



Ministry  
of Defence

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2 February 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Release of Information

Thank you for your email of 15 December 2017 in which you requested the following information:

*SDSR 2015 stated that " By 2025, three of the oldest Sandown Class ships will be decommissioned"*

*[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/492800/20150118-SDSR\\_Factsheets\\_1\\_to\\_17\\_ver\\_13.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/492800/20150118-SDSR_Factsheets_1_to_17_ver_13.pdf)*

*Yet, two Hunt-Class MCMs have just been decommissioned.*

*<http://www.forces.net/news/hms-atherstone-and-quorn-decommissioned-after-58-combined-years-service>*

*Questions: A) Is there a change in the SDSDR facts and if so B) Why?*

Your enquiry is being treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In response to your request, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) can confirm that the out of service dates for HMS ATHERSTONE and HMS QUORN are to be brought forward. This decision will provide an opportunity to de-tune the taut operational tempo that the Mine Counter Measures (MCM) community has delivered over the last ten years, and provide the opportunity for personnel to undertake training, personal development and a harmony period. The detailed plans for the decommissioning and subsequent disposal of HMS ATHERSTONE and HMS QUORN has not yet been finalised. It is likely that the Department will look for a buyer for the two ships over the next few months. There are no plans to cut the number of MCM crews or personnel.

Under SDSR 2015 there was a proposal to remove three ships from the Sandown Class by 2025. In light of the decision on HMS ATHERSTONE and QUORN (both Hunt Class) this will be reviewed.

Mine Counter Measure (MCM) Capability will remain pivotal to the future of the Royal Navy in support of the Continuous At Sea Deterrent, the future Maritime Task Group and support to wider UK Defence, as well as continuing to work closely with our partners. This ensures maritime trade has the freedom of navigation the world economy requires. The Royal Navy is committed to remaining a world class leader in MCM.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat – FOI Section