



National Audit Office

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**Memorandum**

for the House of Commons  
Committee of Public Accounts

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# The Royal Navy and its equipment support

**JANUARY 2018**

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## Summary

- In 2016-17, the Ministry of Defence (the Department) spent £9 billion on the equipment, people and support needed to meet the Royal Navy's (Navy) standing commitments.
- Since 2000, the size of the Royal Navy's ship and submarine fleet has decreased by a third, leading to greater pressure on the remaining fleet. The Department has now committed to halting this trend with the introduction of the new aircraft carriers and two new classes of replacement frigates.
- The Department takes different approaches to supporting its ships and submarines. Supporting new equipment will put increasing pressure on the Department's forecast ten-year spend of £32 billion on supporting ships and submarines. The Department expects this to increase by 17% from £2.9 billion in 2016-17 to £3.4 billion in 2026-27. The Department also expects to identify £1.6 billion of efficiencies from maritime support over this period, which reflects just over half of the efficiencies expected across the Navy.
- The Department is significantly reforming its support arrangements, and implementing a Common Support Model for all complex warships, in order to make savings and improve performance.

## Background

1 This supplementary memorandum has been prepared to support the Committee of Public Accounts in relation to its evidence session on the Comptroller and Auditor General's report *Investigation into equipment cannibalisation in the Royal Navy*. The investigation described cannibalisation – a practice which can be a consequence of not getting the support solution right – and the related processes and trends in its use. This memorandum provides additional information on the Navy and its support solutions to set the investigation in its wider context. It summarises:

- the Navy's role within Defence and its resources (Part One);
- how the Navy supports its in-service ships and submarines and ongoing initiatives (Part Two); and
- the future challenges for support in the Navy (Part Three).

## Part One

### The Royal Navy

**2 The Navy forms part of the UK's Armed Forces and supports the UK's national interests by conducting a range of tasks.** The Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 outlined eight military tasks to be carried out by the Ministry of Defence (the Department).<sup>1</sup> Against this background, the Department sets the Navy's objectives, alongside those of the other Commands, through its 'Defence Planning Assumptions' (**Figure 1** overleaf).<sup>2</sup> The Navy aims to meet its objectives, which include maintaining a nuclear deterrent, ensuring the free movement of trade and protecting UK waters, by fulfilling its standing commitments as set out in its Command Plan (Appendix One). Since 2014, the Department has delegated management of the funding to deliver these objectives to the Navy, which is responsible for determining how allocated funding is spent. To meet its commitments, the Navy works with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, which provides a large proportion of the naval estate, and Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S), which procures and supports Navy equipment.

**3 DE&S, an arm's-length body of the Department, has day-to-day responsibility for the major equipment and support programmes detailed in the Department's Equipment and Support Plan.** The Department has delegated fiscal responsibility for its Plan to the Commands, including the Navy, which then manage and distribute the equipment and support budget to DE&S. Navy Command acts as DE&S's customer. DE&S is currently undergoing a transformation programme to improve its skills and capability to meet the needs of the Commands. By April 2018, the newly established Submarine Delivery Agency will take over responsibility for all submarine procurement and support programmes from DE&S.

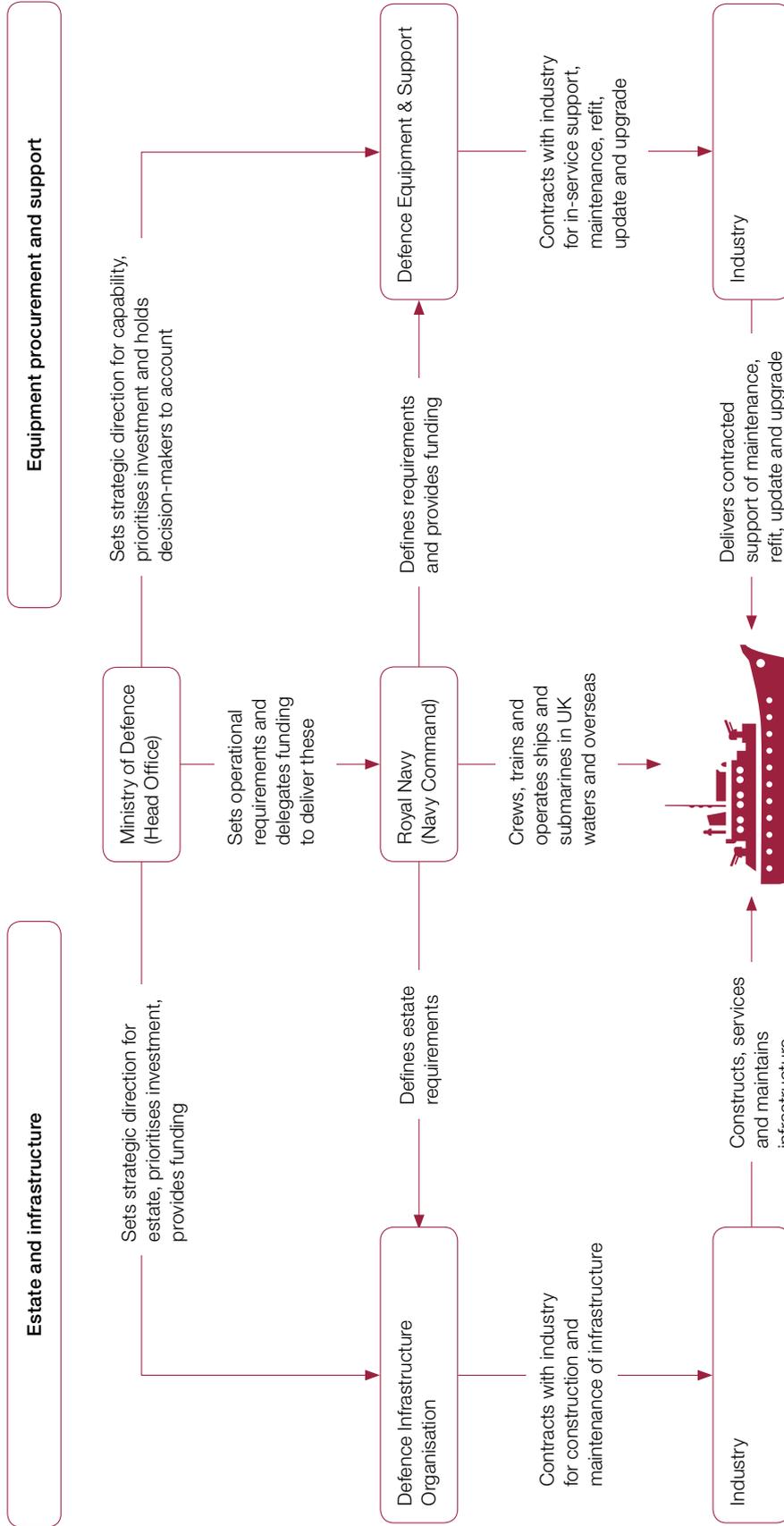
**4 In 2016-17, the Department spent £9 billion on the equipment, people and support needed to meet the Navy's standing commitments (Figure 2 on page 5).** This constitutes 26% of the Department's total spend. It includes £5.7 billion on the Navy and £3.3 billion on DG Nuclear, which is responsible for the nuclear programme within the Department. Of this total funding, £6.4 billion was made available to DE&S to buy new naval equipment and provide in-service support. The Department provided a breakdown of spend over the last two financial years by equipment, people and support. It could not provide information on spending in this form, or by vessel type, before the delegated model was introduced in 2014, given the complexity of costs being shared across different vessel types.

<sup>1</sup> HM Government, *National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015*, November 2015, The eight missions are: 1) Defence of and contribute to the security and resilience of the UK and overseas territories; 2) Provide the nuclear deterrent; 3) Contribute to improved understanding of the world through strategic intelligence and the global defence network; 4) Reinforce international security and the collective capacity of our allies, partners and multilateral institutions; 5) Support humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and conduct rescue missions; 6) Conduct strike operations; 7) Conduct operations to restore peace and stability; 8) Conduct major combat operations if required, including under NATO Article 5.

<sup>2</sup> The Department's Commands (Navy, Army, Air, Joint Forces) and, from April 2017, DG Nuclear are responsible for generating and developing defence requirements.

**Figure 1**  
Operating the Royal Navy within the Defence structure

The Navy works across Defence to complete the military tasks set by the Department



**Notes**

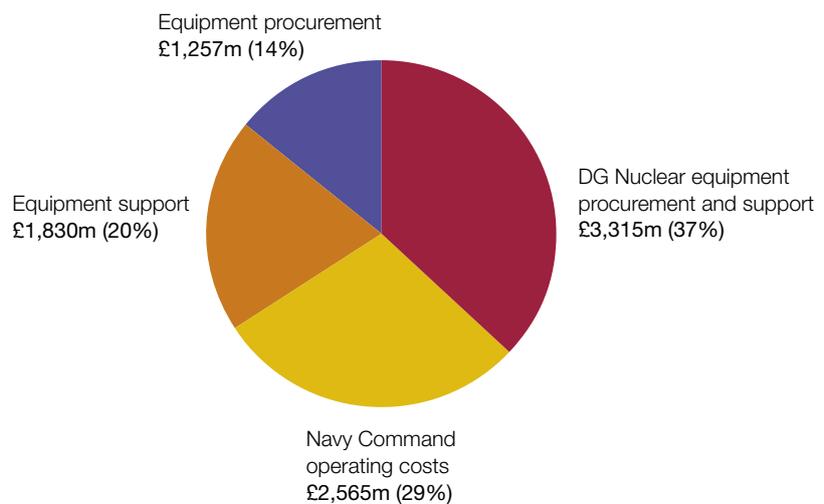
- 1 The Department can amend in-year the annual budget received by the Navy. The Department plans to delegate infrastructure budgets to the Navy from 2018. The Navy will then provide funding to the Defence Infrastructure Organisation. The Navy can currently inject additional funding where required
- 2 Since April 2017, DG Nuclear has had overarching responsibility for overseeing delivery of a successful nuclear enterprise. By April 2018, the newly established Submarine Delivery Agency will take responsibility for all submarine procurement and support programmes from DE&S. The structure and role of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation is currently under review by the Department.

**Figure 2**

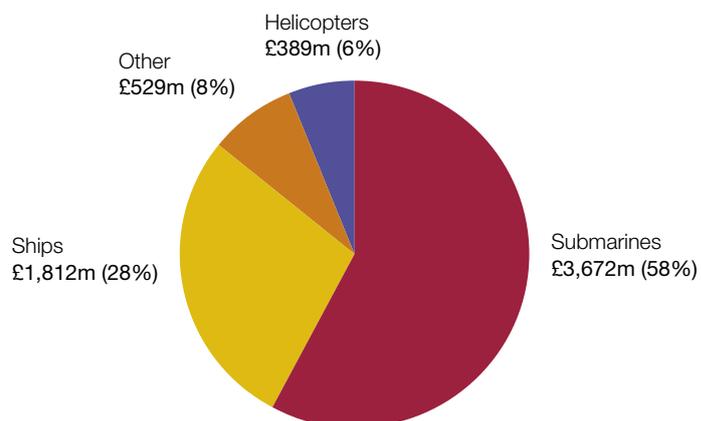
**Breakdown of Navy spend, 2016-17**

**During 2016-17, the Department spent £9 billion on supporting the Royal Navy in meeting its commitments**

Breakdown of the total £9 billion spend across Navy activities



Breakdown of the £6.4 billion equipment procurement and support spend across equipment type



**Notes**

- 1 DG Nuclear has overarching responsibility for overseeing delivery of a successful nuclear enterprise – spending shows DG Nuclear’s Equipment Plan spending. Navy Command operating costs cover spending on people, Navy bases and other costs.
2. Equipment and support costs show the amounts, from within the £9 billion total Navy, spent by DE&S on delivering the requirements set out by Navy Command and DG Nuclear. Navy spending may also include additional support spending. Other includes spending on Navy base support, logistics delivery and other smaller elements.

Source: Ministry of Defence

**5 The Navy has had to make savings for the Department to be able to meet its broader spending commitments.** Affordability constraints continue to exist for both the Department and the Navy. In addition, the Department requires the Navy to identify efficiency savings in order for its spending plans to remain affordable. The Department has identified £15 billion of efficiency savings to be made over the next ten years. It expects £3 billion of efficiency savings from the Navy and DG Nuclear, and therefore from the Navy's fleet of ships and submarines. Of these, £1.6 billion of efficiency savings are expected from across maritime support.

**6 To meet its commitments, the Navy manages a range of complex equipment, which includes both older and newer vessels.** As at April 2017, the Navy operated 84 ships and submarines, including six anti-air warfare destroyers and 11 submarines (**Figure 3**). The equipment is typically complex and able to operate in a range of environments. It includes the UK's most advanced warship, the Type 45 Destroyer, introduced from 2009 onwards, as well as an older fleet of Type 23 Frigates. The Navy also operates aircraft, including 55 Merlin helicopters.

**7 Since 2000, the size of the Navy's fleet has decreased by a third, leading to greater pressure on the remaining fleet.** The number of ships and submarines has reduced across all types of vessels between 2000 and 2017 (**Figure 4** on page 8). At any particular time, the Navy will have some of its vessels on operations and others undergoing routine or in-depth maintenance, or being used for training. With a smaller fleet, individual vessels need to be used more frequently, which means there is less flexibility to re-allocate vessels to different tasks. This makes it even more important that maintenance and training schedules are met. At the end of September 2017, five of the Navy's 19 destroyers and frigates were deployed, or ready to be deployed, on operations; four were undertaking training before being deployed; three were being maintained or undertaking sea trials; and seven were in port between duties.

**Figure 3****Breakdown of the Navy fleet, April 2017**

As at April 2017, the Navy was operating 84 ships and submarines

<b>Class</b>		<b>In-service period</b>	<b>Number</b>
Frigates	Type 23 multi-purpose warship focusing on hunting submarines	1990–2035	13
Destroyers	Type 45 advanced warship designed to protect fleet from missile attack	2009–2039	6
Attack submarines	Attack submarines designed to target enemy ships and submarines		
	Trafalgar class	1983–2022	3
	Astute class	2010–n/a	4
Nuclear deterrent submarines	Vanguard class – ballistic missile submarines carrying the UK's nuclear deterrent	1993–2040	4
Patrol boats	Protect the waters and fisheries around the UK and overseas territories	Various	18
Mine sweeping vessels	Mine countermeasures that detect and destroy mines and other underwater hazards	Various	15
Royal Fleet Auxiliaries	Logistic support ships, including fuel tankers, replenishment ships and aviation training ships that support the fleet	Various	9
Others	Includes survey ships (4), off-shore patrol vessels (4), landing platforms including HMS Ocean (3), and an ice patrol ship (1)	Various	12
<b>Total</b>			<b>84</b>

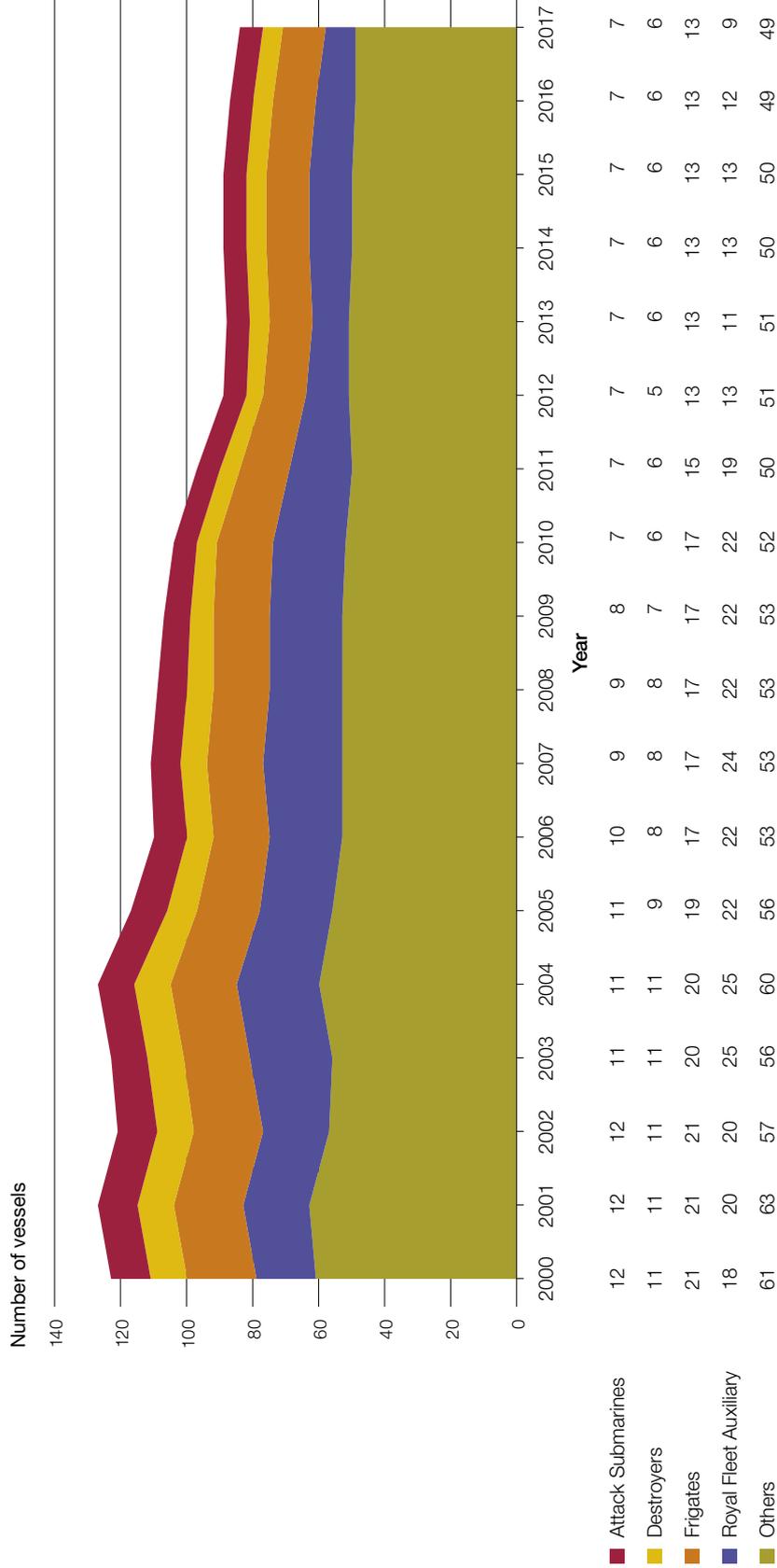
**Notes**

- 1 Out-of-service dates are approximate based on an assumed 25-year service life.
- 2 The Trafalgar-class attack submarine is being replaced by the Astute-class, with a further three Astute-class submarines in construction. One Trafalgar-class submarine will be replaced by HMS Audacious after completion of her sea trials.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Defence statistics

**Figure 4**  
**Numbers of Royal Navy vessels 2000–2017**

The size of the Royal Navy fleet has decreased by around a third since 2000



**Note**

1 'Others' includes landing platforms, patrol vessels, survey vessels, Vanguard-class submarines and mine counter measure vessels.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of UK Defence Statistics, 2000–2017

## Part Two

### Supporting naval equipment

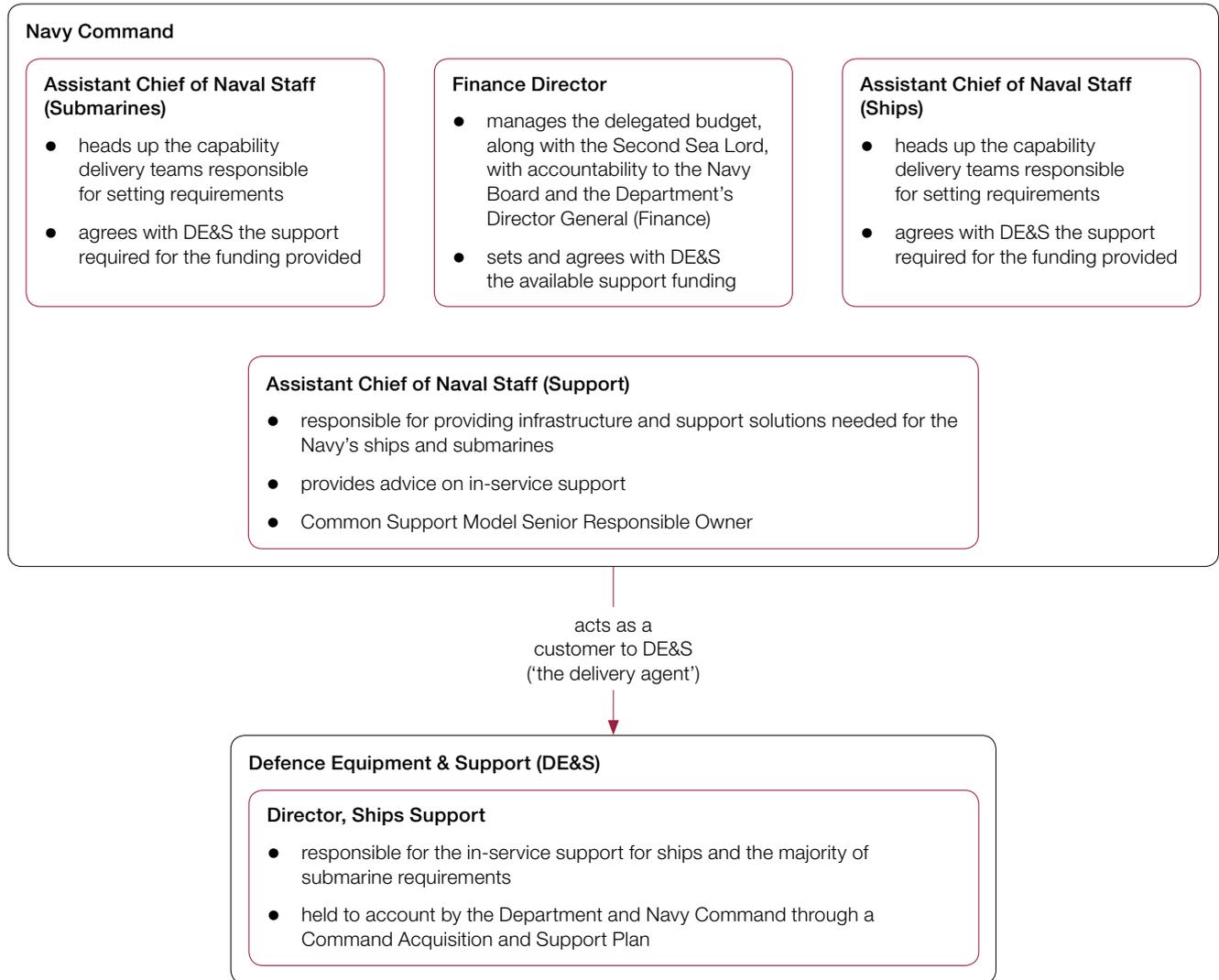
**8 Maritime support covers a range of activities.** It includes the daily upkeep of operational vessels undertaken by mixed Navy, DE&S and industry teams, as well as longer periods of scheduled maintenance, and the major overhaul or upgrade of vessels. For example, the nuclear deterrent submarine, HMS Vanguard, is currently undergoing a three-year overhaul and refuel.

**9 DE&S supports, as well as procures, the Navy's ships and submarines.** The Navy, in partnership with DE&S, sets and plans the maintenance and support schedules and requirements in an acquisition and support plan agreed with DE&S (**Figure 5** overleaf). It then provides DE&S with funding to deliver this plan, which incorporates performance measures for holding DE&S to account. DE&S uses prime suppliers, such as BAE Systems and Babcock Marine Limited, which subcontract to hundreds of specialist engineering and wider companies to provide this support. In 2016-17, the Navy delegated DE&S a forecast £0.9 billion to support its ships and £2 billion to support its submarines. This was 35% of the Department's total forecast support budget.

**10 Pressures on the naval support budget are likely to continue.** Over the next ten years, forecast annual spending on ships and submarine support is expected to increase by 17% from £2.9 billion in 2016-17 to £3.4 billion in 2026-27. However, the Department's cost analysis service assessed that cost estimates for Navy equipment support included in the Equipment Plan for 2016-2026 were under-estimated by £762 million (2.4% of spend on ship and submarine support over the period). In addition, between 2013 and 2016, the estimated cost of supporting new equipment across Defence that will require in-service support going forward rose by 58%, from £14.8 billion to £23.4 billion. As the Navy continues to run existing ships for longer, it will need to budget for these additional support requirements.

**Figure 5**  
Supporting Navy equipment – roles and responsibilities

The Department and Navy Command hold DE&S to account for providing support



**Note**

1 The Submarine Delivery Agency will obtain full agency status no later than April 2018 after which it will have day-to-day responsibility for submarine procurement and support, transferred from DE&S.

**11 DE&S and the Navy have adopted a range of different support models, with differing levels of contractor involvement.** The support solution used depends on either the type of vessel, or whether it is operational, undergoing routine maintenance or undergoing a more in-depth refit. Factors such as the age of the vessel and intensity of use will affect the support required. Running older vessels such as the Type 23, beyond their expected 18-year service life creates engineering and technical risks and means that parts may no longer be made. For newer vessels, performance characteristics, and therefore support requirements, can be harder to predict in the absence of detailed operational information. Models adopted include:

- **A traditional approach**

The Navy retains control of the vessel and manages its maintenance and repairs through DE&S, which contracts with providers for maintenance work. In 2014, DE&S agreed the Maritime Support Delivery Framework with two providers to support its submarines and complex warships. The Framework brought together existing contracts with the aim of providing better incentives for industry to improve performance. DE&S contracted with Babcock Marine to provide support at Her Majesty's Naval Bases Devonport and Clyde for five-and-a-half years (valued at £2.6 billion at the start of the contract) and BAE Systems to provide support at Portsmouth (a four-and-a-half-year contract initially valued at £600 million).

- **Contracts for availability**

The Navy pays a contractor to deliver a complete ship capable of undertaking defined tasks. The contractor is responsible for all its support requirements. DE&S uses this model for patrol boats, offshore patrol vessels and survey vessels.

- **Mixed approach**

A contractor is responsible for ensuring that a proportion of the ship's systems are available when required, while the Department is responsible for the rest. The Department had used this model for the Type 45, contracting out responsibility for 80% of the ships systems to BAE Systems. After finding this support solution to be inappropriate for complex warships, the Department will move to a more traditional approach later in 2017. It is introducing the Common Support Model to reduce overheads, encourage competition and make roles and responsibilities clearer.

**12 The Department is introducing a significant reform to warship support through the Common Support Model.** This aims to establish a comprehensive, long-term framework for supporting complex warships. It will bring together separate support arrangements for individual ship types (which cover everything from combat management systems through to spares, repairs and maintenance) under a single, more efficient and more manageable model. The Department hopes this will improve the service of providers by having them adopt a common approach across all classes of complex warships and lead to cost savings with the model providing a one-stop-shop for services. The Department intends to have this model in place to support the Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier and Type 45 Destroyers from December 2017. At the start of October 2017, the Department had signed ten of the 16 contracts, totalling £794 million of the estimated £1 billion value of the model (**Figure 6**). The remainder will be signed in the coming months.

### Figure 6 Components of the Common Support Model

As of the start of October 2017, £794 million of support contracts had been let under the Common Support Model

Contract title	Description	Value (£m)	Supplier
Marine Systems Support Partner	Four contracts covering spares, repairs and technical services for the Type 45 Destroyers and the Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier	320	Babcock Marine
Joint Support Solution 2	Single contract to support combat management systems, tactical networks and shared infrastructures across 38 ships	200	BAE Systems
Maritime Support Delivery Framework	Two amendments to the broader contract so it continues to support the fleet	150	Babcock Marine/ BAE Systems
Fleet-Wide Communications Support	Single contract for internal and external communications systems support, including long-term support for the carrier and Type 45s	100	Thales UK
Visual Landing Aids	Single contract to support visual landing aids for aircraft on board ships	12	Aeronautical General Instruments Ltd
Ships' Protective Systems	Single contract to support ships' protective systems across the fleet, including submarines	12	Babcock Marine

#### Note

- 1 Support arrangements for some vessels, such as patrol and survey vessels, will continue to operate under their existing arrangements.

Source: Ministry of Defence

**13 To assess the support of in-service equipment, the Navy monitors DE&S's performance against agreed evolving performance thresholds.** In 2016-17, DE&S's performance was rated 'amber' in relation to two of the four in-service support measures (availability; reliability) and 'red' in relation to the remaining two (sustainability; safety process administration). The DE&S's Annual Report stated that "performance was impacted by the unexpectedly high tasking rates of singleton aged platforms, providing less opportunity for regular maintenance," as older ships and submarines were used more than expected. The previous year, DE&S's performance was rated 'red' in relation to all four in-service support measures. The DE&S Annual Report for 2015-16 stated that "in recognition of this [being a challenging year following a period of high operational demands and changes to the programme of work and budget], and as performance metrics were not subsequently adjusted, the Navy released DE&S from its obligations".<sup>3</sup>

**14 Alongside the Common Support Model, the Department, Navy and DE&S have adopted other initiatives to improve the supply chain's performance.**

Measures have included:

- **End-to-end support planning**

The Navy and DE&S use frameworks to determine the most appropriate equipment support solution to meet their requirements and balance cost and effectiveness. The Navy has '*Through Life Management Plans*' in place to help better understand vessels' support needs throughout their service life. It also reviews its in-service support solutions, examining specific components to identify areas for continuous improvement and assurance.

- **Improving material availability**

Programmes such as the *Maritime Supply Chain Improvement Programme* and *Type 45 Support Improvement Programme* focus on fully understanding the demands for parts; improving the availability and quality of technical data; increasing contract cover for spare parts; reducing the number of part demands past their required delivery date; and focusing on improving contractors' performance. Recent performance against indicators underlying the in-service support measures has been mixed. In the 12 months up to September 2017, the total number of outstanding part requests for ships has fallen 13% from 17,590 in 2016 to 15,235 in 2017. However, the level of orders delivered on time by DE&S suppliers for ships and submarines remain well below target levels (**Figure 7** overleaf).

- **People**

The DE&S transformation programme, to improve skills and capability in the organisation, aimed for DE&S to be 'match fit' by April 2017. As part of this, DE&S has introduced measures such as a new organisational structure, more flexible staff allocation systems and a new performance and reward regime. These changes need to be fully embedded in order to deliver the intended benefits of transformation, and DE&S must monitor the effect of the changes to demonstrate their full impact and benefits. DE&S has also sought to address known shortfalls in, for example, supply chain management roles: 92% of the 184 roles across the Submarine Delivery Agency and Ships Operating Centre are now filled.

<sup>3</sup> DE&S Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17, page 18; DE&S Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16, page 16.

**Figure 7**

Summary of DE&S and the Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA – formally part of DE&S) in-service support performance, September 2015 to September 2017

DE&S and SDA's performance has been mixed in the last three years

	Target	Performance as at September			
		2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Outstanding part demands not dispatched by the required due date</b>					
Ships Operating Centre	10% reduction per annum	Baseline (16,983)	+10% (18,733)	-6% (17,590)	-13% (15,235)
Submarine Delivery Agency	10% reduction per annum	Baseline (1,628)	-24% (1,244)	-38% (772)	-19% (626)
<b>Outstanding part demands required to fix operational defects not dispatched by the required due date</b>					
Ships Operating Centre	20% reduction per annum	Baseline (777)	-4% (744)	-3% (719)	+22% (882)
Submarine Delivery Agency	20% reduction per annum	Baseline (76)	-17% (63)	-8% (58)	+19% (69)
<b>Orders delivered on time by DE&amp;S suppliers</b>					
Ships Operating Centre	95%	–	68%	72%	67%
Submarine Delivery Agency	95%	–	68%	61%	58%

**Notes**

- 1 The Submarine Delivery Agency was launched on 1 April 2017 in shadow form and will take full responsibility for day-to-day submarine support from DE&S by April 2018.
- 2 'Operating Centres' refers to the teams within DE&S responsible for the procurement and in-service support of different equipment types. The Ships Operating Centre supports an estimated 80% of spares provision for ships and submarines, with the Submarine Operating Centre supporting the remainder.

Source: DE&S performance data

**15 If the supply chain cannot provide parts when required, for whatever reason, this can have a broader impact on the Navy.** If a part is required and no alternative is available, the Navy can decide to remove parts from one vessel and transfer them to another – a process known as cannibalisation. Our recent report *Investigation into equipment cannibalisation in the Royal Navy* described this process, its impact and how it is managed within the Navy. This investigation was undertaken because of concerns raised with us that cannibalisation was becoming more prevalent within the Navy. The impacts of cannibalisation include increased costs and disruption, diverting resources from other activities and creating additional technical and financial risks.

## Part Three

### Future support challenges

**16 After a period in which the Royal Navy reduced in size, the Department has now committed to halting this trend.** The Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 included commitments to:

- invest £1.2 billion over ten years to provide an aircraft carrier able to deploy 24 jets from 2023;
- replace the 13 current Type 23s with eight advanced Global Combat ships (Type 26) and at least five light frigates by the 2030s (Type 31e); and
- build two further offshore patrol vessels, in addition to the four already commissioned, to replace all four existing in-service vessels and increase the total number from four to at least five.

The National Shipbuilding Strategy, published in September 2017, stated that the Department was “committed to growing the Royal Navy Fleet: this will give us the operational flexibility required to protect our nation’s interests at home and abroad”. It underlined the Department’s commitment to sustaining a destroyer and frigate fleet of at least 19, and an aspiration to increase this number by the 2030s. The strategy sets out key milestones for bringing new ships into service and outlines how the Department intends to procure these ships (**Figure 8** on pages 16 and 17). It also outlines the Department’s aims to introduce greater competition into the shipbuilding industry by growing the fleet.

**17 Early decisions during equipment design and procurement can influence support arrangements.** The recently published National Shipbuilding Strategy recognises that the design and selection of a ship’s specification are important in determining the optimal support solution. The Strategy stresses that support should be considered at the start of a project so that ships can be fully supported. Ship designs should recognise the current and planned future skills of Navy personnel; ensure that equipment and systems are reliable and proven; and, where practicable, keep bespoke military designs to a minimum.

**Figure 8**  
**Royal Navy expansion plans**  
**The Navy plans to introduce new ship and submarine capabilities**

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Carriers	First of two commissioned (Oct)	F-35 lightning aircraft Expected to be operational		First carrier expected to be able to operate (Dec)		
Frigates (Type 23 replacement)		Type 26 First 'cut of steel' expected (summer)				
Destroyers (Type 45 replacement)						Decision on future capability
Submarines		Astute Class Fourth boat to enter service		Astute Class Fifth boat to enter service		Astute Class Sixth boat to enter service. Last of Trafalgar class leaves service
Support Vessels	Tide-class tanker First enters service by year end	Tide-class tanker Three further enter service by year end				
Other		Offshore Patrol Vessels First new OPV enters service	Maritime patrol aircraft Due to arrive in the UK		Offshore Patrol Vessels All five new OPVs in service	Mine Counter Measure Vessels Decision on future capability

**Figure 8 continued**  
 Royal Navy expansion plans

The Navy plans to introduce new ship and submarine capabilities

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Carriers	Carrier Enabled Power Projection Developing the full range of capabilities					
Frigates (Type 23 replacement)	Type 31e First of five enters service by 2023. First of T23 to leave service.		Type 26 First of eight enters services mid 2020s			
Destroyers (Type 45 replacement)	Future Event Destroyers Initial operating capability by late 2030s					
Submarines		Astute Class Seventh boat to enter service				Future Event Dreadnought class submarine First boat to enter service in early 2030s
Support Vessels	Solid Support Vessels Delivery from mid 2020s					
Other	Mine Counter Measure Vessels Initial operating capability					

Source: National Shipbuilding Strategy; Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, Major Projects Report 2015 to 2025, Session 2015-16, HC 488-I, National Audit Office, October 2015

**18 Introducing new equipment creates specific challenges for getting both the support solution and levels of investment right.** The Department needs to decide, within the context of affordability constraints, the support solution it wants and the level of investment in spares and technical documentation. With new equipment, it can be harder for the Department to determine the right level of investment in spares. The Department told us it has developed sophisticated modelling using data from its supply chain to assess the balance between equipment reliability and the purchase of spares inventory. Modelling influences the choice of support arrangements and identifies forecasts for the number of parts required. These forecasts will be less certain for newer vessels, given the more limited data available. Not getting the support solution right for new vessels being brought into service can have a number of impacts, including on later vessels still on the production line. The three in-service Astute-class submarines depend on production line parts to remain operational. This has an impact on both programme costs and the production delivery schedule.

**19 Supporting new equipment will put increasing pressure on the Department's forecast £32 billion budget for spending on ship and submarines support from 2016 to 2026.** The Department will face an increased challenge in controlling its support costs, as current procurement commitments will require support in future plans and some equipment, due to be retired now, will be retained with an extended life. For example, the Type 23 Frigates, which came into service from 1990 with a planned 18-year service life, will now remain in service for at least 30 years. This will create additional maintenance requirements, with greater uncertainty about how systems will continue to operate and an increased risk of parts no-longer being available. The Department needs to provide additional funding to support these requirements unless it can make compensatory savings elsewhere.

**20 The Department has started to consider how it will support its new ships, increasingly using the Common Support Model.** In particular:

- **Queen Elizabeth carrier** – Introducing the carriers will have a significant impact on the Navy with a large proportion of the fleet being required to support and protect the carrier. The Department has adopted a traditional support approach using the Common Support Model. However, a lack of commercial staff has delayed the purchase of spares for the Queen Elizabeth carrier before her first sailing. The Department now aims to have the full complement of spares for the first carrier in time for flying trials in 2018.<sup>4</sup>
- **Replacements for the Type 23 Frigate** – The Common Support Model has been framed so that the new class of frigates can be included. As the ships' design is still being considered, the Department has an opportunity to consider support arrangements early in the process.

4 Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, *Delivering Carrier Strike*, paragraph 3.13.

# Appendix One

## Royal Navy standing commitments

The Navy has a wide range of ongoing commitments both at home and abroad

Standing commitment	Description	Vessels required
Continuous-at-sea deterrent	Maintaining the UK's independent nuclear deterrent, deployed on a continuous basis around the globe.	4 x Vanguard-class nuclear submarines, with supporting capabilities as required.
Fleet ready escort	A single frigate maintained at high readiness to support homeland defence.	1 x frigate (Type 23)
Marine enforcement	Protection of UK fishing grounds and North Sea oil and gas infrastructure.	3 x offshore patrol vessels
Mine-counter measures support	Dealing with discovery of unexploded ordnance under water.	2 x minesweeping ships
Antarctic patrol	Surveying and gathering data around Antarctica and support to British Antarctic Survey mission.	1 x ice patrol ship
Atlantic patrol tasking (North)	Protecting UK interests in the North Atlantic and the Caribbean, including counter-narcotics and hurricane relief.	1 x offshore patrol vessel or 1 x Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Atlantic patrol tasking (South)	Maintenance of UK presence in the South Atlantic and West Africa to provide reassurance to British interests, such as the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia.	1 x frigate or 1 x destroyer or 1 x Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Falklands Islands patrol task	Part of British Forces Falkland Islands, providing assurance to UK interests and the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.	1 x frigate or 1 x destroyer or 1 x Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Gibraltar squadron	Provides protection for NATO or coalition warships entering the naval facilities of Gibraltar and maintain security in the surrounding British territorial waters.	2 x fast patrol boats

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## The Navy has a wide range of ongoing commitments both at home and abroad

Standing commitment	Description	Vessels required
Joint expeditionary force (Maritime)	The Royal Navy's contribution to the UK's joint task force, which is kept at high readiness and available at short notice to respond to unexpected global events.	Amphibious assault ships Type 45 Destroyers Type 23 Frigates Royal Fleet Auxiliaries Attack submarine
Gulf	The Royal Navy maintains a continued maritime presence in the Gulf and Indian Ocean regions to protect and secure the nation's many political and commercial interests.	1 x destroyer/frigate 4 x minesweeping vessels 1 x Royal Fleet Auxiliary
Standing NATO response force	The Royal Navy regularly contributes to the four standing NATO naval task groups in the North Atlantic, Baltic Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.	As required
Royal Marines and amphibious capability	The Royal Marines are part of the Navy's high-readiness forces able to be deployed via helicopter and landing craft from Amphibious Assault ships.	Amphibious assault ships Royal Fleet Auxiliaries
Operation ATLANTA	Operation ATLANTA is a European Union multinational task force charged with combatting terrorism and piracy off the Horn of Africa and Somalia. Its operational headquarters are located at Northwood, London.	Headquarters only

Source: Ministry of Defence

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