

NAVY NEWS WEEK 19-6

11 May 2018

Submarine With a Ton of Cocaine Intercept in Guatemala

[April 30, 2018](#)

An underwater ship with a ton of cocaine was detected and intercepted in Guatemala by naval units of the army. A submarine-type vessel with about one ton of cocaine; with a value of 13.5 million dollars; They intercepted the Guatemalan forces in the Pacific on Thursday; informed the authorities, in Guatemala City. The operation resulted in the capture of three Colombian drug traffickers who were travelling inside the vessel, the Public Prosecutor's Office said. The Office of the Public Prosecutor informed that the shipment consisted of 967 packages (kilos) of the drug whose degree of purity confirmed the experts. Naval units of the Guatemalan Army detected the submarine. On the other hand, the president of Guatemala, Jimmy Morales, has said that in the first years of his administration (2016 and 2017); achieved greater drug



seizures than those made in eight years during the previous two governments. Last year, Guatemala reached a record seizure of cocaine with 13,659 kilos, which exceeded 12,818 kilos in 2016. Also during the patrolling of the naval units of the Army of Guatemala, they discovered the boat. The operation allowed the capture of three Colombians who travelled inside the submarine, informed the Public Ministry. The Prosecutor's Office informed that the shipment consisted of 967 packages (kilos) of a drug whose degree of purity was confirmed. Likewise, the largest seizures of drugs have been practiced in the last eight years, during the term of President Jimmy Morales, much more than those made

during the previous two governments; revealed the Guatemalan president.

Source: <http://www.maritimeherald.com>

Malabar 2018: India deals a blow to Australia and 'the Quad'

By [Emanuele Scimia](#) May 1, 2018 2:58 PM (UTC+8)

The shadow of China looms large in India's decision to exclude Australia from an upcoming multilateral naval exercise. [Canberra](#) confirmed last Thursday that its navy would not be part of **Malabar 2018**, which will be held off Guam between June 7 and 15. So this year's Malabar drills will maintain a trilateral format, involving the naval forces of India, the United States and Japan. This means the project of a Quadrilateral (Quad) alliance/dialogue among New Delhi, Washington, Tokyo and Canberra to face Beijing's military expansion in the Indo-Pacific region will likely be mothballed. Backed by the US and Japan, Australia has tried to rejoin the Malabar exercises under Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, leader of a Liberal-National coalition government, at least with observer status. The former Labor government of Kevin Rudd withdrew the country from the multilateral drills in 2008, supposedly in response to pressure from China. Rudd's move eventually led to the demise of the first attempt to set up an anti-Beijing grouping of Indo-Pacific democracies spearheaded by the US.

Reassuring China

Many view the Indian government's rejection of the Australian request to participate in the Malabar maneuvers as a [concession to China](#), just like its recent decision to freeze relations with the Tibetan leadership in India. New Delhi is apparently trying to thaw the ice with Beijing after last year's military standoff on the Doklam Plateau at the tri-junction border with Bhutan. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Wuhan, in central China's Hubei province, last Friday and Saturday. The pair agreed on improving military communication to prevent border incidents, and supporting a free and open global trading system. Relations between Australia and China have worsened during the Turnbull tenure. The Australian prime minister has repeatedly accused Beijing of interfering in the country's domestic affairs. To counter alleged Chinese meddling, Turnbull has advanced a controversial law to ban foreign political donations to Australian political parties and entities linked to them. Additionally, Canberra is supporting Washington's so-called freedom of navigation and overflight operations in the South China Sea, aimed at pushing back against Beijing's sweeping territorial claims in this body of water. In this respect, tension between Australia and China escalated a couple of weeks ago, when three Australian warships [were confronted](#) in the disputed area by China's PLA (People's Liberation Army) Navy while they were heading for Vietnam, media reports said. As Swaran Singh, a professor at the school of international studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, put it to Asia Times, India's distancing from Australia is likely to be explained as "a response to China's concerns about the Quad having been revived after a decade and now is expanding its interactions to military dialogue and joint exercises." But there is another reason, according to Singh, which refers to the basics of India's foreign policy. Indeed, he said the recent decision to block Australia's participation in **Malabar 2018** "also seems to be guided by India's policy of 'multi-alignment,' which entails partnering with as many countries as possible without making one relationship hostage to any other."

New Delhi goes bilateral/trilateral

All that said, and despite India having so far refused to conclude a [logistics support agreement](#) with Australia to use each other's naval facilities (India has a similar cooperation arrangement with the US and France), a proposal that the Australian government put forward in 2015, New Delhi is not indifferent to security collaboration with Canberra altogether. Military exchanges between Australia and India have been bolstered in the past two years. In June 2017, the two nations held the [AUSINDEX naval drills](#) off the Western Australian coast, with a focus on increasing interoperability between their navies. Further, the Indian Air Force will join Australia's [Pitch Black air exercises](#) for the first time in August. In a way, the Indian government appears to be backtracking on the Quad while keeping bilateral defense ties with Canberra, Tokyo and Washington alive. India is playing a delicate geopolitical game, in which it has to take China's perceptions into account. An New Delhi's vetoing of a quadrilateral framework for naval drills with the US, Japan and Australia should be read as a sign of its unwillingness to join a multilateral front that Beijing could perceive as hostile. In light of its foreign-policy tradition, current Indo-Pacific security dynamics and, more specifically, the precarious state of Sino-Indian relations, bilateral or, at most, trilateral schemes aimed at balancing China's geopolitical rise remains much more manageable for New Delhi than a Quad-style military alliance.

Source: <http://www.atimes.com>

China's concerns were surely discussed during Modi's visit to Xi Jiping.

Britain would never be able to deploy new aircraft carriers on a mission to retake the Falklands because they will always need to be protected by allied planes and ships

- Mark Sedwill said Britain was one of just six nations with aircraft carrier fleets
- He told MPs he expected the ships would only ever go to war alongside allies
- The £3.5bn HMS *Queen Elizabeth* was commissioned into the Royal Navy in 2017

By [Tim Sculthorpe, Deputy Political Editor For Mailonline](#)

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Britain's aircraft carriers will never go into one-on-one combat with the enemy, the National Security Adviser admitted today. Despite being just one of [six nations](#) to operate a carrier fleet, Sir Mark Sedwill said he expected Britain's new flagships would only sail to war alongside allies. Britain sent its own fleet - including carriers *HMS Hermes* and *HMS Invincible* - to recover the Falkland Islands in 1982, standing alone against Argentina. Britain's new £3.5billion aircraft carrier *HMS Queen Elizabeth* is nearing the end of its trials while *HMS Prince of Wales* is still under construction. Giving evidence to the Commons defence committee today, Sir Mark said: *'We will be one of only about I think six countries in the world that has this kind of strategic projection capability when the carriers are fully operational. But it is our intention because of that to use them with allies and it is really important we keep allies in play in our thinking here so I would expect, particularly if they are in a contested deployment that there would be allied capabilities - ships, aircraft, whatever - as part of those groups. We will see what happens in the circumstances but that is part of the thinking about the use of the carriers. It is projecting them as a British sovereign capability but one that will almost inevitably, I would actually say inevitably, be used in a context of allied operations of some kind if used in a contested environment.'* In other evidence, Sir Mark said there were areas he would like to invest in but refused to be drawn on whether he had discussed extra cash with the Prime Minister. Appearing before the Commons Defence Select Committee, Sir Mark said: *'There are areas of vulnerability, definitely, across our national security commitments that I would want to invest in.'* He added: *'There are areas of vulnerability across the entire national security architecture, not just in government, a lot of this is outside government as well. Given the nature of modern warfare and the nature of non-state threats ... yes I would like to invest...'* Sir Mark said the Government did 'not yet' know who was responsible for the nerve agent attack on Russian former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in Salisbury. The adviser played a crucial role in helping to secure international support for Britain's response to Russia following the poisoning. He told MPs that the Government took the unusual move of publishing a letter he sent to Nato secretary general Jens Stoltenberg setting out why the UK held Moscow responsible for the attack to help 'punch through' Russian propaganda. Sir Mark said the attack on the Skripals had 'changed our appreciation' of which dissidents and defectors could be at risk of reprisals. He added: *'The police who are responsible for the protective security of the various agencies alongside them are reviewing the security of all people who might be vulnerable in that way.'* Sir Mark said Russia is the primary 'direct military' challenge the UK faces, but the day-to-day security threat to Britons comes from terrorism and serious crime. He said: *'The threat that kills more British citizens every year than any of those that we might spend the morning focused on is actually serious and organised crime. Whether you want to call it part of national security or part of a Government response, in the end the Government has to respond to that threat and deploy capabilities to do so, including potentially defence capabilities where that's appropriate.'*

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk>

Navy Accepts Delivery of Future USS *Tulsa* (LCS 16)

The Navy accepted delivery of the future **USS *Tulsa* (LCS 16)** during a ceremony in Mobile, Alabama, April 30. Delivery marks the official transfer of LCS 16 from the shipbuilder, an Austal USA-led team, to the Navy. It is the final milestone prior to commissioning, which is planned for late 2018 in San Francisco. "Today marks a significant milestone in the life of the future **USS *Tulsa***, as transfer occurs to the Navy and she enters service," said Capt. Mike Taylor, LCS program manager. "I look forward to celebrating the commissioning of this fine ship alongside the crew later this year in San Francisco." *Tulsa* is the 13th littoral combat ship (LCS) to be delivered to the Navy and the eighth of the Independence variant to join the fleet.

The Independence variant is noted for its unique trimaran hull and its large flight deck. "We look forward to welcoming the future **USS Tulsa** and crew in San Diego later this year," said Capt. Matthew McGonigle, commander, LCS Squadron One (COMLCSRON ONE). "Bringing a ship to life is no small task and I commend the crew for their hard work and dedication to their ship and to the LCS community." COMLCSRON ONE supports the operational commanders with warships ready for tasking by manning, training, equipping and maintaining littoral combat ships on the west coast. "To see **Tulsa** ready for delivery, words almost can't express the amazing work that Austal, Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Gulf Coast, and Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants, have done to get her to this point," said Cmdr. Drew Borovies, Tulsa's commanding officer. "Although there is still plenty of hard work ahead, we are at the point where **Tulsa** is ready for her crew, and I can say without hesitation that her crew is ready for Tulsa. Tulsa and her crew are 'Tough, Ready, and Able!'" Following commissioning, Tulsa will be homeported in San Diego with her fellow ships **USS Freedom (LCS 1)**, **USS Independence (LCS 2)**, **USS Fort Worth (LCS 3)**, **USS Coronado (LCS 4)**, **USS Jackson (LCS 6)**, **USS Montgomery (LCS 8)**, **USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10)**, **USS Omaha (LCS 12)** and the future **USS Manchester (LCS 14)**. LCS is a modular, reconfigurable ship designed to meet validated fleet requirements for surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and mine countermeasures missions in the littoral region. An interchangeable mission package is embarked on each LCS and provides the primary mission systems in one of these warfare areas. Using an open architecture design, modular weapons, sensor systems and a variety of manned and unmanned vehicles to gain, sustain, and exploit littoral maritime supremacy, LCS provides U.S. joint force access to critical theaters. Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants is responsible for delivering and sustaining littoral mission capabilities to the fleet. **Source: NAVSEA**



The Type 23 frigate **St. Albans** is working up off Plymouth. photo : **Raymond Wergan, Newton Ferrers.** ©

Belgian Navy Ship Docks At Banjul Port By: Ndey Sowe

A Belgian Navy Ship that is on a maritime security and capacity building improvement mission with countries on the West African coast, docked at the port of Banjul on the 27th April 2018. The Belgian Command and Logistics Support Ship **A960 Godetia**, has sailed from Cape Verde to the Gambia. Gert Laenen, the Belgian Navy Ship Commander, applauded the welcome accorded them by the Government of the Gambia and said this will further strengthen the already existing friendly



ties, between their two countries. Laenen said apart from the maritime security and capacity building improvement for various Navy's of countries along the West African coast, their mission is to also donate equipment and supplies of various items on humanitarian grounds in order to assist those countries in their fight against maritime crime and terrorism and to improve regional safety; that the maritime security and capacity building improvement will be able to trace both illegal human trafficking and fishing within the waters of the Gambia, and help protect regional safety in West Africa. He asserted that solidarity was the most important aspect in this Maritime Security and

Capacity Building exercise and they have brought along items ranging from sport wear, School materials and other items such as paint, to be distributed to two Schools in Banjul and some to Local Government Authorities. The Belgian Navy Ship Commander said the Gambia shares a long history of friendly relation with Belgium and their visit marks the twelfth edition of the maritime security and capacity building exercise for countries along the West African Coast. Mr. Pierre ML Sarr, the Belgium Consul for the Gambia, expressed similar remarks and further indicated that the visit of the Belgian Navy Ship, will yield good benefits for the country, ranging from health and education, to other sectors of the country. He applauded the

press for their hard work and commitment and urged them to keep up their good work as professionals. The Belgian Maritime Security and Capacity Building Improvement exercise for countries on the West African Coast is based on four pillars, according to Navy Ship Commander, Laenen. These, he said, are defense, diplomacy, solidarity and cooperation, and surveillance; that Maritime Crime threatens the safe passage of commercial vessels through the regions' sea lanes, and this, he said, affects local economies; that the effort is to improve and maintain maritime security in West African waters, by exchanging best practices and share experiences and training with West African Navys, together. Laenen said their training will be based on detecting and reporting on suspicious behavior at sea and monitoring their developments. As tradition allows it, he invited diplomats, journalists and representative of various Local authorities, on a conducted tour of the Ship.

Source: foroyaa.gm

Tories are holing British shipbuilding industry below the waterline

Theresa May and her cronies seem intent on giving Royal Navy work away to foreign yards at expense of British workers. The shipbuilding industry needs a shot in the arm, not a hole below the waterline. So why are the Tories so keen to give away work to foreign yards? SNP MP Chris Stephens has an answer to those in government who seem not to care about domestic jobs. He fairly points out that these are armed ships and should be treated like Royal Navy vessels – and built at home. The Tory Government have such an ideological attachment to competition that they can't see the clear benefits of changing course. From the independence referendum, through general elections, to Brexit, they have struggled with this industry. Promises made, bent, changed and re-written. The Government also clearly can't be trusted to protect the steel industry – even though there are signs of potential and recovery. Unions agree with Stephens – there is no competitive edge to throwing away this work. There is everything to be gained from keeping these orders in Britain. It's a strange way for Theresa May to underline her "*patriotic*" departure from our friends in Europe. If this is our course, expect her to scuttle the ship as we drift over the horizon. Former Commons speaker Michael Martin was a pioneer. First for getting the parliament job – and for the way he lost it. A union man, he was from a strong Labour background and made sure everybody knew it. For all his hard work though, his role in the MPs' expenses scandal cannot be ignored. He appeared to defend the indefensible. And his anger at the release of expenses details, rather than what they said about MPs, was a misjudgment. But it's for his wider impact that he will be remembered by those who knew him. Martin proved locked doors can be opened. His was a fascinating journey – from working class Glasgow to the pomp of the speaker's chair. He was an authentic voice in a parliament that too often keeps them quiet.

Source: dailyrecord

This might all be part of the Brexit-game.

Russian AOR Ivan Bubnov visits Limassol

The Boris Chilikin class also known as Project 1559V Morskoy prostor (Sea space) is a series of fleet replenishment oilers built in 1970s for the Soviet Navy and currently in service with the Russian Navy. As the Soviet Navy began to more regularly operate in large areas of the world's oceans and because of the emergence of the Kiev-class aircraft carriers, demand for large surface supply ships increased. In 1967, the TsKB "Baltsudoproyekt" (now Baltic Shipyard) received technical and tactical assignment for the design of Project 1559V sea oilers based on the civilian Project 1559 or Velikiy



Oktyabr class.

The Russian Boris Chilikin class *Ivan Bubnov* moored in Limassol Cyprus **Photo: Steve Davies**

The main designers were S.N. Shumilov and Captain 2nd rank Yu. D. Makshanchikov. The maximum length of the

ship is 162.3 m (532.5 ft), the maximum width 21.4 m (70.2 ft) and draft 9.0 m (29.5 ft). When in standard load, the ship has displacement about 6,950 tons and 22,460 tons while fully loaded. Endurance of the ships is 90 days during which they can travel the distance about 22,000 km (12,000 nm). The oilers of this class are equipped with a device for the transfer of goods in move by the traverse method. This allows carrying out cargo operations during significant sea waves. A wide range of transported goods (for example, bunker fuel - 8,250 tons, diesel - 2,050 tons, jet fuel - 1,000 tons, drinking water - 1,000 tons, boiler feedwater - 450 tons, lube oil - 250 tons, provisions 220 tons) allows to rank the oilers of this class to the ships for providing of complex supply.

Source: Maasmond Maritime

How does Queen Elizabeth compare to the Russian carrier Admiral Kuznetsov?

The Russian carrier is designed to lead a flotilla of vessels or operate solo while keeping enemy fleet at bay using its anti-ship missiles and using its aircraft to deter enemy aircraft. The Queen Elizabeth class on the other hand are designed to

operate with a battle group to maintain air superiority, strike a variety of strategic and tactical targets using aircraft in addition to providing an air assault platform.



Image of the Russian warship **Admiral Kuznetsov**.

Despite recent sensationalist tabloid headlines, describing the **Admiral Kuznetsov** as “massive” while decrying the UK’s “tiny ships”, the Queen Elizabeth class are of a significantly higher tonnage than the Russian vessel, each sitting at 70,600 tonnes compared to its 55,000. That being said, size is a poor indicator of carrier capability so let’s look beyond tabloid headlines. The Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers will be the largest surface warships ever constructed for the Royal Navy. The vessels will be utilised by all three branches of the UK Armed Forces and will provide eight acres of sovereign territory. Both ships will be versatile enough to be used for operations ranging from high intensity conflict to providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief. Surprisingly for their sheer scale each ship will only have a total crew of 679, only increasing to the full complement of 1,600 when the air elements are embarked. This is made possible by extensive automation of many systems.



Photo: PO PHOT Dave Jenkins

The **Admiral Kuznetsov** serves as the flagship of the Russian Navy and is their only aircraft carrier. The initial name of the ship was **Riga**; she was launched as **Leonid**

Brezhnev in 1985. She was originally commissioned in the Soviet Navy and was intended to be the lead ship of her class but the only other ship of her class, **Varyag**, was never completed or commissioned by the Soviet, Russian or Ukrainian navy. This second hull was eventually sold to the People’s Republic of China by Ukraine, completed in Dalian and launched as **Liaoning**. The Russian vessel carries a number of offensive weapons typically associated with guided missile cruisers and the carrier itself is capable of engaging surface, subsurface and airborne targets. The Queen Elizabeth class carriers, in peacetime, will usually deploy with around 12-24 F-35Bs and a number of various helicopter types. The exact types and numbers of aircraft embarked being adjusted to meet current requirements and threats. In addition to the joint force of Royal Air Force and Royal Navy F-35Bs, the air wing is expected to be composed of a ‘**Maritime Force Protection**’ package of 9 anti-submarine Merlin HM2 and four or five Merlin for airborne early warning; alternatively a ‘**Littoral Manoeuvre**’ package could include a mix of RAF Chinooks, Army Apaches, Merlin HC4 and Wildcat. The vessels are capable of deploying a variety of aircraft in large numbers, up to a maximum in the upper fifties in surge conditions however this would be very rare. The Queen Elizabeth class mark a change from expressing carrier power in terms of number of aircraft carried, to the number of sortie’s that can be generated from the deck. The class is estimated to be able to sustain a maximum sortie generation rate in surge conditions of up to 110 sorties per day. The **Admiral Kuznetsov** can hold up to about 40 fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, including Su-33 fighters and various versions of Ka-27 helicopter, however it rarely sails with more than half of that number. While designated an aircraft carrier by the West, the design of **Admiral Kuznetsov** implies a mission different from that of either the United States Navy carriers or those of the Royal Navy. The **Admiral Kuznetsov** is a heavy aviation cruiser rather than just an aircraft carrier. The vessel carries a number of offensive weapons typically associated with missile cruisers. The carrier itself is capable of engaging surface, subsurface and airborne targets, independently of its air wing. According to War is Boring: “**Admiral Kuznetsov** has never seen combat, nor would she be of much practical military use. The 55,000-ton carrier has a bow ramp, not steam catapults, requiring her aircraft to shed weight before taking off.” This means her planes will go into combat with less fuel or bombs than the ground-based fighters Russia has already deployed to Syria.” (As will the F35s on the QE class!) During a recent voyage the **Admiral Kuznetsov** reportedly “will have about 15 fighters Su-33 and MiG-29K/KUB and more than ten helicopters Ka-52K, Ka-27 and Ka-31”. STOBAR (Short Take-Off But Arrested Recovery), the system used for the launch and recovery of aircraft from the **Admiral Kuznetsov**, does not allow for the same frequency of launches/recoveries and tempo of operations afforded by American carriers or even the Queen Elizabeth class. With STOBAR, the aircraft take off using the ramp and are arrested by

a cable when landing back on the deck. This means that the **Admiral Kuznetsov's** aircraft will only be able to fly a relatively limited number of sorties daily. Other relevant factors include the process and capacities for transporting ordnance to assembly areas and from there to the flight deck, refuelling and arming stations layout, number and capacities of aircraft elevators, etc. These vessels clearly cannot do some of what the other can, while the **Admiral Kuznetsov** can venture alone at times, the **Queen Elizabeth** would be unable due to a lack of offensive capabilities. Although similar in overall form, they are designed for different roles and with different ideologies in mind. The topic of which ideology is more practical to day however is an entirely different topic. As an aviation platform however, the Queen Elizabeth class will certainly be more capable and in the role of a cruiser, the **Admiral Kuznetsov** clearly comes out on top. Is the press right to portray the **Kuznetsov** as something akin to the Bismarck however? No, clearly not. The Russian flagship while a potent symbol is heavily outdated and its mix of roles, cruiser and carrier, severely restricts its capabilities in the mission has been deployed for off Syria. It shouldn't come as a surprise that the more modern Queen Elizabeth class vessels will be far more capable aviation platforms, perhaps therefore comparisons like the above and those that appear in the press aren't all that useful...

Former USS *Fitzgerald* Officer Pleads Guilty to Negligence Charge for Role in Collision

By: [Sam LaGrone](#)

May 8, 2018 6:50 PM • Updated: May 9, 2018 6:35 AM



USS *Fitzgerald* (DDG-62) sits in Dry Dock 4 at Fleet Activities (FLEACT) Yokosuka on July 11, 2017. US Navy Photo

WASHINGTON NAVY YARD – Lt. j.g. Sarah B. Coppock was contrite and quiet when she pleaded guilty on a single criminal charge for her role in the collision between the guided-missile destroyer **USS *Fitzgerald* (DDG-62)** and a merchant ship that killed seven sailors.

Before a military judge and almost a dozen family members of the sailors who died, she pleaded guilty to one violation of Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Coppock was the officer of the deck when ***Fitzgerald*** collided with ***ACX Crystal*** off the coast of Japan on June 17. As part of a plea arrangement, she told military judge Capt. Charles Purnell her actions were partially responsible for the deaths of the sailors who drowned in their berthing after the collision. “*My entire career my guys have been my number one priority,*” she said. “*When it mattered, I failed them. I made a tremendously bad decision and they paid the price.*” In her plea, Coppock admitted that she violated ship commander Cmdr. Bryce Benson’s standing orders several times during the overnight transit off the coast of Japan, violated Coast Guard navigation rules, did not communicate effectively with the watch standers in the Combat Information Center, did not operate safely in a high-density traffic condition and did not alert the crew ahead of a collision. Purnell sentenced her three months reduced pay and

issued a punitive reprimand. While Coppock did admit to wrongdoing, both the prosecutors and defense attorneys painted a picture of a difficult operating environment.

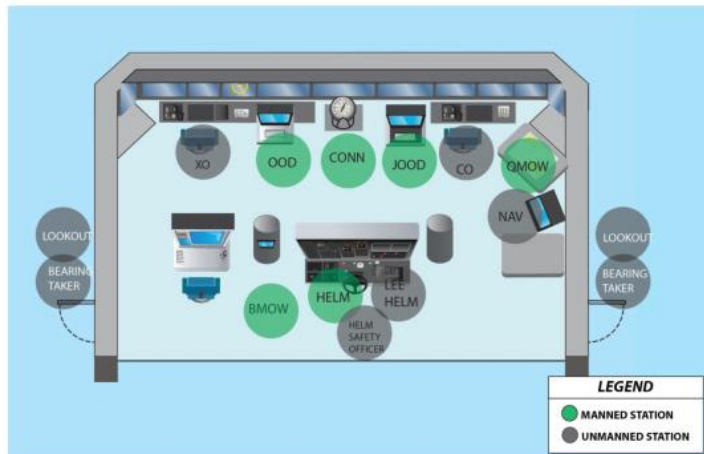


Figure 4 – Bridge Schematic of FITZGERALD

Bridge layout of ***Fitzgerald*** on June 17, 2017. US Navy Photo

When ***Fitzgerald*** collided with ***Crystal***, the malfunctioning SPS-73 bridge radar was tracking more than 200 surface tracks – a mix of large merchant ships and fishing vessels near the coast of Japan, according to the findings of fact in the trial. Coppock was under orders for

the ship to cross a busy merchant shipping lane – a so-called traffic separation – that wasn't labeled on the charts provided by the navigation team. She was also ordered to keep the ship moving at a high-rate of speed during the transit – 20 to 22 knots. The high speed lowered the time the crew could react to ships around them. Coppock said she didn't rely enough on the officers on watch in the ship's combat information center (CIC) to help keep track of the surface contacts as a back up to her crew on the bridge. Prosecutors and defense attorneys that the conditions aboard **Fitzgerald** made the collision more likely. "*Coppock failed in her duties, but she received very little support,*" prosecutor Lt. Cmdr. Paul Hochmuth argued during the sentencing portion of the trial. "*Being complacent was the standard on **USS Fitzgerald**.*" During the sentencing portion of the trial, lawyers for the defense outlined the gapped billets and inability to complete training on **Fitzgerald**. For example, the ship had been without a chief quartermaster for two years before the collision, and the SPS-73 navigation radar was unreliable, defense attorney Lt. Ryan Mooney said, quoting from the Navy's investigation into the collision. The watchstander in the CIC who operated the SPS-67 search and surveillance radar was unfamiliar with the system. "*Lt. Coppock was not put in a position to succeed,*" Mooney said. "*She was set up to fail.*" As part of her statement to the court, Coppock described a tattoo on her left wrist that she got shortly after she returned to shore after the incident. The tattoo includes the coordinates of the location of the collision; the motto of the ship, "**Protect your People**"; and seven shamrocks, one for each of the sailors who drowned in the flooded berthing. "*I'll never forget [the coordinates],*" she told the judge. "*I spent two hours yelling it in a radio trying to get help.*" The trial now supersedes a non-judicial punishment issuance by then-U.S. 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin for Coppock shortly following the collision. Her case was reconsidered for court-martial following the assignment of Adm. James Caldwell, director of Naval Reactors, [as the Consolidated Disposition Authority](#) who was appointed to oversee additional accountability actions for the **Fitzgerald** and **USS John S. McCain (DDG-56)** collisions. One military attorney told USNI News that trying a service member at court-martial after assigning punishment at NJP was an unusual move. "*It's unusual to follow [non-judicial punishment] with a court-martial,*" Rob "Butch" Bracknell, a former Marine and military lawyer, told USNI News on Tuesday. "*So the increased punishment is effectively a couple thousand dollars fine and a misdemeanor conviction on a charge of dereliction resulting in death? What was the point?*" The charge Coppock faced on Tuesday as part of the plea agreement was less severe than charges announced by the Navy in January, in which Coppock and two other unidentified junior officers on **Fitzgerald** faced a combination of charges that included negligent homicide and hazarding a vessel. While not specified in the trial, the nature of the plea agreement suggests Coppock will likely be a prosecution witness against the upcoming courts-martial of then-**Fitzgerald** commander Benson or the two other junior officers who have been charged, [two military lawyers told USNI News last week](#). The two watchstanders who were in the CIC during the collision will face a judge on Wednesday for preliminary hearings on criminal charges for their roles in the collision that include hazarding a vessel and negligence.

Source: <https://news.usni.org>

This emphases why discipline at sea is of the utmost importance, as well as continued training.

BAE Acknowledges Defects in HMS Forth's Construction

By [MarEx](#) 2018-05-02 22:03:00



The **Forth** at her commissioning ceremony (Royal Navy)

The Royal Navy's first-in-class patrol vessel **HMS Forth** was delivered with multiple deficiencies, including broken bolt heads that had been reattached with adhesive, according

to a report obtained by Scottish paper The Herald. The first new Batch II *River*-class OPV, which just entered service last month, was found to have over 100 defects on board. While it is not unusual for a new ship to undergo a shakedown period after delivery, especially if it is the first in its class, some of the defects were of an unusual nature. Prominent errors included flawed work on life raft davits, where bolt heads were found "*to have been cut off and glued in place.*" In an internal document provided to the paper, shipbuilder BAE Systems called on its staff to improve their work. "*Our reputation has seriously deteriorated on the back of recent business-wide operational performance and we all need to take action to improve this,*" the memo said. "*We need everyone in Naval Ships to consider what the barriers are to right first-time performance in your area and identify solutions that you and your team can apply.*" In a statement, BAE said that "*we are aware of an issue with a limited number of bolt fastenings on board **HMS Forth**. These did not present a risk to the mechanisms that secure the life rafts to the ship.*"

Deficiencies on U.S. Navy's small transports

The Royal Navy is not the only service experiencing problems with its smaller ships. In a recent audit report, the U.S. Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General (DODIG) determined that the U.S. Navy's eight Expeditionary Fast Transport (EFS) vessels do not meet expected requirements for cargo transportation or cybersecurity protection. The Navy's contract provides for the delivery of another four ships in the class, all to be operated by Military Sealift Command (MSC). "Navy officials accepted eight EPF vessels with deficiencies that could prevent the MSC from accomplishing missions," the auditors wrote. "The Navy may also have to spend additional money to achieve the required performance capabilities for EPF vessels that were already provided to the fleet and for future EPF vessels that are still in production." Under the Navy's contract requirements, the EPF vessel was to transport about 550 tonnes of cargo for 1,200 nm at an average speed of 35 knots. During testing, it only achieved a range of about 770-850 nm at 31 knots with the rated payload.



The audit found that these shortcomings were not corrected. In a related cargo requirement, the EPF was intended to handle ship-to-ship lightering operations using its stern ramp and a floating dock (image left). The standard called for it to perform this particular mode of cargo transfer in waves over four feet, or at minimum, in waves over four inches (0.1 meters). The vessel successfully completed the stern ramp transfer evolution in waves of 12 inches in a protected harbor, but was not capable of the task in the open ocean with waves of 20 inches (0.5

meters). The Pentagon's Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) assessed that it could not perform this task at sea. In addition, the Navy officials responsible for the EPF program found 14 deficiencies related to "information assurance controls," the shipboard cybersecurity systems that ensure the availability, integrity, authenticity, and confidentiality of information exchanges. DOT&E reached similar conclusions, and DODIG found that these cybersecurity issues may not have been corrected. Despite potential issues with communications security, the Navy is reportedly considering the EPF class for use in a small-scale [command ship](#) role in the Western Pacific. **Source:** <https://www.maritime-executive.com>

This report may well harm BAE's chances to build the frigates for the RAN. Creating conglomerates in the weapons business is harming the quality of products being delivered.

China quietly installed defensive missile systems on strategic Spratly Islands in hotly contested South China Sea

- China has installed anti-ship cruise missiles and surface-to-air missile systems on three of its fortified outposts in the South China Sea, sources tell CNBC.
- By all accounts, the new coastal defense systems are a significant addition to Beijing's military portfolio in one of the most contested regions in the world.

[Amanda Macias](#) | [@amanda_m_macias](#)

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VCG | Getty Images

A PLA Navy fleet including the aircraft carrier Liaoning, submarines, vessels and fighter jets take part in a review in the South China Sea on April 12, 2018. China has quietly installed anti-ship cruise

missiles and surface-to-air missile systems on three of its fortified outposts west of the Philippines in the South China Sea, a move that allows Beijing to further project its power in the hotly disputed waters, according to sources with direct knowledge of U.S. intelligence reports. Intelligence assessments say the missile platforms were moved to the outposts in the Spratly Islands within the past 30 days, according to sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The placement of the defensive weapons also comes on the heels of China's [recent South China Sea installation of military jamming equipment](#), which disrupts communications and radar systems. By all accounts, the new coastal defense systems represent a significant addition to Beijing's military portfolio in one of the most contested regions in the world. The United States has remained neutral – but expressed concern – about the overlapping sovereignty claims to the Spratlys. "We have consistently called on China, as well as other claimants, to refrain from further land reclamation, construction of new facilities, and militarization of disputed features, and to commit to managing and resolving disputes peacefully with other claimants," a Pentagon official

told CNBC when asked about China's recent military activity in the area. *"The further militarization of outposts will only serve to raise tensions and create greater distrust among claimants."* The recent intelligence, according to sources, indicates the deployment of anti-ship cruise missiles and surface-to-air missiles on Fiery Cross Reef, Subi Reef and Mischief Reef in the Spratly Islands. The Spratlys, to which six countries lay claim, are located approximately two-thirds of the way east from southern Vietnam to the southern Philippines.



Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative/Center for Strategic and International Studies. Satellite photo of Fiery Cross Reef in the South China Sea taken on January 1, 2018.

The land-based anti-ship cruise missiles, designated as YJ-12B, allow China to strike surface vessels within 295 nautical miles of the reefs. Meanwhile, the long-range surface-to-air missiles designated as HQ-9B, have an expected range of targeting aircraft, drones and cruise missiles within 160 nautical miles. The defensive weapons have also appeared in satellite images of Woody Island, China's military headquarters in the nearby Paracel Islands. *"Woody Island serves as the administrative and military center of China's presence in the South China Sea,"* Gregory Poling, Center for Strategic and International Studies fellow and director of the [Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative](#), told CNBC in a prior interview. *"We assume that anything we see at Woody will eventually find its way farther south to more directly menace China's neighbors,"* he added.

A hotly contested part of the world

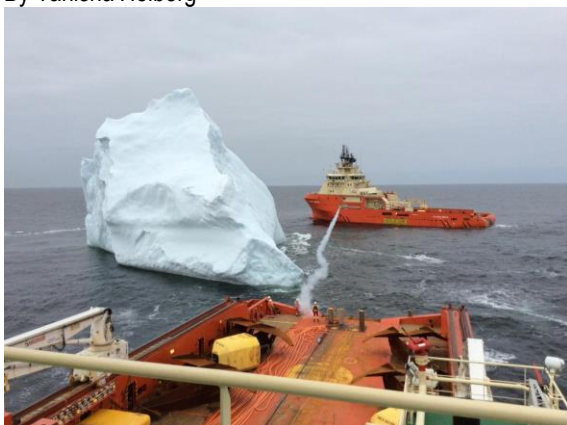
The South China Sea, which is home to more than 200 specks of land, serves as a gateway to global sea routes where approximately \$3.4 trillion of trade passes annually. The numerous overlapping sovereign claims to islands, reefs and rocks — many of which disappear under high tide — have turned the waters into an armed camp. Beijing holds the lion's share of these features with approximately 27 outposts peppered throughout. Beijing's interest in developing the crumbs of land across the South China Sea is by no means new. For instance, China first took possession of Fiery Cross Reef and Subi Reef in 1988 and has since outfitted the features with deep-water ports, aircraft hangars, communication facilities, administration offices and a 10,000-foot runway. Last week, U.S. Navy Adm. Philip Davidson, the expected nominee to replace U.S. Pacific Command Chief Adm. Harry Harris, described China's increased presence in the South China Sea as *"a substantial challenge to U.S. military operations in this region."* In [written testimony](#) to the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, Davidson said the development of China's forward operating bases in the hotly contested waters appear to be complete. *"The only thing lacking are the deployed forces. Once occupied, China will be able to extend its influence thousands of miles to the south and project power deep into Oceania,"* Davidson wrote. *"In short, China is now capable of controlling the South China Sea in all scenarios short of war with the United States."* Davidson's comments echo a steady drumbeat of warnings made by Harris regarding China's growing strength. Earlier this year, [Harris told Congress](#) that Beijing's impressive military buildup, including its pursuit of hypersonic weapons, could challenge the United States *"across almost every domain."* *"While some view China's actions in the East and South China Seas as opportunistic, I do not. I view them as coordinated, methodical and strategic, using their military and economic power to erode the free and open international order,"* Harris told the House Armed Services Committee. Harris, whom President [Donald Trump](#) is reportedly set to nominate as [U.S. ambassador to South Korea](#), currently oversees approximately 375,000 military personnel and is responsible for defending a theater that spans nearly half of the Earth's surface. *"Ladies and gentlemen, China's intent is crystal clear. We ignore it at our peril,"* Harris said.

Source: <https://www.cnbc.com>

The Guy Who Raised the Costa Concordia Wants to Wrangle Icebergs to Help Cape Town's Water Crisis

April 30, 2018 by [Reuters](#)

By Tanisha Heiberg



File Photo: It wouldn't be the first time ships have towed icebergs. In this photo from 2015, two Atlantic Towing vessels [wrangle an iceberg drifting near offshore rigs](#) in the North Atlantic off the Newfoundland and Labrador coast. Photo: Wayne Power/JD Irving Ltd.



JOHANNESBURG, April 30 (Reuters) – Marine salvage experts are floating a plan to tug icebergs from Antarctica to South Africa’s drought-hit Cape Town to help solve the region’s worst water shortage in a century. [Salvage master Nick Sloane](#) told Reuters he was looking for government and private investors for a scheme to guide huge chunks of ice across the ocean, chop them into a slurry and melt them down into millions of liters of drinking water. “*We want to show that if there is no other source to solve the water crisis, we have another idea no one else has thought of yet,*” said Sloane, who led the [refloating of the capsized Italian passenger liner Costa Concordia](#) in 2014. South Africa has declared a national disaster over the drought that hit its southern and western regions after 2015 and 2016 turned into two of the driest years on record. Tough water restrictions are already in place and Cape Town authorities have warned that taps could run dry altogether as soon as next year if winter rains do not come to the rescue of the port city’s 4 million residents. Cape Town-based Sloane said his team could wrap passing icebergs in fabric skirts to protect them and reduce evaporation. Large tankers could then guide the blocks into the Benguela Current that flows along the west coast of southern Africa. A milling machine would then cut into the ice, producing a slurry and forming a saucer structure that will speed up the natural process, he said. A single iceberg “*could produce about 150 million liters per day for about a year,*” around 30 percent of the city’s needs, said Sloane, a director at the U.S. marine salvage firm Resolve Marine. He said he was planning to hold a conference later this month to try and sell the \$130 million project to city officials and investors. The city council was not immediately available for comment. (Editing by Ed Stoddard and Andrew Heavens) **Source:** <http://gcaptain.com>

Ship Manoeuvring at its best



Beautiful drone shot of the ***Xing Guang Hua*** passing the Juliana bridge in Willemstad loaded with the 2 new floating drydocks for **Damen Shiprepair** in Curacao **photo : Damen Shiprepair Curacao**