# UK to Construct Multi-Role Support Ships for Royal Marines Under Defence Secretary's New Naval Strategy



Defence Secretary Grant Shapps has announced that the UK will build up to six multi-role support ships (MRSS) for the Royal Marines, with the first three guaranteed for construction. These new vessels will be designed to transport commandos for special operations globally and will benefit from insights gained from recent conflicts in Ukraine and the Red Sea.

The MRSS are to be equipped with capabilities for carrying a variety of unmanned drones, vehicles, aircraft, and insertion craft. They will also serve as primary casualty receiving ships for providing urgent medical care. This development is part of a broader initiative described by Shapps as a "golden age" of British shipbuilding, with plans for up to 28 Royal Navy ships either underway or projected.

This move aligns with the UK's naval strategy, incorporating lessons from Russia’s Black Sea fleet vulnerabilities and Houthi attacks targeting vessels in the Red Sea. Further, the ships are intended to integrate seamlessly with those of European and NATO allies.

The announcement coincides with the upcoming retirement of the Type 23 frigates HMS Argyll and HMS Westminster, marking a shift towards investing in newer, more advanced naval assets. This initiative is in line with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak’s defense strategy, which targets an increase in defense spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030.