

# GMB backs Labour's call to build British and protect defence jobs



## Building defence contracts in Britain would give economy major boost with manufacturing jobs

Labour leader's calls for defence contracts to be built in Britain would give the economy a major boost by securing shipbuilding, steel, and wider manufacturing jobs

GMB, the union for shipbuilder has backed Labour Leader Keir Starmer's call to build British by default and invest in secure jobs for the defence sector.

The union has accused the Tory government's plans for the nation's security of being 'big on rhetoric... but their actions fail to live up to the hype'.



GMB has long campaigned for the £1.5 billion Fleet Solid Support (FSS) contract to be reserved for UK shipyards – [producing a ground-breaking report](#) highlighting the estimated 6,700 jobs created or secured if the orders were kept in the UK.

 Turning the Tide report cover image

[Read full report \(pdf\)](#)

The union [claimed a major victory back in September](#) after the government finally accepted that FSS ships were warships that could be reserved for UK yards after wrongly claiming that EU tendering rules forbade them to do so.

However, since that announcement Ben Wallace, the Defence Secretary has yet to clarify when and where these ships will be built.

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

"GMB welcomes Labour's call for the government to adopt the 'British-built by default' approach, and invest in and secure jobs for the UK defence sector.

"This Government's big on rhetoric, with their call for shovel ready projects to rebuild the UK economy post Brexit and post Covid 19, but unfortunately their actions fail live up to the hype.

**“** Here's a prime example where the Government can give the economy a major boost by securing shipbuilding, steel, and wider manufacturing jobs at home. Yet they refuse to give any details."**”**

**Ross Murdoch, GMB National Officer**

"Despite repeated questions in the House, the Government is still yet to clarify exactly what the significant proportion of build and assembly work for the Fleet Solid Support ships contract will be carried out in the UK.

"Here's a prime example where the Government can give the economy a major boost by securing shipbuilding, steel, and wider manufacturing jobs at home. Yet they refuse to give any details."



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