

# Offering £1billion ship contract to overseas bidders 'cold-hearted betrayal of British workers'



**GMB, the union for shipbuilders, has called out the Government over its decision to put out a pre contract invitation to overseas shipyards to design and build the FSS programme.**

**Ross Murdoch, GMB National Officer and CSEU Chair, said:**



“It is unbelievable at a time when we desperately need to rebuild the UK economy with good, well-paid jobs that bring significant tax returns to the UK Treasury, this Government offers the opportunity to other countries to help rebuild their own economy by building Royal Navy support ships overseas.

“These orders will be vital in safeguarding thousands of British jobs and bringing prosperity to shipbuilding communities.

“Yet despite the PM’s rhetoric of ‘build build build’, here is a golden opportunity missed.

“Before Brexit, the Government said EU rules meant it had to have an international competition to build these ships.

“In the context of sovereign defence capability GMB consistently challenged this position.

“Well, we’ve left the EU now and the Government still invites overseas companies to take part in a pre-contract engagement. It’s a cold-blooded betrayal of British workers.

“GMB and its sister unions fought hard to save a number of yards that either closed or went to the wire on possible closure.

“GMB will be calling on Team UK to ensure they submit an expression of interest for this stage of the contract and again we call on the Government to stand by its own National Shipbuilding Strategy in ensuring a steady drumbeat of orders to prevent a repeat of this by ensuring these ships are built in the UK.”

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