HMS Illustrious
in Liverpool
22 - 27 October 2009

Captain Ben Key Royal Navy
Commanding Officer HMS Illustrious

The Fleet Air Arm has strong connections with Liverpool. It is an honour for HMS Illustrious to visit Liverpool and for the Royal Navy to celebrate and promote the direct and important contribution that Naval aviation continues to make to our nation’s security.

The ship, which will be moored at the Queen Elizabeth Cruise Liner berth close to the Royal Liver Building, will be taking part in a busy programme of events, the highlight of which will be a Centenary Fly Past over the Carrier on Friday 23 October 2009. The Fly Past will consist of 40 current and historic Naval aircraft including Merlin, Sea King, Lynx and Jaguar helicopters, in addition to Sea King, Sea Harrier, the iconic Sea Vixen, Sea King and Sea King. The aircraft will pass over HMS Illustrious in a sequence of formations known as a Balbo—a large mixed formation of aircraft, named after the Italian General, Italo Balbo, who on one occasion flew large groups of flying boats across the Atlantic in the early 1930s.

“The Fleet Air Arm has strong connections with Liverpool” said Captain Ben Key, Commanding Officer of HMS Illustrious. “Much of the Battle of the Atlantic against the U-boats was fought and won from Liverpool. It is an honour for HMS Illustrious to visit Liverpool and for the Royal Navy to celebrate and promote the direct and important contribution that Naval aviation continues to make to our nation’s security.”

The Fleet Air Arm Fly Past is expected to attract large crowds as it flies up the Mersey. His Royal Highness the Duke of York, KG, the Commodore-in-Chief of the Fleet Air Arm, will be guest of honour onboard the Carrier as the formation flies overhead. HMS Illustrious will be open to visitors on Sunday 25 October and Monday 26 October. Members of the public will also have the opportunity to see three exciting Royal Navy flying displays over the weekend and visit a static park of Naval aircraft in front of the Royal Liver Building. The static park will be open from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm daily from 23-26 October.

“HMS Illustrious, the Nation’s Strike Carrier will be paying a high profile visit to Liverpool from 22 – 27 October 2009 as the centrepiece of the Royal Navy’s continuing celebrations to mark this year’s Centenary of Naval Aviation.”

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**Friday 23 October**

- **1000-1600 Royal Navy Static Park open**
- **1300-1700 HMS Illustrious open to members of the public**
- **1130-1230 Flying Display in front of Albert Dock**

**Sunday 25 October**

- **1430-1530 Flying Display in front of Albert Dock**
- **1000-1600 Royal Navy Static Park open**
- **1630 Aircraft land back on HMS Illustrious following Fly Past**
- **1600 Royal Navy Helicopter Display Team 'The Black Cats' flying**
- **0900 Aircraft take off from HMS Illustrious in preparation for Fly Past**

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**The Royal Navy**

Liverpool has a close affiliation with the Royal Navy. The city is home to the Liverpool War Memorial, and many naval events take place around the Central area of the city.

**Events**

- **Friday 23 October**
  - Royal Navy Static Park open
  - Flying Display in front of Albert Dock
- **Saturday 24 October**
  - Royal Navy Static Park open
- **Sunday 25 October**
  - Royal Navy Static Park open

**The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland**

The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland is a military band based in Liverpool and plays a significant role in the city's cultural life.

**Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity**

This year's Centenary was celebrated with several events in Liverpool. The first was over HMS Illustrious in London later on 7 May 2009, marking the 100th year since, when the Admiralty ordered it to sail.

A Royal Navy Fly Past of over 40 current and historic rotary wing and fixed wing Naval aircraft will take place over Liverpool on Friday 23 October 2009 to celebrate 100 years of Naval aviation. The spectacular formation will be at all different heights and will fly by the length of the River Mersey from south to north pasting over HMS Illustrious anchored at the Copper Lonesome Berth, Pier Head at 2200hrs.

This year's Centenary of Naval Aviation has been celebrated with several events in Liverpool over the weekend. The first was over HMS Illustrious in London later on 7 May 2009, marking the 100th year since, when the Admiralty ordered it to sail.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity will be hosting a number of events throughout the weekend, including a concert by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

**Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measures**

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest running campaign of the Second World War and it was one in which both Liverpool and the Fleet Air Arm played a vital part in Britain's survival and eventual victory.

Much of the Battle of the Atlantic against the U-boats was fought and won from Liverpool. From 1940, the headquarters of Britain's Western Approach Command was established in Birkenhead, Liverpool, and it was here that the anti-submarine war was planned and executed. Pivotal to the campaign against the U-boats was convoy protection built by each group of carriers, frigates and destroyers, and the aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm.

The Fleet Air Arm's operations were one of the most hazardous missions imaginable during the Battle of the Atlantic. The combination of the U-boats, their torpedoes and aerial warfare, the German Condor, were described by Churchill as 'the scourge of the Atlantic'.

In 1944, the main months for the fleet with the loss of the KM20 tons of shipping. An area known as the mid-Atlantic gap where U-boats operated freely because Allied aircraft could not reach them was causing major problems for the convoy. The lack of escort carriers and the prevailing need to provide air cover called for innovation and local resources. The Fleet Air Arm rose to the challenge.

**Under Churchill's direction...**

As a result, the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic. The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland is a military band based in Liverpool and plays a significant role in the city's cultural life.

**The Royal Navy and the Liverpool University Royal Navy Unit together...**

Many Royal Navy and foreign warships visit the Port of Liverpool every year. HMS Illustrious will be open to visitors over the weekend and flying demonstrations will take place each afternoon in front of the Albert Dock.

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**Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity**

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity was established in 1940 to provide a resource for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines during the Second World War. The charity has raised millions of pounds to support members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who have served in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

**The Battle of the Atlantic**

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Construction begins on New Carriers

Construction has begun on HMS Queen Elizabeth, the first of the two new Aircraft Carriers. The first cut of steel was made at Govan on 7 July 2009. Speaking with apprentices after the ceremony, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB ADC said "One of the great lessons of history is that sea power must be supported by air power. There can be no greater testimony to the enduring capability of Carrier aviation than cutting steel for new Carriers in our Centenary year."

HMS Queen Elizabeth and her sister ship, HMS Prince of Wales will provide the UK with a step-change in military capability that can protect UK interests anywhere in the world. 'Find, Fix and Strike' are the words of the Fleet Air Arm motto and the new carriers will be equipped with Merlins, Sea King ASaCs and the new Joint Strike Fighter to fulfil each of these roles.

Bringing service to life

Flying the Flag

Flying fast jets is one of the most demanding and rewarding jobs in the Royal Navy. To what skills and qualities do you need to be born with? A Pilot with the Royal Navy has to be fast, fit, focused and well-balanced. High performance and precision are absolutely essential. The Royal Navy is looking for capable and committed people to join the Fleet Air Arm. You could become a Pilot in the UK's most advanced Carrier Aviation programme. You will be part of a team of professional aviators who will be flying some of the most advanced aircraft in the world. You will be the best of the best, making decisions and taking others under fire straightaway. As well as an aptitude for flying, you also need leadership potential and the ability to work as a team. Flight training involves flying up to 250 hours in different aircraft over a period of 22 months. You will learn how to fly high speed aircraft and also move on to your fast jet training. Training is a fast and demanding course. When you graduate you will be ready to fly the most advanced aircraft in the Royal Navy.

Serco works in close partnership with the Fleet Air Arm at RNAS Culdrose and RNAS Yeovilton providing a wide range of services including the provision of aircraft and engineers to Royal Naval Air Squadrons and training of future generations of naval aviators. Tom Burnet, Director of Serco's Defence Operations Business said "We are passionate about our support to the Fleet Air Arm and proud to play our part in maintaining the Royal Navy's operational capability. On behalf of Serco, I would like to offer my warmest congratulations on the 100th Anniversary of Naval Aviation."