

Shipbuilding: government's own review backs campaign to build them in Britain



Ministers have tried to 'bury critical report,' says GMB Union

The Government must act on the recommendations of its own review by backing the UK's struggling shipbuilding industry, GMB the union for shipbuilding workers has said.

The Ministry of Defence has published the undated review by Sir John Parker, the former Chief Executive of shipbuilding firms Harland & Wolff and Babcock, on the night before Parliament is dissolved.

Parker had been **commissioned to write a review** of the Government's National Shipbuilding Strategy.



The report is critical of the Government's procurement policy. It concludes that the Government's policy of putting all shipbuilding orders apart from frigates, destroyers and carriers out to international tender is not 'the right strategic approach.'

The document goes on to say that 'UK-only competition should be considered for future defence-funded vessels.'

The Appledore shipyard closed earlier this year due to a lack of work, and shipbuilding jobs have been placed under threat at other yards across the UK. The state-owned Spanish company Navantia is thought to be the front-runner in the £1.5 billion competition to build up to three Fleet Solid Support ships for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Ross Murdoch, GMB National Officer, said:

"This report by the Government's own adviser leaves no room for doubt - it was a catastrophic mistake to put a string of shipbuilding orders out to the global market.

"Our yards cannot compete against the unfair subsidies awarded by other nations while our competitors would not dream of letting the UK bid for their contracts.

"The Government must now back skilled UK workers and our steel industry by keeping the £1.5 billion Fleet Solid Support contract in the UK and reserving future awards for our own yards.

"Instead of trying to bury this critical report Ministers must listen to Sir John Parker and back our industry, instead of selling our future overseas."

Press office

079859 1525698

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

