

UK and US Carrier Jets Fly in Tight Formation over Pacific

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A British F-35B Lightning II from 617 Squadron and a US Navy F/A-18E Super Hornet flew in close formation above HMS Prince of Wales during multinational military drills in the Pacific. The manoeuvre, carried out under Operation HIGHMAST, underscores the growing alignment between the UK, the United States, and Japan in the Indo-Pacific.

The exercise forms part of the UK's largest Carrier Strike Group deployment of the year. The eight-month mission, led by HMS Prince of Wales, spans from the Mediterranean through the Middle East to the western Pacific. It is designed to demonstrate advanced airpower integration, strengthen naval cooperation, and reaffirm allied presence in strategically sensitive waters.

The photograph of the aircraft in formation was taken by Air Specialist First Class Amber Mayall and is Crown copyright. The imagery captures the operational precision and coordination among allied air forces operating from the sea.

The UK's role in the drills highlights its broader commitment to upholding international security and projecting naval capability in regions of global significance. Alongside Japan and the United States, the deployment involves a coalition of partner nations including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, and Spain.

These multinational exercises aim to bolster interoperability and readiness among Western allies while contributing to regional stability amid rising geopolitical tensions.

Operation HIGHMAST marks another key milestone for HMS Prince of Wales, reinforcing its status as a central platform for British naval aviation and a symbol of the UK's strategic ambitions beyond Europe.