



PRESS KIT OF THE MINISTRY OF ARMED FORCES

MISSION ANTARES



Operational deployment of the carrier strike group



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MISSION ANTARES

OPERATIONAL DEPLOYMENT OF THE CARRIER STRIKE GROUP

While the situation in Ukraine and in Eastern Europe is deteriorating with spillovers as far as the Middle East, France, a credible and supportive power favouring balance, is deploying the carrier strike group (CSG, or “GAN” in French) as part of Mission ANTARES.

The carrier group sends the message that France is determined to take an active part in securing the area, in the spirit that guides the action of the armed forces aimed at “winning the war before the war”. The carrier group will be engaged in areas of strategic importance for French and European interests, in the Mediterranean and as far as the Indian Ocean depending on the international situation.

Faced with demonstrations of power by the main competitors of France and Europe, the carrier group demonstrates France’s ability to operate with its allies in contested spaces, in a non-escalatory posture and by controlling any risk of escalation.



It contributes to strengthening NATO’s deterrent and defensive posture on the eastern flank of Europe, in the Mediterranean in particular, as well as to Operation CHAMMAL in the Middle East.

Mission ANTARES also prepares the armed forces for high-intensity engagement with our allies, in all environments and domains alongside their allies and partners.

The unpredictability of the carrier group is a major asset in guaranteeing its freedom of action in any theatre of operations and its freedom of movement on the high seas, including in contested areas. This unpredictability is generated by its mobility and tactical agility which also enable the carrier group to intervene over a wide area.

Focus: choosing the name ANTARES

The choice of the name for Mission ANTARES underlines the consideration of all the domains of conflict, both in the face of current disputes and in the preparation of the wars of tomorrow.

Antares is the name of a red star that is in opposition to the red planet Mars. Antares is warlike cunning in the face of pure violence represented by the Greek god Ares (named Mars by the Romans).

Antares is one of the 59 stars of the navigator, the most famous of which is Polaris, the North Star, a name associated with the preparation for high-intensity combat of the French Navy.



Strategic signalling in the Mediterranean and as far as the Indian Ocean

Mission ANTARES participates in strategic signalling by maintaining a visible and assumed presence of France in maritime areas. As a leading military player, France is thus demonstrating that it can intervene in its areas of interest with significant capabilities, relying on the freedom of action allowed by the high seas.

Relying on all of its capabilities, the carrier group ensures control of the air and maritime environment. By participating in the gathering and exchange of intelligence with high added value, it contributes to the autonomous assessment of the situation by France, an autonomy essential for the defence of French interests and those of our partners, in particular our European and NATO partners.



In the central Mediterranean, the carrier group participates in NATO's deterrent and defensive posture on the eastern flank of Europe and in its maritime approaches. As part of the AIR SHIELDING air missions under NATO mandate, the carrier group supports the air protection and reassurance system on the eastern flank.

The deployment of the carrier group allows it to integrate into Operation CHAMMAL, the French component of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR), while performing other missions in its deployment areas.

Depending on the tactical situation, the carrier group can be deployed in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, alongside its strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific.

The unpredictability of the carrier group is a major asset in guaranteeing its freedom of action in any theatre of operation and its freedom of manoeuvre on the high seas, including in contested areas.

A controlled intervention capacity in contested areas

Mission ANTARES is taking place in a context of demonstrations of power, in strategic areas marked today by hardening regional tensions and the contestation of the law of the sea by force.

Competition has never ceased to exist at sea. However, recent times have been marked by multiplying cases of contestation of accepted rules, potentially leading to confrontation. In this turbulent time, France is demonstrating that it can intervene with its allies by controlling any escalation to enforce international law, freedom of maritime and air navigation and to prevent the policy of the “fait accompli”.



This credible intervention capability at sea and in the air was exemplified during the previous mission of the carrier strike group: CLEMENCEAU 22. Following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the carrier group, then deployed in the Mediterranean, redirected its operational effort. On short notice, it participated in strengthening the deterrent and defensive posture of NATO on the eastern flank of Europe.

As an aggregator of allied capabilities, the carrier group gives substance to France's ability to project and intervene in a coalition in the face of our strategic competitors and current conflicts. During Mission ANTARES, the carrier group will be reinforced by various partner navies, notably from Greece, the United States and Italy.



A credible power projection tool geared towards the wars of tomorrow

During Mission ANTARES, the carrier group is also getting ready along our allies and partners for the multi-domain conflicts of tomorrow, based on hypotheses of hybrid or major engagements, at the top of the spectrum.

As in any military operation, switching between low intensity and high intensity can happen suddenly. Preparing for high intensity also means introducing a new state of mind and displaying great moral strength.

With the carrier group, France has a unique strategic instrument, operated by competent, trained and resilient crews. The carrier group can be deployed far away and for a long time, and it can produce effects in all domains¹ of conflict while maintaining agility in its actions.

From today's issues to tomorrow's challenges, the carrier group is a melting pot of innovation in all areas of competition and conflict. By integrating new partners, by developing new common combat preparation standards, or by strengthening it with new capabilities, the carrier group thus prepares, in coalition, the wars of tomorrow.



Focus: distinctive aspects of the carrier group

The carrier group brings its versatility and operational experience to this type of engagement, based on the wars of tomorrow and high-intensity combat in a multi-domain environment, in joint and coalition operations.

As a responsive and mobile power projection tool, the carrier group helps ensure first-entry capability in a contested environment. Combining air and naval deep strike means, it is an essential asset of the air-sea component within a large-scale joint operation.

¹ Multi-domain warfare refers to the extension of conflict, long centred on land, sea and air environments, to exo-atmospheric and cyber spaces, to the deep seabed as well as to the electromagnetic and informational fields.

THE CARRIER STRIKE GROUP, A UNIQUE STRATEGIC TOOL

The carrier group is a tool of political/military and diplomatic power of prime importance. It is a truly strategic asset that delivers a graduated range of options, capable of lasting in operation, adaptable and adapted to the needs of political authorities.

The carrier group brings together an international maritime air force, with military capabilities in all domains (at sea, under the sea, in the air and on the ground, but also in exo-atmospheric and cyber spaces) and in all fields (electromagnetic and informational).

Thanks to the agility of its engagement and to its strategic mobility (the aircraft carrier is capable of traveling 1,000 km per day with freedom of movement guaranteed by the very nature of maritime spaces), it produces multiple effects:

- control of vast air and sea spaces, including in a contested environment;
- maintenance of an independent situation assessment capability;
- projection of power from the air and from the sea, towards objectives on land or against a naval force; this capability allows France to enter a theatre first with significant reactivity, including for high-intensity combat. A Rafale Marine fighter aircraft can be launched every 30 seconds from the aircraft carrier;
- contribution to deterrence thanks to the nuclear naval air force (FANu) that it can implement.

The carrier group is a real lever for international cooperation in the military field. These common operations maintain France's ability to conduct high-intensity operational engagements in a coalition. They strengthen trust and interoperability with strategic partners, European and transatlantic, a guarantee of effectiveness in securing Europe and areas of shared strategic interest.



ANTARES will be the 15th operational deployment of the French carrier strike group since 2001. For more than 20 years, after the equivalent of 24 round-the-world trips and more than 50,000 catapult launches of combat aircraft, *Charles de Gaulle* and her carrier group have thus been engaged in most overseas operations in which France took part.

COMPOSITION OF THE CARRIER STRIKE GROUP

Onboard headquarters staff

Main mission: commanding the task force from aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*.

The carrier group is commanded by the commander of the French high readiness maritime force (FRMARFOR), Rear Admiral Christophe Cluzel, commanding TF 473. On board, it has an operations control centre, an intelligence centre, and an operational planning and logistical support office. It is in direct contact with the national, joint and allied command structures.



Deployed in times of peace, crisis or conflict, FRMARFOR is organised and equipped to engage in a national or international mission within NATO, the European Union or a coalition. FRMARFOR is thus one of the structures qualified to operate within the NATO Response Force (NRF) for which it acted as the maritime component on alert in 2021.

Aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*



Main mission: control of air and maritime space and power projection.

A nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, *Charles de Gaulle* offers France a first-rate, versatile and graduated capacity for action.

She is a strategic tool through the freedom of action that maritime spaces provide and through her power projection capacity. She combines autonomy of action, flexibility of use, power, mobility and endurance.

The aircraft carrier in numbers

42,500 tonnes: her displacement, i.e. 4 times the weight of the Eiffel Tower.

30 years: average age of her crew.

15.4%: share of her crew who are women.

75 metres: length of the runway required for the catapult launch and recovery of aircraft from **15** to **23** tonnes.

260 km/h: maximum speed reached in **3** seconds during a catapult launch by Rafale Marine and Hawkeye aircraft.

30 seconds: interval between two catapult launches.

Carrier air wing

Rafale Marine (F3-R standard)

Main missions: power projection, air defence, reconnaissance.

Modern and multipurpose combat aircraft with a long-range intervention capability.

E-2C Hawkeye aircraft

Main missions: detection and air traffic control.

This is the only advanced observation embarked aircraft.



Dauphin helicopter

Main missions: crew safety and search and rescue missions (missions "Pedro").

Caïman Marine helicopter

Main missions: multirole combat helicopter (detection, anti-submarine warfare, ship attack, logistical cargo capacity).



Frigates, an expanded defence

The carrier group always includes first-rate frigates, essential to guarantee the freedom of action of the aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle*. These modern units and their on-board helicopters make it possible to have an extended capacity for action.

They combine state-of-the-art systems and weapons, including Aster 15 and 30 anti-aircraft missiles, MU90 torpedoes and naval cruise missiles (MdcN), to conduct deep strikes.

As part of the 3-dimensional control of maritime space (above, on and under the surface), air defence frigates (FDA) and multi-mission frigates (FREMM) have a detection and firepower that complement that of the carrier air wing, providing robust protection to the carrier group.



Supply ship, operational logistical support

The mission of the command and replenishment ship (BCR) is to deliver fuel, water, food, ammunition and spare parts, as well as mail, to all the units of the carrier strike group.



Attack submarines, discreet and enduring scouts

Playing the role of a scout, the nuclear submarines (SNA) provide early warning for the force. They provide discreet and effective protection by placing themselves between potential threats and the aircraft carrier. They are also capable of carrying out other missions ranging from intelligence gathering to anti-submarine warfare and deploying special forces.



Maritime patrol aircraft Atlantique 2, eyes above the sea

The Atlantique 2 maritime patrol aircraft, based on land and integrated into the carrier strike group, perform intelligence missions on the high seas, as well as anti-submarine warfare. They can also participate in power projection missions and deliver weapons on land targets (laser-guided bombs).



Foreign units, levers of cooperation



Units from several allied and partner navies are joining part or all of Mission ANTARES: Greek, American and Italian frigates are thus setting sail with the carrier strike group. Alongside the French units, they participate in the defence of the carrier group and embody a spirit of strategic solidarity.

Several foreign officers are also integrated into the crews and the on-board staff of the carrier group,

coming from partner nations.

This international task force illustrates the interoperability capabilities between allied navies but also their high level of mutual trust and cooperation.

As the only military capability of this level in Europe, the carrier group constitutes a lever of cooperation particularly valued by the partner nations and allies of France. As a natural aggregator of capabilities provided by international means, the carrier group gives substance to the ability of the French armies to command projection and intervention missions in a coalition.

Interoperability between partner nations is also strengthened, a guarantee of effectiveness in France's ability to react at short notice, alongside its European and transatlantic allies, to a crisis threatening their interests.





THE CARRIER STRIKE GROUP

DAUPHIN PEDRO

Search and rescue, maritime surveillance



CAÏMAN MARINE (NH90)

Naval warfare, anti-submarine warfare,
logistics, intelligence



NUCLEAR AIRCRAFT CARRIER CHARLES DE GAULLE (PA)

Operation of the carrier air wing, command
platform

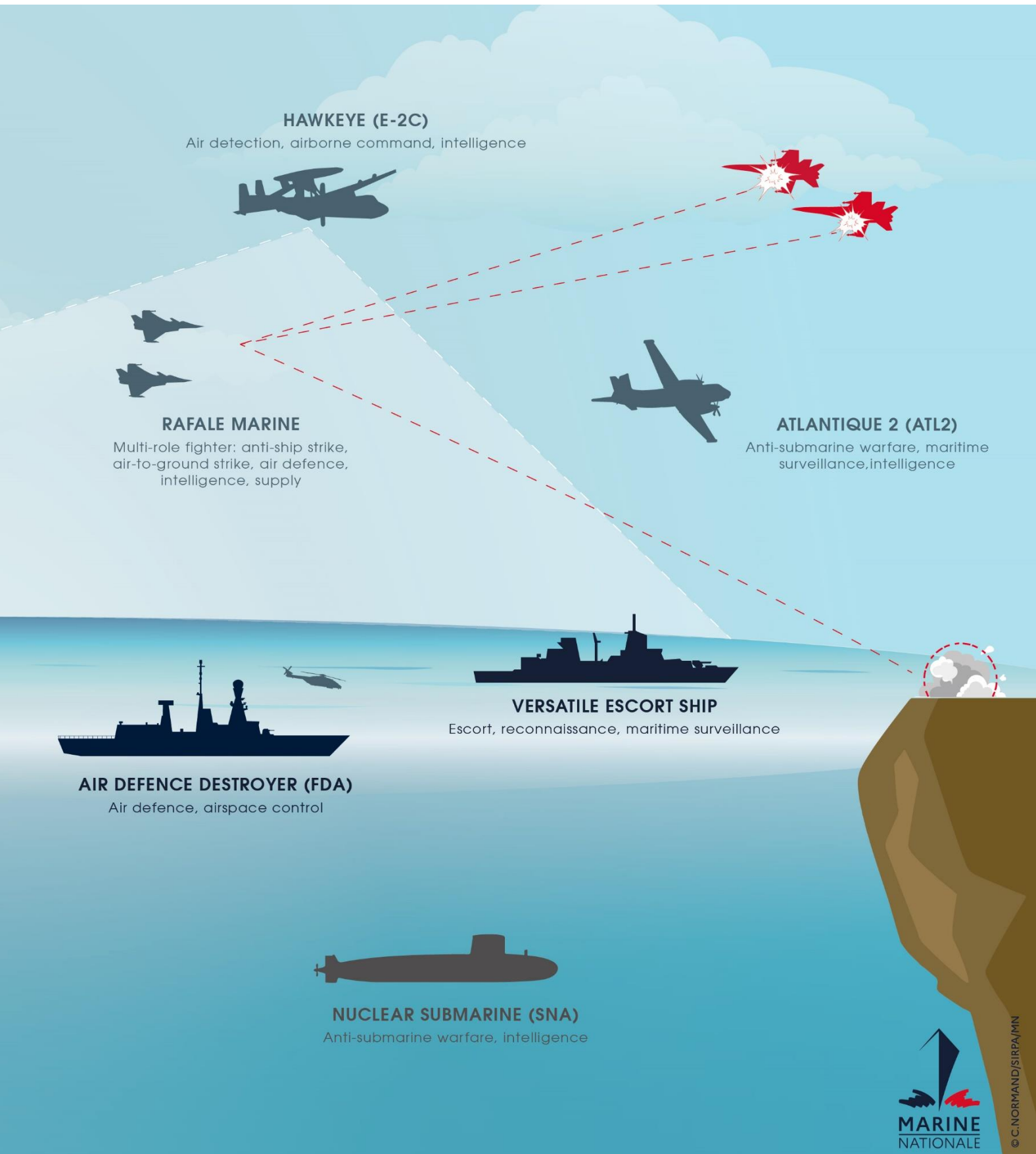
MULTI-MISSION FRIGATE (FREMM)

Escort, anti-submarine warfare, power projection



COMMAND AND SUPPLY SHIP (BCR)

Logistical support (food, fuel, ammunition)





BIOGRAPHY OF REAR ADMIRAL CHRISTOPHE CLUZEL, COMMANDING OFFICER OF TASK FORCE 473

Rear Admiral Christophe Cluzel is married and a father of 5. He is a 1994 graduate from the French Naval Academy. Following his graduation he was successively assigned to the patrol boat *Grèbe*, the LSD *Ouragan*, the anti-air destroyer *Cassard* and the frigate *Ventôse*, between 1994 and 1998. He took part in fishing survey mission, especially in the French Southern and Antarctic islands, but also in the very first counternarcotic operations in the Caribbean sea. He graduated from the Naval warfare and weapons school in 1999 and embarked on the antisubmarine destroyer *La Motte-Picquet* for a CORYMBE mission in West of Africa as well as the KHOR ANGAR operation in the Red Sea. From 2001 to 2002, he commanded the patrol boat *La Moqueuse* based in New Caledonia.



He became operations officer aboard anti-submarine destroyer *Montcalm* and took part in the operations AMARANTE and ENDURING FREEDOM, before integrating the French Carrier Strike Group (CSG) in 2004 for the Operation AGAPANTHE in the Indian Ocean. Assigned as the weapon systems officer of the air defence destroyer *Jean Bart* in 2004, he took part once more in the FRAM deployment of the French CSG. Early 2006, he was commissioned as the commanding officer of the frigate *Enseigne de vaisseau Jacoubet*, deployed twice in the Indian Ocean in Enduring Freedom operation and took part to the fight against piracy off Somalia.

In 2008 he graduated from the Collège Interarmées de Défense before being appointed at the Délégation aux affaires stratégiques - former French OSD -, responsible for the ballistic missile defense and the fight against piracy. In 2010, he became executive officer of the air defence destroyer *Forbin* and has been deployed both in the French CSG deployment in the Indian Ocean and HARMATTAN Operation off Libya.

As the head of operations of the French Forces deployed in the Indian Ocean for the next 3 years, he assumed operational control of the joint operations within the Middle East/Indian Ocean area, including several hostage release operations, and contributed to numerous multilateral defense plans.

In 2014, he became chief of staff of the French CSG and held the duty on board *Charles de Gaulle* during the Arromanches deployment, during which the TF473 took part in the Operation INHERENT RESOLVE over Iraq. He assumed command of the air defence destroyer *Forbin* from August 2015 to August 2017 and drove his crew during more than 8 months in the frame of the Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, especially during ARROMANCHES III deployment, within the French CSG, but also within different US CSG.

He was privileged to be selected in 2017 for the Centre des Hautes Études Militaires before joining the military office of the Minister of the Armed forces, as military advisor for operations and international relations, from 2018 to 2020. He is appointed in August 2020 as deputy commander of FRMARFOR. He is deployed as force commander of operation AGENOR (CTF474) from end of August 2020 to mid-January 2021. He is promoted Rear Admiral on January 1, 2021.

Since September 1, 2021, he is designated as commander of the French Maritime Force (COM FRMARFOR).



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The French Navy operates 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, on and under all the seas of the world, in the air and on land, in order to ensure the safety of the French people and to defend national interests. Its 42,000 sailors (military and civilian) lead five major missions:

Deterrence

At least one nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) is permanently deployed since 1972 to protect France's vital interests;

Protection

The French Navy acts constantly to protect maritime approaches from threats at sea or coming from the sea. It also participates in State action at sea, intervening daily in areas under French sovereignty and jurisdiction;

Prevention

The French Navy adopts a stance of permanent vigilance in strategic areas to prevent the outbreak or deterioration of crises;

Knowledge and anticipation

Leveraging the various intelligence gathering assets it deploys around the world, the French Navy exploits many sensors enabling it to maintain its knowledge of potential crisis areas and to detect, as soon as possible, the emergence of new tensions;

Intervention

With its means of projecting power and force, the French Navy intervenes as close as possible to threats and crises, alone or as part of multilateral coalitions and cooperations. It is committed to long-term action and stands ready to intervene without delay in the event of a deterioration in the situation at sea or on land.

The French Navy works to prevent crises that can threaten France in an international context of extremely rapid change. For this purpose, it permanently deploys at least one nuclear ballistic missile submarine, on average 35 warships, 5 aircraft, as well as commando units, i.e. nearly 4,500 sailors on, under and above the sea and on land, serving the interests of France and of the French people.

In 2022, the French Navy recruits and trains more than 4,000 seamen and women, aged between 17 and 30, with an educational background starting with a Year 10 to a Master. In order to update its know-how and maintain its operational capability, each year the French Navy recruits future seamen in more than 80 professions, across 12 wide domains of activity.

It is supported by a network of 54 CIRFAs (Centres d'information et de recrutement des forces armées / Joint centres for information and recruitment) located in metropolitan France and overseas, manned by 200 sailors who are recruiting consultants. More information in the Press area of www.etremarin.fr.

