, our Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, promote the interests of British citizens, defend our values, reduce poverty and tackle global challenges with our international partners. The FCDO plays a vital role in critical UK international maritime interests such as developing strong maritime security relationships with states, climate change, countering hostile state threats, sub-sea infrastructure, illegal immigration, and the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources. The FCDO is the lead department in the UK government on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The FCDO is also the lead department for responding to maritime terrorist incidents outside of UK's territorial sea, and works closely with the Home Office and other partners to coordinate a response to such incidents.

**HM Revenue and Customs** is a non-ministerial department. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) protect the UK's fiscal, economic, social, and physical security before and at the border and work with Border Force to enforce appropriate custom measures. HMRC works with enforcement and intelligence agencies to ensure legitimate trade is being conducted in accordance with the World Customs Organization SAFE Framework of Standards.

**HM Treasury** is the department responsible for developing and executing the government's public finance and economic priorities. HM Treasury (HMT) maintains control over public spending setting the direction of the UK's economic policy and working to achieve strong and sustainable economic growth. HMT provides strategic oversight of the UK tax system, provides policy regarding financial services, and aids the delivery of infrastructure projects across the public and private sector. HMT looks to ensure the UK is prosperous and maintains sustainable growth.

**Home Office** is responsible for UK immigration, security, and law and order, including counter-narcotics and counter terrorism. The policies of the Home Office (HO) are supported by intelligence agencies, law enforcement and the Department's public agencies and bodies such as BF. HO is the lead department for border security issues including key maritime security risks and looks to prevent the likelihood and impact of illicit activities including smuggling and other activities used by criminals to exploit and take advantage of the maritime sector. HO is also the lead department for responding to domestic maritime terrorist incidents, and works closely with FCDO and other partners to coordinate response to incidents outside of UK's territorial sea.

**Joint Maritime Security Centre** is the UK's centre of excellence for maritime security, coordination, as a multi-agency organisation JMSC ensures the government, military, and law enforcement agencies, have a developed understanding of maritime security threats and risks in our own waters and across the globe. It facilitates the coordination of the UK's maritime expertise, capabilities, and at-sea assets to enable a whole system response to threats to security, law and order, trade and commerce, and the integrity of the maritime domain. JMSC provides a mechanism for the UK's maritime and law enforcement focused organisations to fuse intelligence, data, and capabilities. JMSC's Operations Centre utilises cutting edge technology to provide 24/7 monitoring of UK waters. Staffed by personnel drawn from across government it is able to swiftly identify maritime security incidents and coordinate the UK's aerial and at-sea assets in response. JMSC owns and develops the operational playbooks to counter a range of threats and assures multi-agency exercising of response scenarios.

**Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre** assesses and analyses all intelligence relating to the threat worldwide from international terrorism to UK maritime assets. Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) analyses incoming intelligence from a wide range of sources on potential maritime terrorist threats and produces assessments detailing their judgement on their credibility and plausibility. JTAC sets the terrorist threat levels for UK commercial maritime assets, military vessels, and important maritime domains such as choke points. These threat levels communicate JTAC's view on the likelihood of a terrorist attack on maritime assets in that location and are used by wider government as the basis for assessments of the risk to shipping worldwide.

**Maritime and Coastguard Agency** is an executive agency of DfT. The MCA acts as a key maritime authority, regulates the sector with regards to safe shipping, such as supplying certification to seafarers and produces legislation and guidance on maritime matters. It acts as the safety regulator for UK flagged shipping and operates the UK Ship Register. It also coordinates the activities of the ship registers of the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies via the Red Ensign Group. It has responsibility for the implementation of international maritime safety conventions and codes, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and the International Convention of Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers. It inspects foreign flag merchant ships calling at UK ports for compliance with regulatory instruments. It is the UK's National Competent Authority for the long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT) and for the operation of the Automatic Identification System (AIS). The MCA supports and provides 24-hour maritime and coastal search and rescue emergency coordination and response service, generally undertaken by HM Coastguard which is part of the MCA.

**Marine Management Organisation** is an arms-length non-departmental public body of DEFRA responsible for implementing a marine planning system designed to integrate the social requirements, economic potential, and environmental imperatives of our seas; implementing the marine licensing regime; enforcement of fishing activity of all nationalities within English waters. The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) aims for a clean, healthy, safe, productive, and biologically diverse ocean and seas. The purpose of the body is to protect and enhance the marine environment and support the UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development.

**Ministry of Defence** is responsible for all Military Forces and their activity globally. A Department of State and Military Strategic Headquarters with three key outputs: Defence Policy; Military Capability (the ability to conduct military operations); and Military Operations. The MoD is responsible for defence against all direct military threats to the UK and the Overseas Territories; ready to protect the people of the United Kingdom, counter state threats, prevent conflict and be ready to respond to present challenges, fit for future requirements. The MoD provides strategic intelligence; Military strategic advice and responses; deploying and coordinating defence activity; supporting counter-terrorism work (CONTEST); countering small boat migration in the Channel and providing Military Assistance to Civil Authorities (MACA) in response to Maritime Security situations. The MoD plays a central role in the governments National Security Policy and supports the multi-agency responses to piracy, assisting with international coordination of counter piracy efforts. The MoD plays a critical role in strengthening Alliances and partnerships that benefit security globally, maximising its 18 different organisations, the three service Commands (Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force), Strategic Command and a variety of enabling organisations to either deliver, support, or enable military and non-military responses in one form or another in support of UK Maritime Security Objectives.

**Ministry of Justice** is responsible for developing policy impacting the delivery of Justice in the UK and executes this through its arms-length agencies and bodies and other government organisations, such as the Crown Prosecution Service. The **Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)** is a non-ministerial Department responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police and other investigating bodies in England and Wales. In Scotland, this function is carried out by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, and in Northern Ireland by the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS). As part of the UK's counter-piracy effort, the CPS has previously provided advice on prosecutions to the authorities of international governments.

**National Crime Agency** are an intelligence-led law enforcement agency who lead the UK's fight to cut SOC, operating across the whole of the UK with law enforcement and intelligence agencies to protect the public. The Agency proactively develops evidential cases against the most complex SOC offenders including in Organised Immigration Crime (OIC), Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking, drug trafficking and general border vulnerabilities. The NCA holds the single intelligence picture of the SOC threat to the UK, leading and coordinating the system's response.

**National Cyber Security Centre** works between industry and government, providing a unified source of advice, guidance and support around cyber security, including management of cyber security incidents. The NCSC supports the most critical organisations, such as ports in the UK, the wider public sector, shipping industry, SMEs, as well as the general public. When incidents occur, they provide effective incident response to minimise harm to the UK, help with recovery, and learn lessons for the future. The NCSC also works in collaboration with other law enforcement, defence, the UK's intelligence and security agencies and international partners. The NCSC understands cyber security and distils this knowledge into practical guidance that is made available to all. In maritime, the NCSC provide comprehensive guidance on how ports can secure their remote systems to ensure goods continue flowing through.

**Police Service** – seek to prevent crime in inland waterways, ports, harbours, UK Territorial Waters, and offshore energy installations. The police services work with partner agencies to provide proportionate protective security in and around the UK. The Police work within a 12 nautical mile limit. The crimes they seek to prevent range from organised crime to supporting the enforcement of environmental laws. They also have a global responsibility to investigate crimes committed on British Ships. The majority of the functions of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Police Scotland are devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly and Scottish Parliament respectively. As part of policing counter-terrorism operations, there are eleven **Counter Terrorism Units (CTUs)** and **Intelligence Units (CITUs)**. These units collaborate daily to confront threats from terrorism. At the centre of these units sits the **Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (CTPHQ)**, which devises policy and strategy, coordinates national projects, and programmes and provides a single counter-terrorism policing voice, for key stakeholders including government, intelligence agencies and other partners. Additionally, **Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) or SO15** sits within London's Metropolitan Police Service. This CTC is responsible for providing a proactive and reactive response to terrorism, domestic extremism and related offences, including the prevention and disruption of such activity; supporting the National Coordination of Terrorist Investigations outside London; assessing, analysing and developing intelligence to aid operational activity; being the police single point of contact for international partners in counter-terrorism matters; assisting in the protection of UK interests overseas and the investigation of attacks against them.

**Royal Air Force** protects Britain's interests, citizens, territory, and trade through the intelligent application of Air Power, to deliver military effect. In concert with allies, partners and the other Services, the Royal Air Force (RAF) provides support to international maritime security and deters threats to UK prosperity and security. Internationally, the RAF works with partners to counter illegal maritime activity including piracy, drug smuggling and other illegal trade particularly in the Mediterranean, the Gulf, the Caribbean and the South Atlantic. It also contributes to the development of maritime air surveillance capabilities.

**Royal Navy** protects Britain's interests, citizens, territory, and trade through judicious use of its ships, submarines, aircraft, Royal Marines, and training teams. In concert with allies and partners, the Royal Navy promotes international maritime security and deters threats to UK prosperity and security. For the UK maritime environment, the Royal Navy maintains a number of ships and units ready to respond at short notice. Internationally the Royal Navy, including the Royal Marines, works independently, bilaterally or as part of an EU, NATO or other Maritime Task Forces reinforcing and developing international relationships and deterring or countering illegal maritime activity, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, Northern Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, East and West coasts of Africa, the Caribbean and South Atlantic. The Royal Navy also contributes to the development of maritime governance capacity and capabilities in areas of strategic maritime importance. The Royal Navy has implemented a world leading MDA Programme to provide an understanding of maritime activity to improve national, regional, and international maritime security. The programme itself provides support to the UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) and the Maritime Domain Awareness Trade – Gulf of Guinea (MDAT-GOG).

**UK Maritime Trade Operations** is a Royal Navy capability with the principal purpose of providing information between UK military and the wider international maritime trade. UKMTO delivers maritime security information, often acting as the primary point of contact for merchant vessels involved in maritime incidents or travelling within an area of high risk. UKMTO also administers Voluntary Reporting Areas (VRAs) which encourages vessels to provide regular reports that enhances the security of merchant vessels. In the event of incidents at sea the UKMTO can provide advice for vessels near the vicinity and deliver information to the wider shipping industry. Information that the UKMTO receives is controlled in a secure information system. The UKMTO liaises with military maritime operations and provides assistance through information sharing, it does not coordinate response. The UKMTO aims to understand the global maritime domain, directly supporting the wider maritime industry. The knowledge it analyses and shares includes security, safety, and environment factors to support safe navigation of the sea.

**United Kingdom Hydrographic Office** is the government's hydrographic and marine geospatial experts. They are an executive agency of the MOD serving as a world-leading centre for hydrography, specialising in marine geospatial information and services in order to provide defence and security partners with information advantage whilst also supporting global shipping and environmental protection agendas. As part of the Ministry of Defence, the UKHO also plays a key role in supporting the UK's national security. The UKHO is the mapping authority for 71 other countries around the world. By supporting the delivery of critical national infrastructure, it provides a unique and significant soft power and international leadership role for the UK. By helping to protect the world's ocean, enabling safe passage, and supporting sustainable economic growth, the UKHO works to ensure that the UK remains a leading maritime nation in the years to come.

## The Role of the Devolved Administrations

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Within the UK approach to maritime security, many powers and activities are undertaken by the Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh governments, and their public bodies. Below is a brief summary of the responsibilities at the Devolved Administration level. Where activities are not listed, they fall into the UK government's responsibilities listed above.

### Northern Ireland

**Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and Department for Infrastructure (DfI)** co-ordinate a programme for monitoring, control and surveillance of sea fishing activity, port security and securing the Marine Environment. DAERA carries out inspections at sea with the support of the Royal Navy.

**Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)** has responsibility for all water within the 12-mile territorial limit of Northern Ireland. Officers of PSNI have equivalent maritime law enforcement powers to those of other UK territorial forces under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

### Scotland

**Marine Scotland** is responsible for marine and fisheries issues in Scotland. Marine Scotland operates 18 shore-based fisheries compliance offices covering the entire Coastline of the mainland and Islands and a central team that deals in intelligence and risk analysis for the tasking of all assets, as well as a fleet of Marine Protection Ships, carrying out over 900 days of at sea patrols per annum. In addition, the UK Fisheries Monitoring and Control Centre is based in Edinburgh and hosted on behalf of the UK by Marine Scotland.

Scotland has a separate legal system, in which the Lord Advocate serves as head of the prosecution system and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is the sole public prosecution service. Police Scotland has responsibility for all water within the 12-mile territorial limit of Scotland. Officers of Police Scotland have equivalent maritime law enforcement powers to those of other UK territorial forces under the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the Chief Constable has operational independence for all matters within Scotland.

## Wales

### Marine and Fisheries Division

The Marine and Fisheries Division (MFD) is a department within the devolved Welsh Government. The MFD co-ordinate a programme for monitoring, control, and surveillance of sea fishing activity. This programme includes similar activities undertaken by the MMO. A Welsh team of Marine Enforcement Officers carries out fisheries protection and enforcement and have a range of assets at their disposal including Fisheries Patrol Vessels.

## Joint Industry – Government organisations

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Government works closely with industry on maritime security. A range of engagement, takes place on a regular basis to share knowledge and expertise. The Shipping Defence Advisory Committee is one example of this work. Government will continue this range of engagement and will seek out new opportunities to ensure industry is appropriately supported.

### Shipping Defence Advisory Council (SDAC)

The SDAC is currently an informal body designed to maintain dialogue between the MoD (Navy) and the shipping industry (via the UK Chamber of Shipping (UK CoS)) on maritime security and Defence issues as they relate to the shipping industry. The secondary purpose of the council is to act as the vehicle for industry input into the development of policy and operational practices as they relate to defence and maritime security. The SDAC is co-chaired by the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff and the Chairman of the Chamber of Shipping Defence & Security Committee. Membership includes the Royal Navy, UK CoS, Maritime Industry Representatives, DfT, FCDO and other government departments. Its principal task is to guide defence and security policy, strategy, and when required operational liaison as relates to the shared interests of the MOD and the Shipping Industry.

# Annex B: Glossary

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<b>AIS</b>	Automatic Identification System (AIS)
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association South East Asian Nations
<b>BF</b>	Border Force
<b>CONTEST</b>	Counter Terrorism Strategy
<b>CNI</b>	Critical National Infrastructure
<b>CSG</b>	Carrier Strike Group
<b>EEZ</b>	Exclusive Economic Zone
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FDI</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>FoN</b>	Freedom of Navigation
<b>GVA</b>	Gross Value Added
<b>HRA</b>	High Risk Area
<b>IMO</b>	International Maritime Organization
<b>IR</b>	Integrated Review
<b>IO</b>	International Order
<b>ITLOS</b>	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
<b>INTERPOL</b>	International Criminal Police Organisation
<b>ISPS</b>	International Shipping and Port Facility Security Code
<b>NAFIG</b>	North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>OCGs</b>	Organised Criminal Groups
<b>OIC</b>	Organised Immigration Crime
<b>PFSA</b>	Port Facility Security Authority
<b>PFSO</b>	Port Facility Security Officer

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<b>ReCAAP</b>	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
<b>SOC</b>	Serious and Organised Crime
<b>SOLAS</b>	Safety of Life at Sea
<b>UNCLOS</b>	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

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# References and Clarification

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- <sup>20</sup> Maritime Domain includes all areas and things of, on, under, relating to, adjacent to, or bordering on a sea, ocean, or other navigable waterway, including all maritime-related activities, infrastructure, people, cargo, and vessels and other conveyances.
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