

# Carrier support ships delay 'deeply concerning'



**GMB, the union for shipbuilding and ship repair workers, has reacted to the National Audit Office's report on progress on delivering the full UK aircraft carrier programme.**

The NAO warned that delivery of the Ministry of Defence's forthcoming order for new supply ships, which is **worth up to £1.5 billion, will now be delayed by between 18 and 36 months.** [1]

Meanwhile, thousands of shipbuilding jobs have been lost, and the Appledore yard closed last year as work dried up.

The Ministry of Defence is still considering whether the Fleet Solid Support ship order should be built in the UK or put out to international competition.



**Ross Murdoch, GMB National Officer and maritime Chair of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU), said:**

'This news is deeply concerning. Until these support ships are delivered, taxpayers will never see full value for their £6.4 billion investment in the Royal Navy's new carrier fleet.

'Yards in the UK are crying out for work, and with every extra day of delay that passes there is a greater risk that more sovereign defence manufacturing capability will be lost.

'The Royal Navy needs these support ships and our yards need the work – it really is a no-brainer.

'GMB urges the Ministry of Defence to provide the economy with the shot in the arm it needs by bringing forward this contract and guaranteeing that the ships will be built in the UK.'

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