

British Carrier Joins Largest Pacific Naval Exercise in Decades

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The Royal Navy's HMS Prince of Wales, leading Carrier Strike Group 25 (CSG 25), has joined Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025, one of the largest multinational naval drills in the Pacific. The deployment marks a significant stage in Operation Highmast, Britain's major eight-month commitment to Indo-Pacific defence cooperation and naval presence.

Exercise Talisman Sabre involves over 35,000 personnel from 19 nations and spans operations across sea, land, air, cyber and space domains. The UK's presence includes not just naval forces but also elements of the British Army and Royal Air Force, operating alongside counterparts from countries such as Canada, Norway, Spain, New Zealand, Japan, and Australia.

CSG 25 is playing a central role in high-intensity maritime training, including barrier operations and carrier-defence simulations intended to counter hostile incursions. The air wing on HMS Prince of Wales includes up to 24 F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters, marking the largest British carrier deployment of the aircraft to date, supported by Merlin and Wildcat helicopters. Accompanying the carrier are Type 45 destroyers, Type 23 frigates, and support vessels from the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

In a notable show of international cooperation, the UK carrier group is operating in close coordination with allied warships, including Australia's HMAS Sydney and Norway's HNoMS Roald Amundsen. These integrated formations are practising joint strike operations, maritime surveillance, and amphibious landings, demonstrating interoperability and shared readiness.

Rear Admiral Steve Moorhouse, Commander of the Carrier Strike Group, described the operation as "a critical test of our ability to secure sea lanes, deter threats, and maintain maritime dominance." He reaffirmed Britain's commitment to defending freedom of navigation and upholding international maritime law in contested regions.

Exercise Talisman Sabre forms a key component of the UK's evolving Indo-Pacific strategy. The government has made it clear that the region

holds growing strategic and economic importance. This latest deployment signals Britain's intent to maintain a regular, credible maritime presence in support of allied partnerships and rules-based order.

The approach reflects a traditional defence philosophy: project strength to maintain peace, foster stability through alliances, and protect global trade routes vital to the national interest. As geopolitical tensions continue to rise in the region, the Royal Navy's active role underlines its enduring relevance as a force for stability on the world stage.