



Multi Role Support Ship (MRSS) Market Update

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Background – The need for MRSS

- The Royal Navy is evolving to become a future Maritime Force which is more **distributed, persistently engaged, protean by design, more interchangeable and interdependent**, and functioning as a cooperative **system of systems**.
- The existing amphibious platforms Landing ship Dock (Auxiliary) (LSD(A)) and Landing Platform Dock (LPD) go **out of service between 2031 and 2034**.
- The IR21 identified a **MRSS**, “to provide the platforms to deliver **Littoral Strike, including Maritime Special Operations**, in the early 2030s”.
- National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh proposed a class of up to six MRSS, to enable powerful global littoral strike and amphibious capability with the Future Commando Force.
- The associated **Littoral Strike concept** will transform the **Commando Force** from a contingent, high readiness force to a pre-emptive, **persistently engaged** force.
- This new concept is centred around **two Littoral Response Groups (LRG)** to deliver a sovereign capability, which can surge and be combined into larger task group formations.



MRSS Headlines



Royal Marines to get six new ships which can launch drones and fire laser weapons

Grant Shapps says the specialist vessels will ensure a 'secure future' for the Armed Forces

Danielle Sheridan, DEFENCE EDITOR
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- MRSS is now in Concept phase and is the highest priority programme within the RN New Entry shipbuilding pipeline.
- The Planning Assumptions for Service Entry is the early 2030s to meet the Out of Service Dates of the existing amphibious capability.
- In Jun 23 Minister of Defence Procurement signed a year-long UK-NL Statement of Intent that committed us to explore opportunities for collaboration as part of separate or bi-national future littoral strike shipping platform acquisition programme(s).
- Last week Secretary of State for Defence announced the acquisition of up to six MRSS to replace all of the RNs current amphibious and littoral strike platforms.
- The Royal Navy and Defence Equipment and Support, will now conduct detailed work on the design and procurement strategy, informed by industry engagement. The Defence Secretary has directed that these ships will be built in the UK.



What Capability is MRSS replacing?

The UK amphibious capability is currently delivered by 6 ships within 3 classes:

- 2x Landing Platform Docks (LPDs) entered service in 2003 – HMS ALBION and HMS BULWARK.
- 3x Landing Ship Dock (Auxiliary) (LSDA) entered service from 2006 – RFA MOUNTS BAY, RFA LYME BAY and RFA CARDIGAN BAY.
- 1x Aviation Support Ship (AvSS)/Primary Casualty Receiving Facility PCRFF entered service in 1988 – RFA ARGUS having already had her life extended.



How will MRSS operate

- The **Multi-Role Support Ship (MRSS)** capability is a **system-of-systems** comprised of a number of task units that collectively delivers the 'Lift', 'Protect' and 'Enable' elements of the **Littoral Strike (LS)** force level output.
- MRSS will operate in **two Littoral Response Groups (LRGs)** in two separate global regions and be **forward deployed** to respond rapidly to crises.
- The two LRGs can **aggregate to form a single Littoral Strike Group (LSG)**, augmented as necessary by additional force protection provided from the wider fleet. Equally, one or both LRGs can integrate with a CSG to form an **Expeditionary Strike Force (ESF)**.



MRSS – (Draft) Single Statement of User Need

*The User requires a Multi-Role Support Ship (MRSS) capability to deliver **Commando Force Strike and Special Operations from the littoral and remain ready to respond to non-concurrent crises as part of a UK sovereign unilateral response, and with individual force elements fully interoperable with other forces.** MRSS will also host the UK's future **Maritime Deployed Hospital Care, future expeditionary offboard autonomous systems and enable follow on forces.** The MRSS capability will **operate worldwide, persistently engaged as Littoral Response Groups (LRG), ready to aggregate to form a larger Littoral Strike Group (LSG) or to be combined with a Carrier Strike Group (CSG) to form an Expeditionary Strike Force (ESF).** The capability will **operate up to and including a medium-high threat environment, and in a high threat environments only when afforded protection by other task group force elements.***



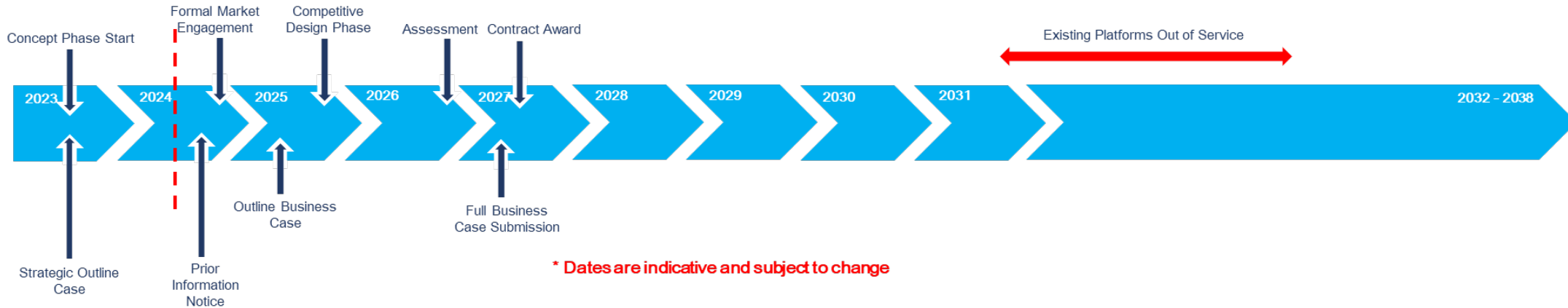
What the MRSS will need to do

The MRSS Capability shall:

- Host, launch and recover Commando Forces Personnel, Surface, Aviation and Ground Manoeuvre vehicles and equipment for full scale Littoral Strike amphibious operations.
- Provide an afloat command platform for Littoral Strike Group operations.
- Host, launch, and recover maritime special operations.
- Sustain deployed Commando Force operations from the littoral.
- Deliver Maritime Role 2 Enhanced medical capability to littoral strike operations.
- Host, launch, operate and recover expeditionary offboard autonomous systems.
- Generate amphibious task units for Littoral Strike operations.
- Be capable of operating globally in multiple threat environments.



High Level Schedule



- The baseline planning assumption, subject to departmental approvals, is that **the MRSS procurement will be a competition**. The detailed procurement strategy will be developed during the “Concept Phase”.
- The Concept Phase is a pre-procurement phase that includes:
 - **gathering information** on the market;
 - finalising the full set of **Key User Requirements**;
 - **validating assumptions** made in setting the procurement strategy; and
 - **engaging with industry** to obtain feedback and prepare industry to participate in the future competition.
- Opportunities to participate in **market engagement will be advertised via a Prior Information Notice**, and is expected to commence in Q4 2024.



UK – NL Collaboration

- Project Catharina was established to determine the level of collaboration that may be possible between the UK MRSS and NL LPX (now ATS) programmes.
- A series of working groups and wargames established that national concepts of operations and budgets were not sufficiently aligned to proceed with a common design at this stage.
- Taking an early decision to build two fully interoperable but distinct classes of ship, that meets both nations' very different requirements, provides far greater operational choice for both nations and indeed NATO.
- Project Catharina will continue as the vehicle to ensure interoperability and where possible, seek benefits and efficiencies in a limited number of common design elements.



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Questions?

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