Semper Eadem?
British Foreign and Defence Policy Making:
A Critical Analysis of the Procurement and Commissioning of
the Queen Elizabeth-class Aircraft Carrier

<u>Statement of Aims</u>

This dissertation seeks to investigate multi-level British foreign and defence decision-making processes through a critical analysis of the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier project's procurement and commissioning processes this research features utilisation of the bureaucratic politics model and interpretivist approach. This research examines and pursues the following topics:

- The overarching theoretical question of how can policy analysis be conducted across long-duration complexly negotiated sequential decision-making processes?
- How does foreign policy fit into the interplay between security policy and strategic considerations in order to produce defence policy decisions?
- What are the foreign policy underpinnings and motivations of the Queen Elizabeth-class project?
- How coherent are the varying perspectives and narratives on the Queen Elizabeth-class project? For what reasons do they diverge?

CONTENTS

Introduction

The Queen-Elizabeth carriers represent the core component of the future of British maritime security, the result of a complex semi-structured, multi-level, negotiated group decision across a turbulent 20-year process that is crucial to Britain's global strategic ambitions and as such demands academic analysis. Defence policy, whilst ostensibly an enclave of military affairs, is in fact interdisciplinary, being the product of the deeply and complexly interwoven fields of foreign policy, security policy, and grand strategy.[1] In an effort to develop sophisticated understandings of defence policy decision-making processes, it is critical to engage with these various fields; however, the limited remit of this field demands a narrowing of the scope of discussion. Thus, this research will primarily focus on the foreign policy elements. The body of literature surrounding foreign policy analysis is characteristically slow to adapt, singularly focused, and generally unnecessarily messy, which has forced tough decisions on theoretical methodology.

The literature review attempts to summarise the influences of international relations through foreign policy analysis before assessing the varying approaches of foreign policy decision-making theory with consideration of the input of defence policy, leading to a chosen methodology. Attention is then turned to the Queen-Elizabeth-Class, interrogating the strategic considerations, bureaucratic actor network, and broader analysis of the project.

Through the analysis of the Queen-Elizabeth carriers, the overarching theoretical question pursued in this research asks how we can conduct policy analysis across long-duration complex sequential decision making processes. This inquiry proceeds alongside an investigation into how foreign policy fits into the interplay between security policy and strategic considerations producing national defence policy decisions. Our focus in the case study seeks to build an understanding of the foreign policy underpinnings of the Queen-Elizabeth-Class and questions the coherence of the varying perspectives and narratives in an effort to understand what drives their divergence.

Literature Review

<u>International Relations Theory</u>

The field of international relations (IR) is the precursor to our area of study, foreign policy analysis (FPA), and imparts a great deal of theoretical spill-over into FPA. It seems appropriate to begin this literature review with a summary of the basic approaches (underpinned by varying social values) to provide a base for this thesis, which is not an all-encompassing review of IR theoretical approaches, but an attempt to highlight the key positions to build a picture of the study.

The fundamental approach of this research is realism, which views the world arena as the inevitable clash of states in contest over competing national security interests and vying for influence. This informs our FPA by viewing foreign policy as a function of capability and

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[1] Jakob Edler and Luke Georghiou, 'Public Procurement And Innovation—Resurrecting The Demand Side', *Research Policy*, 36.7 (2007), 949-963 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2007.03.003>.

resource distribution.[2] [3] Institutionalism focuses on structural constraints and precedes approaches such as liberalism, which holds the values of freedom and democracy as core tenants, thus emphasising international institutional structures. Internationalism, which is a more modern approach, values order and justice, manifesting in the conceptualisation of a rule-based international order.[4] [5] Some approaches in the field are more economically-oriented: Marxism, a perspective predicated by the material logistics of global capitalism; and the International Political Economy approach (IPA), characterised by the pursuit of economic growth and the welfare of the capital markets.[6] [7] A useful contemporary approach is the interpretive approach, which focuses upon the policy actors and considers their actions through a location in historical traditions; this is widespread in the fields of government and public policy, but less so in FPA. The interpretive approach will provide an entry-point for analytical insight in this research.[8]

Foreign Policy Analysis Theory

Foreign policy analysis is defined as the scrutiny of the external policies of states and their placement within a broader context of academic theories.[9] Though it is considered slow to adapt to the ever-changing practices of foreign policy, it still continually appeals to constraints, capabilities, leadership attributes, and structural determinants.[10] Foreign policy, however, can be increasingly characterised as messy due to a complexifying arena and an expanding number of actors (including non-state actors).[11] This extends to British foreign policy, which is not free of external influences or diversifying actors.

There are many approaches to FPA; some take direct input from IR, as seen above with realism, Marxism, and institutionalism. There are other approaches, however: Constructivism creates conceptions of national identity and deduces sets of 'norms' for a state that act as both constraints and determinants.[12] Approaches such as post-structuralism and critical theory seek to conduct deconstructive discourse analysis that provides explanations through building understandings of what an actor is saying and how they are expressing it. Whilst this does imply an interpretive nature, it seeks to build positions on social structures through materialism to create determinants on foreign policy.[13]

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[2] 'Foreign Policy', in *Introduction To International Relations: Theories And Approaches*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 253.

[3] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p. 165. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[4] Ibid, p. 163.

[5] Ibid, p. 164.

[6] Ibid, p. 163.

[7] Ibid, p. 164.

[8] Ibid, p. 165.

[9] 'Foreign Policy', in *Introduction To International Relations: Theories And Approaches*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 252.

[10] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p. 163. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[11] Ibid, p. 165.

[12] Ibid, p. 163.

[13] Ibid

Interpretivism takes inspiration from but is opposed to ideas of structures and constraints leading to determinants (positivism). It acknowledges structures and constraints on actions but views actors as 'free agents' not bound by determinants and conducts analysis through the paradigms of 'traditions'. These can be political (conservatism, liberalism, etc.), cultural (Atlanticism, Europeanism, etc.), or social scientific (realism, feminism, etc.). Interpretivism is not all-encompassing in its coverage (as it is not positivist) but rather serves to highlight the key dynamics underpinning it.[14] [15]

Other approaches to the study of FPA are comparative foreign policy, bureaucratic politics (especially the works of Allison), and the 'level of analysis' approach, which engages through a multi-dimensional set of perspectives examining policy at the systemic, national, and individual levels.[16] [17] At the individual level we find personalised FPA, which seeks to interrogate the individual leader as an actor through investigating their belief system, psychological profile, and cognitive processes.[18]

<u>Foreign Policy Decision Making</u>

Situated within FPA, focussing on the analysis of the decision-making processes pre-empting a foreign policy action, there are generally considered to be two perspectives on foreign policy decision making (FPDM) that overlay approaches and theories surrounding the process. The first is the procedural perspective, based on the concept of the differentiated polity model viewing the policy executive as a segmented group of actors and conceptualising FPDM as a 'game' in which the 'players' build informal coalitions in the pursuit of their policy goals.[19] The second overarching perspective is the substantive perspective; unlike the first perspective, it views the policy executive as a cohesive unit with policy decision being sculpted through the lens of constraints (domestic and political).[20]

It is important to highlight the key dynamics and categorisations serving as a structural foundation to the theoretical approaches of FPDM. There are sequential decisions interrelated in a series, and group decisions involving the influence of group dynamics and often resulting in a bargaining process (with phenomena such as groupthink and polythink). Both can be considered ends–means oriented decisions (instrumental actions) or interaction-oriented decisions (strategic actions).[21] Often, group decisions are also considered to be negotiated decisions, because they result from interaction between multiple actors with multiple agendas

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[14] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), pp. 166-169. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[15] James Strong, 'Interpreting The Syria Vote: Parliament And British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 91.5 (2015), p. 1126. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12401>.

[16] 'Foreign Policy', in *Introduction To International Relations: Theories And Approaches*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 253-257.

[17] Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Man, The State And War: A Theoretical Analysis. (Fourth Printing.)* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965).

[18] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p. 164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[19] James Strong, 'Interpreting The Syria Vote: Parliament And British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 91.5 (2015), p. 1125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12401>.

[20] Ibid.

[21] 'Types Of Decisions And Levels Of Analysis', in *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 16.

and goals.[22] Consideration of whether a decision is structured (routine, repetitive decisions involving established procedures and a high degree of certainty), semi-structured (involving a higher degree of uncertainty and more alarming assessment of risks, necessitating being unstructured in at least one way), and unstructured decisions (complex issues with no precedential or routine answer).[23]

FPDM models come in two essential forms that correspond to the above perspectives. Models under the substantive perspective engage with the steps taken in the creation of a foreign policy action in order to identify the structures and situations constraining it. A prominent example is Patrick Haney's model of decision making, which postulates five tasks in the process of FPDM: 1. A survey of the policy specifications; 2. Canvassing for alternative policy responses to this specification; 3. A search for various sources of useful information; 4. The new information is processed, accepted, and factored into the decision; 5. An evaluation of the costs, risks, and implications of the policy options takes place, deducing the most effective solution to the policy specification.[24] This constitutes a useful example of rational/logical models for FPDM. Rational decision making refers to a process of logic to deduce policy action preference, for example, 'A to B, and B to C, therefore A to C'. This process is contingent on information that is up-to-date and reliable.[25] The model of rational choice which differs in taking a more casual approach to logical FPDM relies on the utilisation of subjective probability estimates that try to maximise the utility of the decision. This is, however, contingent on the decision maker being a good estimator of probability in the pursuit of efficient choices.[26]

Models falling under the procedural perspective explore the processes surrounding the networked nature of political decision making, particularly the concept of coalitions. Predominant amongst these models are two of the three proposed by Graham Allison (Model 1, the rational actor model, is the outlier, being substantive and essentially the same as the rational choice model).[27] Model 2, the organisational process model, views policy as the output of large and inertial organisations individually constraining the policy choices of the executive; it takes inspiration from structured decision making by implying the limitation of pre-existing planning.[28] The organisational process model has been largely dismissed as ineffective, only offering partial explanations of foreign policy actions.[29] Model 3, the bureaucratic politics model, is more successful, conceptualising the decision-making system as a wide network of competing bureaucratic actors, all in constant competition for influence, with policy resulting from the tug-of-war between bureaucracies in a process of bargaining and compromise.[30]

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[22] 'Types Of Decisions And Levels Of Analysis', in *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 17.

[23] 'Types Of Decisions And Levels Of Analysis', in *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 17.

[24] Stephen Dyson, 'Prime Minister And Core Executive In British Foreign Policy' (unpublished Ph.D., Washington State University, 2004), pp. 17-18.

[25] Janice Gross Stein, 'Rational, Psychological And Neurological Models', in *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 131.

[26] Ibid, p. 132.

[27] Graham T Allison, *Essence Of Decision: Explaining The Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Longman, 1971).

[28] Lawrence Freedman, 'Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model', *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 435. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

[29] Raymond Tanter and Richard Henry Ullman, *Theory And Policy In International Relations* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 40-79.

[30] Lawrence Freedman, 'Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model', *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 435 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

A common misconception is that procedural and substantive perspectives (especially Allison's Models 1 and 3) are mutually exclusive and in competition with each other; this is misguided, as they represent alternative ways we can analyse the decision-making process and the set of assumptions and values surrounding political relationships.[31] In this light the perspectives can be compatible for use in multi-faceted analysis of FPDM.

Personalised FPA seeks to analyse the executive actor at an individual level to provide insight. The contributions of this approach focus on the role of information processing, framing, and cognitive biases; these are part of a psychological approach emphasising that a leader must 'gather and process the information at hand to reach an appropriate decision or judgement – one that meets the facts and circumstances – strategic and politics'.[32] Psychology crucially underpins these judgements, as psychological factors can have a significant impact in small-group decision making.[33] Factors that must be considered in psychological analysis are: cognitive consistency, the evoked set (urgent concerns), emotions, images (stereotypes of people/events), belief system framing, analogies (past experience), personality, and the leadership style (crusader, strategic, pragmatic, or opportunistic).[34] [35] David Axelrod's cognitive mapping technique is one of a limited range of models from this approach.[36] Risk perception influences psychological approaches; the concept of 'world risk' by Ulrich Beck creates specific cognitive dynamics leading to policy mistakes. Postulating that government is organised around the notion of risk, it can be seen that risk-based decisions carry uncertainty serving to fuel cognitive dissonance. Such idiosyncratic situations are argued to be more frequent following events such as 9/11, as evidenced by the large expansion in risk bureaucracies and the emergence of the risk analysis industry.[37] [38] Heuristic processing, the idea that the mind uses cognitive shortcuts in decision making, can be exacerbated by an unexpected change in risk perception preceding poor decisions.[39] Psychology can be useful when layered with social knowledge, but it is a difficult approach to apply to a larger number of actors involved in decisions, as it is almost impossible to aggregate behaviour across a network without significant distortion. It still proves useful, however, in policy framing and implementation.[40]

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[31] Lawrence Freedman, 'Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model', *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 436. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

[32] 'Psychological Factors Affecting Foreign Policy Decisions', in *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 98.

[33] Steven L. Woodruff and James F. Cashman, 'Task, Domain, And General Efficacy: A Re-examination Of The Self-Efficacy Scale', *Psychological Reports*, 72.2 (1993), 423-432. <https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.1993.72.2.423>.

[34] 'Psychological Factors Affecting Foreign Policy Decisions', in *Understanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 98-100.

[35] Margaret G. Hermann, 'How Decision Units Shape Foreign Policy: A Theoretical Framework', *International Studies Review*, 3.2 (2001), 47-81. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1521-9488.00234>.

[36] Robert Axelrod, *Structure Of Decision: The Cognitive Maps Of Political Elites* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 5-45.

[37] Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), pp. 255-265.

[38] Ryan Beasley, 'Dissonance And Decision-Making Mistakes In The Age Of Risk', *Journal Of European Public Policy*, 23.5 (2016), pp. 771-787. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2015.1127276>.

[39] Janice Gross Stein, 'Rational, Psychological And Neurological Models', in *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 138.

[40] Janice Gross Stein, 'Rational, Psychological And Neurological Models', in *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 143.

Defence Policy and Procurement

Defence policy is not readily defined, and this extends to British defence policy. Ostensibly, it seems to concern pay scales, service conditions, and questions such as conscription, but these are the prerogative of the armed forces as employers, while defence policy involves the nature and size of the armed services, its strategic underpinnings, and the alliances it sculpts.[41] Defence policy is different from most policy; the central objective is that of national security, something unequivocally and deeply linked to a nation's foreign policy.[42] It has a completely unique decision-making environment due to military involvement, which carries with it an entirely unique institutional logic, including concepts such as self-sufficiency of the military-industrial complex (imposing a near enclave status for the decision environment) and the idea of *longue durée* (long-duration planning).[43] [44]

There are two predominant models for defence policy decision making; these correspond strongly to the two FPDM perspectives. The first corresponding to the procedural perspective is the pluralist model, which Samuel Huntington described in his book *The Common Defence* as 'not the result of deductions from a clear statement of national objectives. It is the product of the competition between purposes within individuals and groups … the result of politics not logic' – simply put, there is no rational seat of power, and decisions are the compromise of conflicting interests balanced off in a process of bargaining.[45] The second model, akin to the substantive perspective, is the managerial model; it was prominently advocated by US defence secretary Robert McNamara. He suggested that 'vital decision making, particularly in policy matters, must remain at the top … rational decision making depends on having a full range of options from which to choose, successful management organises the enterprise so that this process can take place'. McNamara thus argued policy making can be designed to reproduce the features of a rational decision-making process if managed effectively.[46]

Also related to national security is the idea of driving forward technological innovation. Defence procurement policy has long been studied in the context of innovation generation.[47] This has led to the concept of the 'entrepreneurial state', which postulates that the state through its defence policy takes higher than rational levels of risk in the pursuit of new technology and

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[41] William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), pp. 21-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

[42] Jakob Edler and Luke Georghiou, 'Public Procurement And Innovation—Resurrecting The Demand Side', *Research Policy*, 36.7 (2007), 949-963. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.respol.2007.03.003>.

[43] Patricia H. Thornton William Ocasio, 'Institutional Logics', in *Handbook Of Organisational Change* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 2020).

[44] Fernand Braudel, 'Histoire Et Sciences Sociales: La Longue Durée', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 13.4 (1958), 725-753. <https://doi.org/10.3406/ahess.1958.2781>.

[45] Lawrence Freedman, "Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model", *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 442. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

[46] Lawrence Freedman, 'Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model', *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 443. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

[47] David C. Mowery and Richard N. Langlois, 'Spinning Off And Spinning On(?): The Federal Government Role In The Development Of The US Computer Software Industry', *Research Policy*, 25.6 (1996), 947-966. <https://doi.org/10.1016/0048-7333(96)00888-8>.

innovations.[48] This is present in the procurement processes; however, due to the enclave nature of the military-industrial complex there is deep institutional complexity when compared to other types of public procurement, with the exception of telecommunications and nuclear energy.[49] The Ministry of Defence (MoD) engages in public procurement, which has become an increasingly standardised process across government, but this conflicts with the institutional logic within the MoD. Frictions occur surrounding the competition and market efficiency rules, raising questions on the decentralisation of management, the provisions for domestic and economic development, and the tension between the procurement need for urgency versus the defensive need for innovation, ultimately resulting in delays and expanded costs due to a process with little understanding of the requirements of complex grand defence projects.[50]

Methodology

Foreign policy analysis is underdeveloped and the theories are slow to develop and adapt in response to a quickly transforming foreign policy arena with new practices and a diverse array of actors. The approaches above often pertain to singular event actions and fail to encapsulate the sequential policy actions across longer time-frames that emerge at the cross-section of defence and foreign policy. The ever-expanding foreign policy arena results in a complex and messy subject for study. The messiness is underpinned by cross-departmental issues that blur the interests and influences of the domestic and foreign. Appeals to the individual for analysis through the psychological/cognitive approaches cannot be easily aggregated across a long-duration policy or large actor network and are almost impossible when compounded by both challenges simultaneously. This leads to a position in which bureaucratic politics (Allison's Model 2) and the procedural perspective offer the best opportunity to engage with the messiness but also presents a need to address the complexity produced by the model.

The Bureaucratic Politics Model

Bureaucracies are driven by self-interest motivated by self-preservation in a constant competition for influence within the government; the statement that 'where you stand depends on where you sit' implies that policy choices result from political considerations surrounding position in network governance.[51] This competition is driven by the imposition of budgetary ceilings on government spending, transforming a discursive pursuit of policy influence into a bitter zero-sum game characterised by competition between government departments (each a bureaucracy) seeking to increase their proportion of the budget and to justify their metaphoric slice of the pie to the others.[52] This competition takes place within a power structure dependent upon the distribution of political resources, which take two forms: tactical resources pertaining to immediate bureaucratic battles (e.g. relevant capacity for policy implementation), and the ability to structure distribution of those resources before bureaucratic battles take place (e.g. entrenchment of procedures, precedents, and processes).[53]

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[48] M Mazzucato, *The Entrepreneurial State* (London: Anthem Press, 2013).

[49] Royston Greenwood, 'Institutional Complexity And Organizational Responses', *The Academy Of Management*, 5.1 (2011), 317-371. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2011.590299>.

[50] Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019).

[51] 'Foreign Policy', in *Introduction To International Relations: Theories And Approaches*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 262.

[52] Lawrence Freedman, 'Logic, Politics And Foreign Policy Processes: A Critique Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model', *International Affairs*, 52.3 (1976), p. 444. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2616555>.

[53] Ibid, p. 447.

This model was prominently formulated by Graham Allison, but is rooted in scholarship established in the 1970s, primarily the works of Desther, Steinbrunner, Galluci, Sparier, and Uslaner.[54] Allison structured this model through an analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis, an aspect which has drawn the attention of well-established critiques. These criticisms, however, do not target the model itself but rather the presentation of the crisis, although one prominent criticism accuses 'bargaining games' of effectively diminishing executive responsibility. That may be a valid analytical revelation, but the burden of responsibility may be too strongly expected.[55] A constructivist criticism argues this model can be isolated from wider discursive analysis of a state's actions. Whilst actors, preferences, perceptions, and influences flow from the model, it ignores the constructivists' valuing of reasoning over event analysis or policy choices.[56] However, the point that criticisms of this nature come from a position that seeks to view FPA models as mutually exclusive and incompatible stands. The reality is that the most cohesive analysis is multifaceted. In response, I will attempt to broaden the remit of my bureaucratic analysis, although a truly constructivist approach is beyond the limited scope of this project.

Complexity is the biggest issue; however, interdisciplinary practices from management studies enable a simplification of the messiness and complexity, illuminating the bureaucratic decision-making process for clear analytical insight.[57] The most important tasks in strategy making manage the interface between stakeholder demands in relation to strategic goals. The work of Freeman offers useful tools for the identification and explanation of that interface.[58] He defines stakeholders as the groups effected by and those affecting a strategic choice; these constitute the actors in our analysis.[59]

The Power-Interest Matrix

Freeman argued the dimensions of power and interest are most significant in the identification of key stakeholders and proposed a power-interest matrix grid to assist in balancing the need for a broad definition of stakeholders with yielding manageable results in a stakeholder survey.[60]

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[54]Steve Smith, 'Allison And The Cuban Missile Crisis: A Review Of The Bureaucratic Politics Model Of Foreign Policy Decision-Makin', *Millennium: Journal Of International Studies*, 9.1 (1980), p. 22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298800090010301>.

[55] Ibid, pp. 27-29.

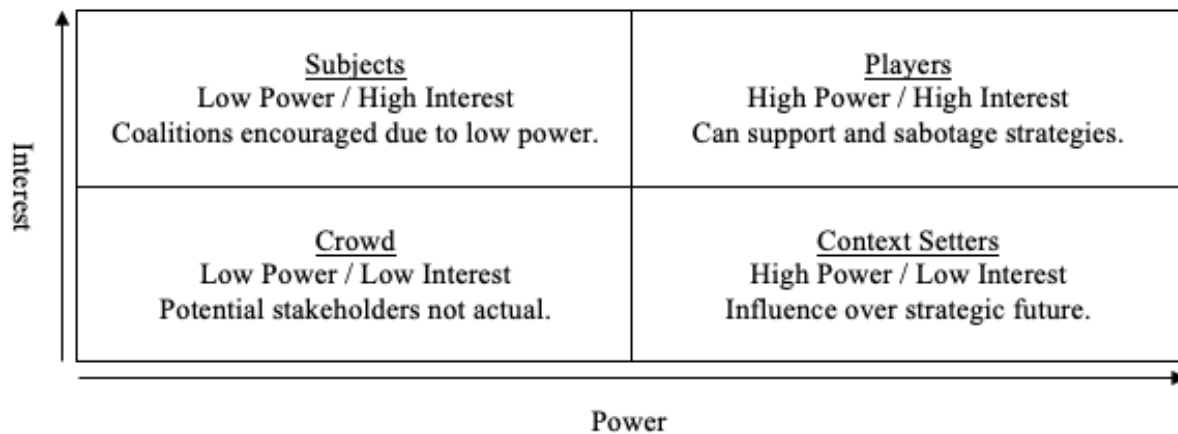[56] Jutta Weldes, 'Bureaucratic Politics: A Critical Constructivist Assessment', *Mershon International Studies Review*, 42.2 (1998), pp. 223-225. <https://doi.org/10.2307/254413>.

[57]Jonathan Bendor and Thomas H. Hammond, 'Rethinking Allison's Model', *American Political Science Review*, 86.2 (1992), p. 302. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1964222>.

[58]Fran Ackermann and Colin Eden, 'Strategic Management Of Stakeholders: Theory And Practice', *Long Range Planning*, 44.3 (2011), pp. 179-182. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2010.08.001>.

[59] R. Edward Freeman and David L. Reed, 'Stockholders And Stakeholders: A New Perspective On Corporate Governance', *California Management Review*, 25.3 (1983), 88-106. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165018>.

[60] R. Edward Freeman and David L. Reed, 'Stockholders And Stakeholders: A New Perspective On Corporate Governance', *California Management Review*, 25.3 (1983), 88-106. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41165018>.

Subjects Low Power / High Interest Coalitions encouraged due to low power.	**Players** High Power / High Interest Can support and sabotage strategies.
Crowd Low Power / Low Interest Potential stakeholders not actual.	**Context Setters** High Power / Low Interest Influence over strategic future.

Diagram 1 [61]

Once every stakeholder has been placed within this matrix, clear analytical insight is revealed on their role in the decision making process. Those in the upper levels have the most at stake in decisions but varying degrees of power, whilst those to the right of the matrix have the most power to affect and influence strategies but varying degrees of stakes in the decision.[62]

Stakeholder Influence Network Mapping

In acknowledgement of the interdependent interactions between stakeholders, the 'identification of both the stakeholders as well as the interconnectedness between them is a critical step'.[63] When stakeholders respond in a decision making action, they do so with respect to others alongside the focal project; therefore, a stakeholder's power is intrinsically linked to their position in the actor network.[64]

The stakeholder influence network diagram is a depiction of these relationships graphically demonstrating the value of relationships.[65] The links between stakeholders are represented with arrows of varying types: solid arrows represent formal relationships (direct influence), dotted arrows represent informal relationships (persuasive influence), and double-ended arrows represent mutually-influencing relationships.[66]

This relationship analysis allows the identification of significant players (which can be identified as central nodes) in the network. Those with many inward links receive considerable

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[61] Fran Ackermann and Colin Eden, 'Strategic Management Of Stakeholders: Theory And Practice', *Long Range Planning*, 44.3 (2011), p. 183. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2010.08.001>.

[62] Ibid.

[63] E Freeman and J McVea, 'A Stakeholder Approach To Strategic Management', in *Handbook Of Strategic Management* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), pp. 135-140.

[64] Fran Ackermann and Colin Eden, 'Strategic Management Of Stakeholders: Theory And Practice', *Long Range Planning*, 44.3 (2011), p. 186. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2010.08.001>.

[65] Fran Ackermann and Colin Eden, 'Strategic Management Of Stakeholders: Theory And Practice', *Long Range Planning*, 44.3 (2011), p. 186. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2010.08.001>.

[66] Ibid, p. 186.

amounts of information and thus act as powerful network nodes, whereas those with many outward links have the ability to influence many opinions and outcomes, thus acting as a powerful conduit within the network.[67]

Maritime Strategic Context

The Dominant Geopolitical Maritime Discourse

'The maritime environment consists of the sea, the land in the area known as the littoral, and the airspace above both…'[68]

There are three geographical influences on maritime security: the physical, the human, and the ideational.[69] [70] Reinforced in the two elements of sea power, the material (naval force) and ideational (maritime security policy), maritime security pertains to non-military issues, and this constitutes consideration of the three elements of the maritime economy: sea lanes of communication (international shipping), leisure (tourism and settlement), and resources (both energy and halieutic).[71] The dominant maritime geopolitical discourse is framed by liberal principles maintaining the international order. This is reflected in the reality that the presence of adversarial naval forces, piracy, trafficking, illegal immigration, and illegal resource extraction result in the 'freedom of the seas' never being granted, and that maritime security actually exists as the normalised virtue of control across an 'us versus them' security identity paradigm.[72] Maritime security thus doesn't use the sea to project security but to protect the land from sea-based threats.[73]

From 1919 to 1991 the role of naval force has diminished due to the modern prevalence of weapons of last resort, leading to a position of limited use of naval force in conjunction with diplomatic action.[74] This development resulted in the 'manoeuvrist approach' to modern naval operations that 'seeks to collapse an enemy's cohesion and effectiveness through a series of rapid, violent, and unexpected actions that create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation in which [the enemy] cannot cope'.[75] Admiral Zumwalt's 'High/Low Hypothesis' denoted naval capabilities as either high meaning for the purpose of war (e.g. aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines) or low meaning for peace-time purposes (moderate in cost and performance).[76] The current maritime age hosts fleeting United States naval supremacy (since the collapse of the USSR), juxtapositioned against maritime power diffusion across regional powers – with an emphasis on the rise of the Asia-Pacific powers.[77] [78]

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[67] Ibid, p. 187.

[68] Royal Navy, *BR1806 - British Maritime Doctrine* (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999), p. 159.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Basil Germond, *The Maritime Dimension Of European Security: Seapower And The EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 20.

[71] Ibid, pp. 91-93.

[72] Ibid, pp. 25-27.

[73] Ibid, p. 73.

[74] James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy 1919 - 1991*, 3rd edn (London: the Macmillan press, 1994), pp. 66-69.

[75] Royal Navy, *BR1806 - British Maritime Doctrine* (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999), p. 164.

[76] James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy 1919 - 1991*, 3rd edn (London: the Macmillan press, 1994), p. 74.

[77] Ibid, p. 73.

[78] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 5.

Britain's Maritime Interests

Admiral Hill stated on strategy that you must begin by figuring out your interests, therefore, this is the logical beginning.[79] As an island nation, Britain is unique in its nearly absolute reliance upon the sea. Twice in the 20th century the island was starved by means of sea-blockade, and this reliance continues into the modern day; 80% of food in Britain is imported, largely as cargo on ships.[80] [81] The remnants of Britain's former empire are spread across the world, with 14 British Overseas Territories in the Caribbean, the South-Atlantic, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and an extensive network of 15 overseas military instillations, including naval presences in Bahrain, Cyprus, and Singapore.[82] Britain has ownership of the world's fourth largest mercantile fleet, and maritime dependency is expected to increase 135% by 2030; Britain's maritime interests extend beyond just vessels to British import/export cargo.[83] The predominance of the maritime domain for Britain is internationally recognised in London, which exists as the world's centre for many maritime industries – acting as host to the International Maritime Organisation, colloquially the 'UN of the seas'.[84] The prosperity and future of Britain is unequivocally woven with the maritime domain, with dependence on sea-lines of communications (SLOCs), and a market confidence tied to its ability to access them; this marks a substantial vulnerability.[85]

The 20th century saw debate and soul-searching surrounding Britain's maritime interests. WW2 and the Suez crisis led to a wish within government in the 1960s to impose a political operational ceiling on British naval capabilities, including the abandonment of high-tech naval capabilities (e.g. aircraft carriers). This was silenced by the successes of the Beira Patrol, which successfully employed a blockade imposing a UN-sanctioned oil embargo in the Mozambique Channel against Rhodesia by the HMS Ark Royal.[86] The Falklands War in the early 1980s proved the need for a strong naval component to protect our maritime interests.[87] The beginning of the 1990s proved pivotal for the recognition of Britain's maritime interests; the fall of the USSR marked the first time in 200 years that the country could think freely about its political-strategic issues away from the immediate concern of defending the territorial sovereignty.[88] The conclusion was that future British maritime operations would be at a distance from Britain and multinational, under increased political and media scrutiny, preventative in character, and demanding flexibility and a focus on the littoral (which MoD defined "as those land areas …

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[79] Ibid, p. 6.

[80] James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[81] 'Say Goodbye To Tea And Carrots: 80% Of British Food Is Imported', *Business Insider*, 2019 <https://www.businessinsider.fr/us/no-deal-brexit-percentage-british-food-imported-shortages-2019-1> [Accessed 1 May 2020].

[82] Basil Germond, *The Maritime Dimension Of European Security: Seapower And The EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 95.

[83] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 7-8.

[84] Ibid, p. 7.

[85] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 8.

[86] James Cable, *Gunboat Diplomacy 1919 - 1991*, 3rd edn (London: the Macmillan press, 1994), pp. 100-108.

[87] Ibid, p. 108.

[88] Royal Navy, *BR1806 - British Maritime Doctrine* (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999), P. 160.

susceptible to engagement and influence from the sea").[89] [90] Acceptance that Britain's geo-strategic interests most closely aligned with those of its NATO allies followed recognition that command of the sea was no longer an option for the Royal Navy, which can only seek to control and influence situations surrounding British interests.[91] [92] A limited fragile consensus was also reached over differing conceptual thinking between the RAF and Royal Navy on future strategic considerations.[93]

Britain's National Strategic Vision

Britain is strange amongst Great Powers, as it effectively abandoned grand strategy after the Suez Crisis in 1957.[94] [95] Post-Suez, grand strategy became tied to the US, and later became increasingly tied to the EU, resulting in a position seeking a safe middle-ground between the two, with a reactionary strategic policy.[96] Britain's two strategic strengths remained: balancing different powers, and leveraging the strategic interests of others in the pursuit of Britain's ends. A 2010 Public Administration Select Committee report entitled *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* found that there was no central body responsible for British grand strategy and that Whitehall had forgotten how to formulate it entirely.[97]

The post-Cold War consensus on Britain's strategic vision for the 21st century is that Britain is a medium-sized power seeking to reject the thesis of decline. Acknowledging this will come at a cost, it retains the ambition to engage in world affairs and protect its interests, with a continued doctrine of deterrence and a responsibility in upholding the international order[98] [99] To meet these strategic ambitions, it envisions a need to maintain forces capable of simultaneously responding to a major international crisis such as in Operation Granby (First Gulf War) alongside lesser-scale extended deployments, such as in Kosovo.[100] There is an admission that these ambitions require participation in *ad hoc* 'coalitions of the willing', requiring commitment to a multilateral system of alliances and partnerships.[101] [102]

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[89] Ibid, pp. 162-3.

[90] Ministry of Defence, *UK Maritime Power (JDP0-10)* (Bicester: Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2017), pp. 1-49.

[91] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), p. 50.

[92] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 64-65.

[93] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 7.

[94] Royal Navy, *BR1806 - British Maritime Doctrine* (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999), p. 160.

[95] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010).

[96] Ibid.

[97] Ibid .

[98] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 2-3.

[99] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), pp. 23-24.

[100] *Strategic Defence Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 1998).

[101] *The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept: An Analysis Of The Components Of The UK Defence Capability Framework* (Shrivenham: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2003), p. 3.

[102] *The UK National Strategy For Maritime Security* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014).

Case Study: The Queen-Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carrier

The case study of the Queen-Elizabeth Aircraft carrier project embodies the challenges faced by FPDM and FPA – standing at the cross-roads of foreign and defence policy – serving as an example of a semi-structured, multi-level, negotiated group decision across a turbulent 20-year process.

General Information

The Queen-Elizabeth-Class (QEC) are the largest (65,000 tonnes) and most expensive (total programme cost: £7 billion) ships ever procured by the Royal Navy. With super carrier status, a range of 12,000 miles, a compliment of 700 men, and capacity for up to 72 aircrafts, this class of ship represents the premier British power projection capability.[103] Two commissioned QEC will provide a continuous year-round carrier capability with a conceptualised three support ships, 138 F-35 aircraft, and an enhanced complement from three Commando Brigades, there is no precedent in Royal Navy history for operating a ship of this scale and power.[104]

The QEC is only one aspect of this case study, as it is the logistical component of a delivery package, the projector of the force that is the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), which is the 'next-generation [5th generation] strike weapons system designed to meet an advanced threat' as the 'cornerstone of a multi-mission joint force possessing improved mission flexibility and unprecedented effectiveness to engage and destroy'.[105] The JSF is the continuation of the RN-RAF interoperability project started in 2000 under the Joint Force Harrier (JFH) programme. It is unmatched outside of the other tier-1 JSF operator in the United States.[106]

1998–2009

The QEC project origins are the 1998 Strategic Defence Review (SDR), which placed the order to replace the Invincible-Class with two larger and more flexible carriers (CVF) to enter service in 2012–2015.[107] The interoperable foundation for the JSF programme was established in this review, creating the JFH by merging the Royal Navy's Sea Harriers with the RAF's GR7 Harrier.[108] The MoD announced the contract competition for the CVF in January 1999, and awarded competing design contracts to Thales Group and BAE systems in November 1999. In January 2001, the American-built Lockheed Martin F-35 was chosen as the intended aircraft. In 2003, the MoD confirmed the QEC purchase and announced a BAE-Thales collaboration on the project utilising both industrial bases; however, this collaborative industrial effort and

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[103] David Hobbs, *British Aircraft Carriers: Design, Development & Service Histories* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2013), p. 347.

[104] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), pp. 30-3.

[105] *USMC Aviation Plan 2015* (Washington, D.C.: United States Marine Corps, 2015), p. '2.3.2'.

[106] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[107] *Strategic Defence Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 1998).

[108] Ibid.

risk-sharing agreement took five years to negotiate, culminating in the Aircraft Carrier Alliance (ACA) in 2008.[109]

2010–2014

The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) under the Coalition government addressed the significant overspend at the MoD. It imposed an immediate cut on the HMS Ark Royal (axing aircraft carrier capability), expedited JFH retirement, confirmed the purchase of one QEC but didn't address the procurement of the second (suggesting a foreign sale), and announced a late-stage switch to the F-35C CATOBAR (catapult-launch) variant with lower-lifespan costs, heavier payload capacity, and a longer range, instead of the F-35B STOVL (short take-off, vertical landing).[110] [111]

In 2012 following debate surrounding the F-35 variant and the spiralling costs of the late-stage conversion to CATOBAR, the decision was taken to revert back to the F-35B STOVL variant for the first 48 JSF.[112] Due to significant delay on the project and impending deadlines, in 2013, the MoD renegotiated the ACA buyer-supplier risk-sharing agreement, placing a larger share of risk on industrial partners.[113]The same year, CEPP emerged (Carrier-Enabled Power Projection), switching QEC emphasis towards wide roles comprising a mixed-air group hybridised with the JFF, Merlin helicopter variants, and marinised Chinooks and Apache attack helicopters. CEPP took over as the new senior responsible owner for the project, attempting to manage divergence between the Royal Navy and RAF on the QEC.[114] [115]

2015–Present

The 2015 SDSR sought to right the wrongs of the 2010 SDSR. It confirmed two QEC to be brought into service and the additional specification that one would be configured towards an amphibious role. The review confirmed the order of 138 F-35, with 24 to be available to the QEC by 2023, but didn't address the variant.[116]

Controversy resulted after the review in British defence circles on the utility of the announced JSF numbers and variant, with an expected embarked air fleet of 12 F-35Bs (amounting to only 24% of designed capacity) and a variational reduction in 'deep strike' capability; questions

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[109]Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), pp. 7-8.

[110] *Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2010).

[111]James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[112] 'Defence Secretary Announces Decision On Jets For Navy'S Future Carriers| Royal Navy', *Web.Archive.Org*, 2012. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120513102839/http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/News-and-Events/Latest-News/2012/May/10/120509-F35B> [Accessed 23 April 2020].

[113]Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), pp. 8-9.

[114] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[115]Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), p. 8.

[116] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015).

were raised surrounding the credibility of its deterrence and utility beyond close air support.[117]
[118] [119] The government revealed in 2016 an agreement with the US for the deployment of USMC aircraft onto the QEC, which, alongside the CEPP concept, suggests a great deal regarding intention and credibility of deterrence.[120]

Multi-Level Bureaucratic Analysis

### Queen Elizabeth Class Project Power-Interest Matrix
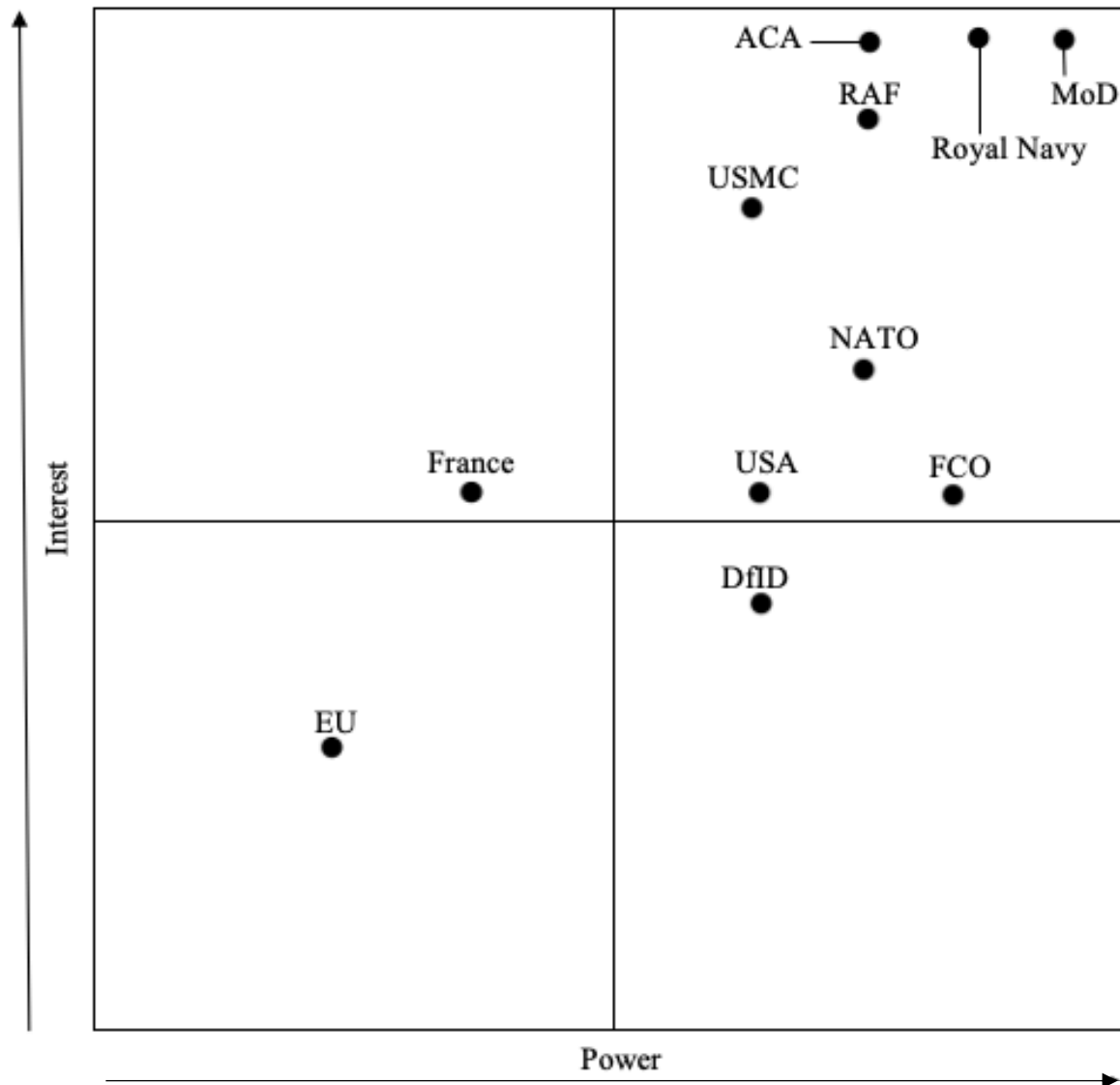
Model 1

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[117]James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[118]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 24.

[119] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 9.

[120] 'Joint Press Conference By Secretary Carter And Secretary Michael Fallon', US Department of Defence, 2016 <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/937142/joint-press-conference-by-secretary-carter-and-secretary-michael-fallon/> [Accessed 23 April 2020].

Queen Elizabeth Class Project Stakeholder Influence Diagram
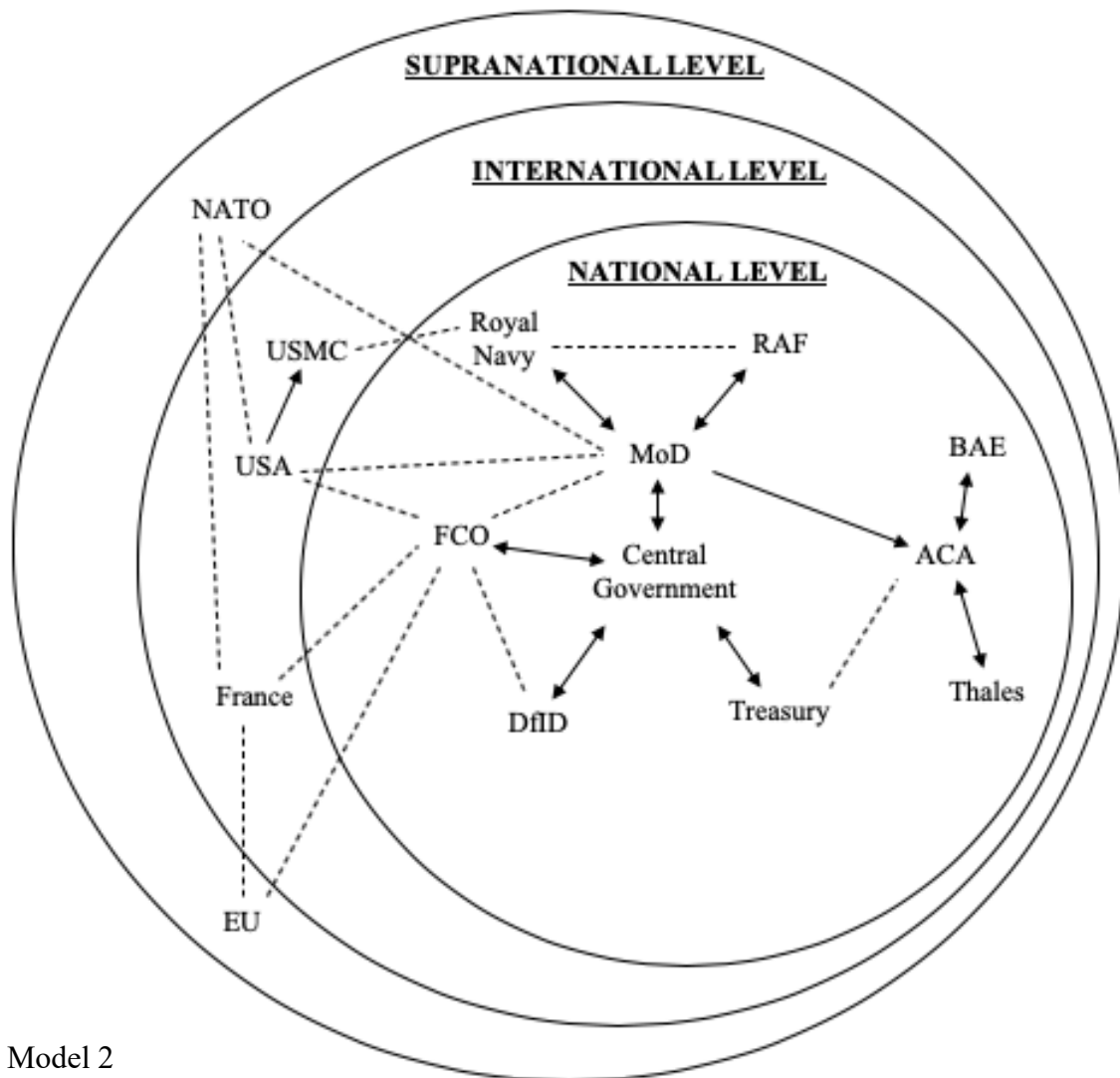
Model 2

The National Level

Rhodes defined the British core-executive as a 'complex web of institutions, networks, and practices'; analysis of the bureaucratic politics of foreign and defence policy necessitates exploring this web.[121] Defence policy is unique in Britain, as the armed forces play little role in policy creation – they don't stand apart from civil society or Whitehall machinery (they're situated within the MoD, situated within Whitehall).[122] When the Defence Select Committee

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[121] Stephen Dyson, 'Prime Minister And Core Executive In British Foreign Policy' (unpublished Ph.D., Washington State University, 2004), p. 5.

[122] William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), 21-24, p. 21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

chose to use the JSF as a case-study examining British defence policy making, they were unable to trace any single entity.[123]

The post-Cold War soul-searching led to a strategic fragmentation in British governmental thinking, with ministries pursuing their own 'mini-strategies'.[124] Furthermore, ministries increasingly engage in their own individual foreign affairs, highlighting the fragmentation of FPDM and leading to a foreign–domestic policy blur. The analysis of the QEC project therefore demands assessment of each key ministerial perspective.[125] Due to the doctrine of collective responsibility the consent of Cabinet is still required on high-level decisions.[126]

Zbigniew Brzezinski highlighted increasing phone-call diplomacy between heads of state, often disregarding ambassadors, indicating a paradoxical centralisation of FPDM on the PM (with increasing summitry, community membership round-tables, and presidentialisation). This empowers the Cabinet Office, which acts in a gatekeeping function as the procedural and informational hub of government, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, representing the effective beating heart of Whitehall (with power to shape Cabinet committees).[127] [128] [129] This carries long-term implications as 'one PMs agency becomes the next's structure'.[130]

Ministry of Defence (MoD)

The MoD is 'more concerned with the management of resources than security policy': in our FPA of the QEC project this is ostensibly true, the Ministry sought to balance the desires of the armed services branches (which exist as policy implementers, not policy makers), alongside the governmental desires for the project, such as foreign policy and security questions that surround sea-basing vs land-basing or the building of international partnerships.[131] Procurement is the responsibility of the Procurement Executive (although there is Treasury oversight on expenditures greater than £100m) with divisions for every procurement area, existing as the biggest customer for the British defence industry (bringing power over the industry's size, ownership, structure, and conduct, reflected in pricing, profits, and industry

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[123] House of Commons Defence Committee, *Decision-Making In Defence Policy (Eleventh Report Of Sessions)* (Westminster: House of Commons Defence Committee, 2015), pp. 16-21.

[124] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010), Question 3.

[125] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p. 163. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[126] Stephen Dyson, 'Prime Minister And Core Executive In British Foreign Policy' (unpublished Ph.D., Washington State University, 2004), p. 8.

[127] Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p. 164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[128] Zara Steiner, 'Decision-Making In American And British Foreign Policy: An Open And Shut Case', *Review Of International Studies*, 13.1 (1987), pp. 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210500113749>.

[129] Stephen Dyson, 'Prime Minister And Core Executive In British Foreign Policy' (unpublished Ph.D, Washington State University, 2004), p. 6.

[130] Ibid, pp. 12-13.

[131] William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), 21-24, p. 23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

focus).[132] Accountability is difficult within the MoD due to its secretive nature, competing sources of internal decision-making, and frequently changing officials.[133]

Much of the influence of the MoD on the QEC project has been spent on managing the internal tensions and conflicting visions between the Royal Navy and RAF, largely surrounding the JSF, initially manifesting on the question of sea- or land-based. Whilst there are good arguments surrounding the increased payload capacity potential of land-basing, the MoD looked towards costing for a solution.[134] Aside from the £20 billion upfront investment in the QEC (with a 50-year lifespan) its running costs have been estimated at £65 million per annum, a favourable alternative to an airfield (RAF Marham costs £144 million per annum to run).[135] Reinforced by the influence gainable through the ability to offer QEC access to close allies free from the political constrains of land-basing.[136] Prepositioning will be kept to key strategic locations, such as HMS Jafar in Bahrain.[137]

The rivalry then shifted to vying for influence over the size of the embarked airwing. The MoD recognised the success of the project was contingent on the airwing's credibility as a deterrent; this extends to the cadre of pilots (who need a suitable number of aircraft to maintain proficiency).[138] The initial 48 F-35Bs will be split into three squadrons: the first a heightened readiness carrier-based squadron, the second a squadron embarked half the time, and the third a shore-based squadron. There was significant concern within the MoD that despite having three times the tonnage of the predecessor Invincible-Class, the QEC would have an identically sized airwing (just 24% of capacity).[139] [140] The MoD solution is the CEPP concept which, in an effort to secure the necessary financial support from the tri-services for the continuation of the project, shifted the emphasis from a carrier-strike function to a hybridised airwing comprising the F-35Bs alongside a plethora of helicopter aircraft.[141] This can be seen in two lights: either a PR packaged capability reduction or a tri-service unifying maximisation of the return on investment.[142]

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[132]Keith Hartley, 'Defence Procurement In The UK', *Defence And Peace Economics*, 9.1-2 (1998), pp. 40-42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10430719808404893>.

[133]Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), pp. 10-11.

[134]Timothy John Benbow and James Bosbotinis, *The Interoperability Of Future UK Air Power, Afloat And Ashore*, Corbett Papers (Shrivenham: The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, 2014), pp. 6-7.

[135]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 3.

[136] Ibid, p. 12.

[137]*The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept: An Analysis Of The Components Of The UK Defence Capability Framework* (Shrivenham: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2003), p. 73.

[138]James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[139] Ibid.

[140]M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 3.

[141] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[142] Ibid.

The foreign policy efforts of the MoD follow the notion that 'defence policy is international by design' and the QEC project is no exception.[143] Recognising challenges posed by the high-cost burden of advanced procurement, shortfalls in NATO capabilities, and tightening budgetary limits (the MoD focuses on working with allies as the best solution), it wants to exemplify a 'roadmap for other allies seeking to combine efforts and resources'.[144] In its Joint High-Level Operation Concept, it identifies two tiers of allies to operate with (not as): those that can exploit the future information environment (warrants integration – the US and France), and those that can't (warrants interoperability - the rest of NATO and the EU), facilitating the full extent of the Royal Navy's technological capabilities with integrated allies through exchanging real-time information over secure links with shared procedures and command ethos, whereas interoperable allies will still rely on revisionary techniques such as liaison officers and standing procedures.[145] The MoD highlights QEC interoperability with allies as coveted by growing reluctance of some NATO members (Germany and Poland) in order to mitigate this loss of capability and solidify MoD leadership, standing as Europe's senior security partner. This interoperability extends to non-NATO members such as Australia with cooperation sought on amphibious warfare.[146]

The MoD considered the US its preeminent security partnership and intends to maximise the integration and synergy of the QEC with the US military. This involves political cooperation at the highest level to address national and NATO capability gaps, military cooperation involving combined exercises, assistance in the training the Royal Navy to operate the QEC, and exchanging personnel and data, alongside material cooperation, sharing a knowledge base on carrier development, facilitating useful foreign military sales, and maximising interoperability for technologies, support systems, and procedures.[147]

The core concept for the MoD can be summarised as political and military risk-sharing with allies, an ability to match demanding timescales (fight tonight concepts) with credible and valued capabilities to help drive Britain's strategic benchmarks, all as it believes Britain will be gauged on its levels of interoperability with allies and its willingness to share in the risk.[148]

Royal Navy (RN)

The RN identified three responsibilities towards the UK National Security Strategy: warfighting, maritime security, and international engagement (alliance/partnership building) – the QEC forms the core of the Joint Force 2025 concept and consequently underpins these responsibilities.[149] British global strategic ambitions dictate a capability for acting far-away;

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[143] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), p. 49.

[144] *Statement Of Intent By The Department Of Defense - Ministry Of Defence Regarding Enhanced Cooperation On Carrier Operations And Maritime Power Projection* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2012).

[145] *The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept: An Analysis Of The Components Of The UK Defence Capability Framework* (Shrivenham: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2003), pp. 43-66.

[146] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), pp. 3-4.

[147] *Statement Of Intent By The Department Of Defense - Ministry Of Defence Regarding Enhanced Cooperation On Carrier Operations And Maritime Power Projection* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2012), pp. 1-7.

[148] *The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept: An Analysis Of The Components Of The UK Defence Capability Framework* (Shrivenham: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2003), pp. 20, 45.

[149] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 11.

the QEC spearheads this ambition and highlights carrier-strike capability for this purpose (stressing its inclusion in CEPP). The RN acknowledges, however, that its fleet size cannot simultaneously escort and support both QEC; therefore, it requires a commitment to strategic partnerships specifying the preeminent relationship with the US and a need to intensify partnerships with France to address this gap.[150] [151] The First Sea Lord emphasised this through his three RN imperatives: continuous at-sea deterrence, carrier capability, and amphibious readiness (constituting the RN's intended contributions to future multilateral joint operations).[152]

The RN's conduct of international engagement corresponds to these imperatives as a means for building partnerships and gaining influence. Their ultimate goal for the QEC is its recognition as a 'joint airfield' operated and commanded by the RN for the tri-services and allies, thus providing a strategically mobile carrier strike, littoral, and support system capability.[153] [154] The RN wrestles for influence with the RAF and has sought to establish itself as 'cross-domain' specialists retaining their prerogative for the maritime domain whilst working alongside the USMC to build littoral capability.[155] [156] QEC partnership with the US was established in the 2012 statement of intent, and include engagement at the highest level: a RN Assistant Chief of Staff is appointed to deliver carrier strike and littoral capabilities with a job responsibility of liaising regularly with the US Navy (USN) and USMC.[157] Furthermore, there is military collaboration on the training of Fleet Air Arm (FAA) pilots by the USMC (which require 18 months experience to qualify for daylight carrier-operations) and the USN providing carrier-operation experience for sailors, leading to a view that the QEC delays and the gap before the arrival of the F-35 have been good fortune.[158]

Royal Air Force (RAF)

RAF input regarding the QEC largely focuses on competition for influence, budget, and control of the JSF and its basing against the RN – historically, the RAF had little need to be expeditionary due to a colonial network of airfields, followed by the use of allied airbases during the Cold War. In the present day however, overflight rights provide limitation outside of Europe.[159] With the prerogative to generate and sustain 'battle winning air power', the RAF identifies the need for a fifth generation fighter (the JSF) and recognises it must work closely

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[150]Royal Navy, *Future Navy Vision: The Royal Navy Today, Tomorrow And Towards 2025* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), pp. 2-6.

[151]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 13.

[152]Royal Navy, *Defence Operating Model (Command Plan)* (London: Ministry of Defence), p. 3.1.

[153]Royal Navy, *BR1806 - British Maritime Doctrine* (London: Ministry of Defence, 1999), pp. 169-170.

[154]Timothy John Benbow and James Bosbotinis, *The Interoperability Of Future UK Air Power, Afloat And Ashore*, Corbett Papers (Shrivenham: The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, 2014), pp 7-8.

[155] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[156]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 2.

[157]Royal Navy, *Defence Operating Model (Command Plan)* (London: Ministry of Defence), p. 8.38.

[158]James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[159]Timothy John Benbow and James Bosbotinis, *The Interoperability Of Future UK Air Power, Afloat And Ashore*, Corbett Papers (Shrivenham: The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, 2014), pp. 2-3.

with allies on training and procurement to achieve this – which extends to engagement surrounding interoperability and multilateral commitments (NATO).[160] The RAF is negative towards naval aviation due to disunification of the air fleet and budgetary competition from the FAA.[161]

Due to a budgetary ceiling constricting the funding to only one fifth generation fighter project, the RAF eventually accepted the need to compromise and work with the RN.[162]They agreed to sea-basing but argued for short-period embarkation of limited numbers (half-squadrons of four to six aircraft) and pushed the creation of the joint rapid reaction force, which sought to harmonise British airpower doctrine, concepts, and capability, in a joint environment enhanced by the QEC.[163] [164] The RAF highlighted the leveraging of QEC's foreign influence as stated by Vice-Marshall Sean Bell: "allow our carriers to operate in tandem with the US and French … [their] aircraft to operate from our carrier and vice-versa".[165]

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)

The FCO takes the lead on many things related to security policy due to the MoD preoccupation with resource management. Indeed the FCO has become a network actor, deciding and implementing unexpected policy areas.[166] [167] The Foreign Secretary is powerful in the Cabinet due to the immense foreign policy bureaucracy at his disposal, with staff in every country, although recent periods of underfunding relative to most global foreign ministries have led to a focus closer to home.[168] [169] The 21st century has seen the FCO increasingly side-lined within the fragmentation of foreign policy and strategy. Being frequently left outside decision making, the FCO has responded to this shift away from King Charles street by seconding talented staff

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[160] RAF Air Media Centre, *The Royal Air Force Strategy* (High Wycombe: Ministry of Defence, 2017), pp. 22-30.

[161]Timothy John Benbow and James Bosbotinis, *The Interoperability Of Future UK Air Power, Afloat And Ashore*, Corbett Papers (Shrivenham: The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, 2014), p. 3.

[162] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[163] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 14.

[164] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[165]D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 11.

[166]William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), p. 23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

[167]Mark Bevir, Oliver Daddow and Ian Hall, 'Introduction: Interpreting British Foreign Policy', *The British Journal Of Politics And International Relations*, 15.2 (2012), p.164. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856x.2012.00537.x>.

[168]Stephen Dyson, 'Prime Minister And Core Executive In British Foreign Policy' (unpublished Ph.D., Washington State University, 2004), p. 10.

[169] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010).

to the Cabinet Office and engaging in frequent inter-departmental consultations to build ties, especially with the MoD (e.g. on the laws of the sea convention). [170] [171]

The FCO has strongly backed the QEC project, as it recognises the influential status of two super carriers with air basing for fifth generation aircraft, identifying an increasing leadership void to fill in Europe by the US pivot East.[172] [173] The FCO expressed that, for Britain to cultivate confidence as a reliable ally, it must be seen to share in assuming real political risk and committing significant offensive military contributions in early deployments.[174] The FCO recognises the flexibility aircraft carriers afford to policy makers, as seen in 1972, when Buccaneer aircraft from HMS Ark Royal provided a show of force against a Guatemalan threat to British Honduras.[175] This exemplifies how the QEC will facilitate the maximum number of diplomatic options by enabling engagement without entanglement and 'effects without regrets', both whilst reducing the political challenges.[176] The FCO also recognises soft-power opportunities, with the QEC offering prestige value, attracting media coverage, the signalling sent when it sails, and the opportunity for port visits that highlight advanced technological capabilities, military strength, and the ability to successfully pursue grand projects.[177]

Department for International Development (DfID)

The DfID benefits from the fragmentation of foreign policy and pursues its own policy agenda abroad, pursuing an independent strategy as directed by the International Development Act 2002 and strengthened by the subsequent International Development Act in 2015, which enshrined 0.7% of GNI to be spent on overseas development assistance; it now stands as a respected voice within the Cabinet.[178] Despite notorious cultural conflict with the MoD, the DfID supports the QEC project due to the value of its humanitarian function, believing the QEC's arrival in crisis theatres sends a powerful message and has the capacity to be a strong humanitarian relief instrument.[179] This fits into a DfID consideration that 'every £1 spent on upstream prevention saves the international community £4 downstream'.

[170] Oliver Daddow, '"Tony's War"? Blair, Kosovo And The Interventionist Impulse In British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 85.3 (2009), pp. 556-557. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00813.x>.

[171] Zara Steiner, 'Decision-Making In American And British Foreign Policy: An Open And Shut Case', *Review Of International Studies*, 13.1 (1987), pp. 5-16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0260210500113749>.

[172] M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 22.

[173] Timothy John Benbow and James Bosbotinis, *The Interoperability Of Future UK Air Power, Afloat And Ashore*, Corbett Papers (Shrivenham: The Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies, 2014), p. 12.

[174] *The UK Joint High Level Operational Concept: An Analysis Of The Components Of The UK Defence Capability Framework* (Shrivenham: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2003), p. 20.

[175] James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[176] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 8.

[177] Tomas Schober and others, 'Present And Future Of Aircraft Carriers As A Floating Diplomatic And Military Means Of Deterrence', *INCAS BULLETIN*, 3.4 (2009), pp. 153-159. <https://doi.org/10.13111/2066-8201.2011.3.4.14>.

[178] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010).

[179] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 9.

In light of this, carrier-based humanitarian assistance stands to be funded by the DfID provided it meets OECD guidelines.[180] Recent proposals under the Johnson premiership could see the DfID merged with the FCO, providing a pathway for the RN to receive a slice of the 0.7% overseas development funding.[181]

Aircraft Carrier Alliance (ACA)

The ACA is a crucial network actor involved with the QEC and effectively represents the collaborative effort of the British military-industrial complex to share risk and produce the carriers. The result of the MoD cancelled competition resulting from a realisation that neither of the national supplies (BAE or Thales) possessed sufficient capability for the project, thus presenting a need for a consolidated manufacturing base, development of supply-chain consortiums, and a limited number of systems integrators.[182] The ACA suffered an accretion of weakening accountability and complexifying decision-making processes stemming from the initial MoD-led integrated project team moving towards a frequently changing RN senior responsible owner in 2005, which later switched to CEPP senior responsible ownership in 2013, further diluting authority between the RN and RAF.[183]

The influence of the ACA on the QEC procurement ostensibly is not foreign policy, but rather applied pressure across the domestic–foreign blur by emphasising the preservation of domestic industrial capacity and jobs (of which the ACA created 10,000). Indeed, military procurement logic is predicated on domesticated security of supply and skill preservation.[184] This is exemplified in the programme costs, of which only 20% went towards the actual structure and tonnage; steel is cheap, British labour is not.[185]

<div align="center">The International Level</div>

The United States

The US is the world's largest naval force and the *de facto* leader of western interventionism. Its carrier fleet is stretched in its responsibilities, commanding three Combined Maritime Forces comprising 33 countries with global responsibilities for security and terrorism (CTF150), counter-piracy (CTF151), and Persian Gulf Security (CTF152).[186] This stretched leadership has necessitated focussing, and Department of Defence (DoD) strategic guidance

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[180] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 9.

[181] 'SDSR 2020 – Which Direction For The Royal Navy?', *Save The Royal Navy*, 2020 <https://www.savetheroyalnavy.org/sdsr-2020-which-direction-for-the-royal-navy/> [Accessed 20 April 2020].

[182] Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), pp. 9-10.

[183] Ibid, pp. 7-8.

[184] Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), p. 10.

[185] David Hobbs, *British Aircraft Carriers: Design, Development & Service Histories* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2013), p. 343.

[186] *The UK National Strategy For Maritime Security* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 26.

has led to a refocus to the Asia-Pacific.[187] [188] Emphasising the strengthening of allies in the Indo-Pacific; a response to a Chinese naval expansion lacking in transparency.[189]

The US maintains a 'special relationship' with Britain, founded upon shared perspectives of military purpose and tasks alongside a common vision of the future strategic environment.[190] NATO intervention in Kosovo (1999) highlighted this alliance's mutual doctrine, as the US and UK sought to project power from the sea, whereas the rest of NATO focused on the support of land from the sea; this has led to Britain's identification as a capable ally by the US.[191] As the US is Britain's preeminent security partner, the concept of interoperability 'sits at the heart' of this 'special relationship'.[192] This alliance holds true into the present, despite moments of friction (e.g. the 2013 parliamentary veto against military action in Syria, which implied continuous political but not necessarily military support).[193]

Following the Iraq War, recognition of the benefits of littoral land-based attack led to the US pressuring the British and French governments to develop littoral capabilities. Proliferation of A2AD area-denial weapons, however, have necessitated over-the-horizon littoral strategies emphasising greater lateral dispersion and deeper insertion tactics; consequently, the challenge of interoperability in amphibious operations has increased significantly.[194] The result is a British effort towards littoral specialisation, with hybridised CEPP utility to serve this operational function (alongside HMS Ocean and the Albion-Class LPDs).[195] In recognition of this effort, the US gives distinction to Britain as an ally capable of assistance in amphibious operations, whilst all other allies are expected to fulfil a force protection function.[196]

US involvement with the QEC focuses on developing an interoperable foundation for these operations through the leveraging of the US-UK carrier R&D knowledge base in order to facilitate common advanced joint doctrine and common technologies and procedures, alongside an emphasis on interoperable understanding in the joint command chains through collaboration and cultural exchange at every level from the decision makers in government to

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[187] *Report On Operations In Libya* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Defence Select Committee, 2012), p. 43.

[188] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 5.

[189] *A Cooperative Strategy For 21St Century Sea power* (Washington D.C: Department of the Navy, 2007), pp. 3-4.

[190] *Combined Seapower: A Shared Vision For United States Navy - Royal Navy Cooperation* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 5-6.

[191] Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), pp. 7-10, 40.

[192] *National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), p. 51.

[193] JAMES STRONG, 'Interpreting The Syria Vote: Parliament And British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 91.5 (2015), p. 1138. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12401>.

[194] Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), pp. 38-39.

[195] M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 23.

[196] Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), p. 40.

the naval commanders, right down to individual junior officer exchanges.[197] [198] Furthermore, the US has extended use of its test ranges and equipment support facilities to the QEC.[199]

The US intends to utilise the QEC to maintain a presence in Europe (as it pivots East), with the intention of deploying a USMC marine air-ground task force (SPMAGTF) to a larger composite European naval force (operating the F-35B requiring STOVL, the only European carrier suitable is the QEC).[200] In lieu of a US carrier group, the US is also considering the ability to deploy specific detachments to the QEC, such as UAVs or electronic warfare units.[201] As such, the latest RN command plan contains provisions for regular liaisons with the USN and USMC on carrier strike and littoral manoeuvre capability deliverance.[202]

The driving force behind this US cooperation is based mostly in fiscal realities.[203] The US seeks mutually inclusive benefits that will save money without loss of their maritime airpower projection capabilities. This is the result of a decade of British austerity and a 5-year cut in DoD spending, forcing a need for collaborative force management to increase the capacity of limited resources and reduce the duplications of effort across the alliance.[204] [205]

USMC

The USMC and Britain are logical strategic partners as the two tier-1 operators of the F-35B variant.[206] [207] The USMC sought to actively influence and lobby the MoD into the procurement purchase of the F-35B variant through the instrumental work of Lieutenant General Jon Davis, the deputy commandant for aviation who flew with RAF No. 3 Squadron for 3 years.[208] The USMC sought to regenerate RN and RAF capabilities with minimal British investment as an overarching partner strengthening priority, through exchange programme-facilitated shipborne

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[197] *Joint Vision 2020* (Washington D.C: US Department of Defence, 2000), p. 65.

[198] *Combined Seapower: A Shared Vision For United States Navy - Royal Navy Cooperation* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 7.

[199] *Statement Of Intent By The Department Of Defense - Ministry Of Defence Regarding Enhanced Cooperation On Carrier Operations And Maritime Power Projection* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2012).

[200] *A Cooperative Strategy For 21St Century Sea power* (Washington D.C: Department of the Navy, 2007), pp. 11-16.

[201] James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[202] Royal Navy, *Defence Operating Model (Command Plan)* (London: Ministry of Defence), p. 8.39.

[203] M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 23.

[204] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 17-18.

[205] *Combined Seapower: A Shared Vision For United States Navy - Royal Navy Cooperation* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 8.

[206] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 10.

[207] M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 23.

[208] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

pilot training, and the leveraging of their larger F-35B purchase (246 aircraft), which were offered as a way to maximise the QEC's potential in the short to medium term due to limited initial British F-35B numbers (however, this limits the QEC to close-air support taskings).[209] [210] [211]

The real crux of this partnership centres on mutual capability gaps. The USMC Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is able to address the issues of an imagined airwing of just 12 British F-35Bs limiting the QEC's potential (only 24% of capacity), and gaps in the CEPP mixed air-group arsenal surrounding true ISTAR capability and a complete lack of tactical recovery capability.[212] Whereas the QEC can help solve the significant lack of sealift available to the USMC (described by Lieutenant General William Faulker as "the truth of the matter" regarding the QEC), which stems from severe budgetary limitations by the DoD and a heavily overworked US fleet, resulting in a desperate search for sealift opportunities with consideration even of cargo ships.[213] This is exacerbated by inter-service tensions with the USN over amphibious operation command relationships. The emerging 'OMFST' concept led to a reworking of these relationships, with the USMC expressing the need for their commanders to exert tactical control before the penetration of the littoral.[214] In an effort to reinforce this position, the USMC has appealed to multinational doctrine – especially that shared with the RN – as both want amphibious task force command in littoral operations over their inter-service rivals (the RAF and the USN).[215]

The USMC's overarching priority of strengthening allies has led to the top level aspiration of integrating MEU into the QEC, and RN assets onto the USMC's L-Class ships.[216] This has manifested in the decision to deploy USMC SPMAGTF onto European naval vessels (which necessitates the QEC, as the only alternative European carrier – the Charles De Gaulle is STOBAR configured); thus, in the USMC aviation plans for the F-35B, the QEC is now recognised as a future sea-base.[217] [218] This is exemplified by the first move towards this

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[209] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), pp. 13-17, 24-25.

[210] *USMC Aviation Plan 2015* (Washington D.C.: United States Marine Corps, 2015), p. '2.5.7'.

[211] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[212] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), pp. 23-24.

[213] Hope Seck, 'Marine Leaders Carve Out More Training Time At Sea', *Marine Corps Times*, 2015 <https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2015/05/08/marine-leaders-carve-out-more-training-time-at-sea/> [Accessed 2 May 2020].

[214] Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), p. 40.

[215] *Amphibious Operations Joint Publication 3-02* (Washington D.C: United States Navy & United States Marine Corps, 2019), pp. III-6, IV-18.

[216] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), pp. 2-3.

[217] *A Cooperative Strategy For 21St Century Sea power* (Washington D.C: Department of the Navy, 2007), p. 16.

[218] *USMC Aviation Plan 2015* (Washington D.C.: United States Marine Corps, 2015), p. '2.3.2'.

integration, the 2007 Exercise Bold Step, which saw a three-weeks deployment onto HMS Illustrious of 14 USMC Harriers and 30 pilots.[219]

France

There is a long-recognised need for Anglo-French defence cooperation based on a common ambition to retain global power status in the face of austere defence budgets (suggesting benefits to a cooperative economy of scale) alongside a need to maintain leadership and military credibility (especially in the eyes of the US within NATO).[220] This is underpinned by the RAND estimation that the UK and France together comprise 65% of European defence spending.[221] Past attempts at defence cooperation have been unsuccessful, such as the St Malo treaty of 1998; however, the two 2010 Lancaster House bilateral security treaties have proved promising in developing a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) and initiating the development of a joint carrier task force capability.[222] Operation Ellamy (in Libya, 2011) was the first operational test following the treaties and demonstrated an ability for joint Anglo-French leadership in lieu of the US in a multilateral intervention.[223] Furthermore, the agreement has led to British assistance of French operations in Mali and the DRC through airlift and surveillance support, as simultaneous progress has been made on the CJEF with the establishment of a CJEF Operational HQ.[224] In pursuit of integrated capability, the Charles De Gaulle (CDG) aircraft carrier has been developed as the centre of an integrated carrier strike group with simultaneous development of joint military doctrine and training programmes, alongside cooperation on cyber warfare, acquisitions, logistics, and defence industrial bases.[225] The French reliance on the CDG alone has sparked discussion on French embarkation on the QEC; however, the reality is limited due to the QECs STOVL configuration, which isn't compatible with the STOBAR configuration used by the French Rafale aircraft.[226] Agreement over joint development of UCAVs, however, offers a promising area of collaboration for use on the QEC.[227]

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[219] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[220] Peter Antill, Pete Ito and Steve Robinson, *Anglo-French Defence Cooperation In The Age Of Austerity* (London: Centre for Defence Acquisition - RUSI, 2013), pp. 3-4.

[221] Ibid, p. 3.

[222] M. Sparrow, '*Carrier Strike and its contribution to Britain's strategic capabilities in the contemporary operating environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 21.

[223] *Report On Operations In Libya* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Defence Select Committee, 2012), p. 56.

[224] *UK-France Declaration On Security And Defence 2014* (London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2014), pp. 4-11.

[225] *Treaty Between The UK And France For Defence And Security Cooperation* (London: Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2010).

[226] James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[227] David Hobbs, *British Aircraft Carriers: Design, Development & Service Histories* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2013), p. 369.

<div align="center">The Supranational Level</div>

NATO

The maritime domain has been the prerogative of NATO since the successful first joint maritime exercise in 1952. This led to the encouragement of standardisation across the alliance, which worked well in the NATO Adriatic Blockade from 1992 to 1995.[228] The Kosovo intervention in 1999 saw divergence in the alliance's maritime doctrine, with the US and Britain operating differently than most NATO states.[229] This was exacerbated in 2011 by Operation Ellamy, which saw the US take a backseat and key members such as Germany and Poland avoiding involvement, leaving the NATO coalition severely lacking in carrier sealift and carrier strike capability. The NATO General Secretary at the time highlighted the mission's success was only possible due to US capabilities, and the vital need for more members to attain them.[230]

There are three dimensions of NATO maritime doctrine, small-scale localised conflicts, rogue states with sophisticated threats (A2AD, WMD, etc.), and major regional power threats; however, it is noted only the US can handle them all.[231] This gap between the US and NATO results from a doctrinal and budgetary gap and renders an interoperable choice to other NATO members: either invest in a small but highly-advanced navy or focus on a maritime specialism.[232] Further issue stems from tensions between national sovereignty and collective endeavour; will nationals actually commit the assets they have 'assigned' to SABOUER in operations?[233] Professor M. J. Williams conceptualises that NATO has become a 'two-tier alliance'; simply put, those that can do and those that can help. This perception influences British defence policy significantly, which can be seen in British efforts towards a limited offensive contribution in the form of littoral warfare.[234] [235]

NATO is a key alliance for Britain's maritime interests. NATO Maritime Command (MARCOM) is based out of Northwood, Hertfordshire, and is commanded by an RN officer, currently Vice-Admiral Keith Blount.[236] NATO political guidelines sit at the heart of Britain's defence policy; this is reflected in the financial burden necessitated by the British desire to lead in the alliance, e.g. QEC investment.[237] [238] The QEC project has stressed consideration of what

[228]Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), pp. 7-8.

[229] Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), pp. 9-10.

[230] Christopher Martin, *The UK As A Medium Maritime Power In The 21St Century*, 1st edn (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 66.

[231]Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), p. 10.

[232] Ibid, p. 11.

[233]*Report On Operations In Libya* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Defence Select Committee, 2012), p. 41.

[234] *Report On Operations In Libya* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Defence Select Committee, 2012), pp. 61-62.

[235]Kenneth Gause and others, *US Navy Interoperability With Its High-End Allies* (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analyses, Center for Strategic Studies, 2000), p. 4.

[236]*The UK National Strategy For Maritime Security* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 26.

[237]*National Security Strategy And Strategic Defence And Security Review* (Westminster: Cabinet Office, 2015), p. 50.

[238]Keith Hartley, 'Defence Procurement In The UK', *Defence And Peace Economics*, 9.1-2 (1998), p. 40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10430719808404893>.

additional NATO assets can add operational value, with suggestions of the USMC AH-17 Sea Cobra or French Tiger attack helicopters.[239] NATO responsibilities clearly influence and underpin British FPDM and defence policy.

<u>EU</u>

The EU is a relevant bureaucratic actor due to its influence over British strategic thinking during the 20-year procurement process. Britain and the EU have intertwined maritime interests: the EU possesses the world's largest EEZ, covering 25,000,000km², extensive Atlantic SLOCs, and receives 80% of its oil from the North sea, with limited major threat; thus, the primary maritime security focus is on the Suez-Malacca shipping route (threatened through non-western competition).[240] These common maritime interests necessitate a unity of maritime security purpose, a coherency between EU and member state (MS) maritime policies, based upon the four EU strategic maritime principles: cross-sectoral, functional integrity, respect for rules and principles, and multilateralism.[241] The EU advocates a multi-agency maritime approach through an emphasis on supporting MS capabilities, specifically highlighting maritime rapid response multi-role capabilities for the high-seas and littoral, although it acknowledges this vested interest is not an EU directive or remit.[242] Despite this, a 2005 dimension study highlighted desires for networked strategic maritime logistics and littoral capability.[243] This is driven by ambitions as a global security actor, begat by external action such as OP SOPHIA (Mediterranean migrant crisis response) and OP ATALANTA (Somalian Counter-Piracy), reinforced by policy tools such as the SDP and MSO.[244] [245]

Notwithstanding, Brexit mutual strategic interests and ambitions between Britain and the EU remain and survive through NATO. Despite long-standing British political neuralgia over EU defence policy (critical not driving), the QEC project was strengthened by the EU maritime vision, and Brexit ultimately allows Brussels to create command structures and integrate common defence policies with greater success.[246] [247]

<u>Interdepartmental Competition, Groupthink and Polythink</u>

Interdepartmental competition is a reoccurring theme in this bureaucratic analysis and stems from the post-Cold War fragmentation of strategic thinking and foreign policy, with departments vying for influence and the class of ministerial cultures.[248] Maritime security

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[239]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 29.

[240] Basil Germond, *The Maritime Dimension Of European Security: Seapower And The EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 92-94.

[241] *EU Maritime Security Strategy* (Brussels: EU Council, 2014), pp. 3-5.

[242]*EU Maritime Dimension Study 6794/07 COSDP 943* (Brussels: Council of the EU, 2007), pp. 9-10.

[243] Basil Germond, *The Maritime Dimension Of European Security: Seapower And The EU* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 106.

[244]*EU Maritime Security Strategy* (Brussels: EU Council, 2014), p. 8.

[245]*The UK National Strategy For Maritime Security* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 26.

[246]William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), p. 23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

[247] 'SDSR 2020 – Which Direction For The Royal Navy?', *Save The Royal Navy*, 2020 <https://www.savetheroyalnavy.org/sdsr-2020-which-direction-for-the-royal-navy/> [Accessed 20 April 2020].

[248] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010).

compounds these issues as an area of over-lapping departmental interest; this has led to an approach of integration and collaboration.[249] Efforts have taken place from 1980 to 2000 to improve the government machine, especially through increased collaboration between the MoD and FCO. Successes, however, have been limited by a lack of effective resource allocation with an emphasis on managing departmental 'bottom-lines' alongside the influential rise of advisors and agencies.[250]

Interservice rivalry between the RN and RAF has been another prominent theme. Despite attempts at interoperability starting with the early JFH programme, there have been significant issues with interservice cultural clash (manifesting amongst officers on-board and in force strategic visions) but also over the issue of RAF embarkation (or lack of). This was highlighted by Exercise Hajar Osprey in 2008, which saw just four JFH deployed to HMS Illustrious by the RAF.[251] This significant sibling rivalry over the naval aviation budget led to the Newton Report in 2009, which identified the RAF claiming to be fully capable and pushing to remove all RN input over the JSF, and the RN asserting there was no precedent for naval aviation operations without the maritime element and highlighting consistent RAF reluctance to embark. The report concluded that the JSF must be RN led as the only service capable of operating the JSF and QEC (with 200 relevant positions requiring naval specialisms).[252] Furthermore, the CEPP concept is the result of efforts within the MoD to resolve tensions between the RN-RAF over the QEC.[253] There's also a tension between the armed forces and civil service stemming from top brass reluctance to commit men and resources to what they deem non-core functions and non-vital interests, alongside disputes over split pay-grading systems.[254]
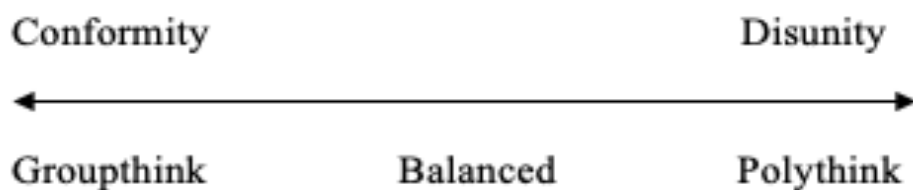
Conformity		Disunity

Groupthink	Balanced	Polythink

Diagram 2 [255]

Groupthink is an explanation of cohesive policy-making groups with uniformity of decisions, whereas polythink espouses a plurality of opinions and intra-group conflict resulting in a fragmented decision-making process.[256] Polythink is not necessarily unproductive, standing

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[249] *The UK National Strategy For Maritime Security* (London: Ministry of Defence, 2014), p. 10.

[250] William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), pp. 21-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

[251] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[252] Ibid.

[253] Oishee Kundu, 'Buying Butter And Guns: Comparing Procurement In Military And Non-Military Contexts' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 2019), p. 8.

[254] William Hopkinson, 'The Making Of British Defence Policy', *The RUSI Journal*, 145.5 (2000), pp. 21-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840008446566>.

[255] Alex Mintz and Carly Wayne, 'The Polythink Syndrome And Elite Group Decision-Making', *Political Psychology*, 37 (2016), 3-21 <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12319>, p. 5.

[256] Ibid, pp. 3-5.

reliant upon systems for multi-advocacy, distributed decision-making, and competitive advisory for success.[257]

The 1990s marked a change in British group decision making, with the fragmentation of strategic thought shifting impressions of groupthink, until the personalised approach of Blair completely shattered groupthink as he increasingly dismissed Whitehall from the decision-making processes.[258] [259] This switch to polythink under Blair effectively condemned the QEC project process as it set in motion the plague of polythink issues at every sequential decision. It can be seen, however, that the rivalries of the three Armed Forces branches instil an innate position of polythink. Indeed, this continues to this day, as seen over the procurement of the Firestorm missiles by the Army in Afghanistan, which, despite significant maritime potential, involved no RN decision-making involvement or even opportunity for involvement.[260]

Broadening Analysis

In response to constructivist critiques of the bureaucratic model alongside issues of lengthily sequential policy decision-making analysis, I have decided to conduct an interpretivist timeline analysis in order to provide a cohesive and wide-ranging multi-faceted investigation. This allows for the coverage of the larger narrative and reasoning of government, overarching perspectives that informed the debate and input of bureaucratic actors throughout the extensive QEC project process.

Timeline Analysis

1998–2009

The initial QEC order in the 1998 SDR was placed under the influence of Blair's recently elected New Labour and its foreign policy perspective of morally-based liberal multilateralism – the so-called 'Blair Doctrine' established in his 1999 Chicago Speech.[261] [262] The central messages of a need for increased moral purpose in British foreign policy and enhanced NATO credibility following failings over Bosnia were reinforced during Blair's early interventions: Kosovo in 1999 reinforced the 'special relationship' and US-UK joint maritime doctrine (this reinforcement further solidified by the 2001 decision to procure F-35 aircraft) and, alongside

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[257] Ibid, pp. 17-18.

[258] *Who Does UK Grand Strategy?* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Public Administration Select Committee, 2010).

[259] Oliver Daddow, '"Tony's War"? Blair, Kosovo And The Interventionist Impulse In British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 85.3 (2009), p. 558. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00813.x>.

[260] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 25.

[261] Oliver Daddow, '"Tony's War"? Blair, Kosovo And The Interventionist Impulse In British Foreign Policy", *International Affairs*, 85.3 (2009), pp. 548-558. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00813.x>.

[262] Oliver Daddow, 'The Use Of Force In British Foreign Policy: From New Labour To The Coalition', *The Political Quarterly*, 84.1 (2013), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923x.2013.02428.x>.

Sierra Leone, served to embolden British multilateralism.[263] [264] However, 9/11 in 2001 sparked a move to personalised foreign policy stewardship by Blair. Under the influence of the neo-conservative 'war hawks' of the Bush administration, it led to a divergence from the moralist underpinnings of Robin Cook, freeing Blair's push into Iraq and Afghanistan – a point of significance for the QEC project due to the sudden spike in defence spending (operational not procurement) and a shift towards standardised land air-basing.[265] [266] These distractions in defence focus and spending influenced the MoD move towards switching from a BAE-Thales competition to a collaboration, beginning negotiations over use of the stretched military-industrial complex base. The late agreement of the ACA arrived with unfortunate timing facing the two-fold Blair resignation (New Labour foreign policy now heavily marred by Iraq) and the financial crash (a blow to defence spending). The arrival of the short Brown premiership marked a recoil from foreign interventionism and an attempt to return to Kosovo-era moral liberalism, with David Miliband removing 'crusader' rhetoric and attempting to position Britain as a global hub for diplomacy.[267] [268]

2010–2015

2010 saw the election of the Conservative-Liberal coalition and the premiership of Cameron, marking the beginning of a decade of austerity economics and a foreign policy position of 'pragmatic realism' (limited in ambition).[269] [270] The government quickly published the infamous 2010 SDSR, which in an austere attempt to address the MoD overspend set about defence cuts and cost-saving, this focus on costs over-shadowing the strategic value of the programme and resulting in questions over the second QEC and a switch to the F-35C variant (further contributed to by the recoil from interventionism following Iraq, with the F-35C being intended for long-range strikes and not the more interventionist littoral manoeuvre).[271] [272]

Operation Ellamy (Libya) in 2011 was the first significant military operation after the 2010 SDSR, and the lack of a British carrier contribution relied on military creativity to replace it with land-basing at Gioia De Colle in Italy; this involved 3000-mile round-trip air sorties with two mid-air refuels to produce a mere 20% contribution to coalition air-strikes characterised as

[263] Oliver Daddow, '"Tony's War"? Blair, Kosovo And The Interventionist Impulse In British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 85.3 (2009), pp. 548-558. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00813.x>.

[264] Oliver Daddow, 'The Use Of Force In British Foreign Policy: From New Labour To The Coalition', *The Political Quarterly*, 84.1 (2013), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923x.2013.02428.x>.

[265] Oliver Daddow, '"Tony's War"? Blair, Kosovo And The Interventionist Impulse In British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 85.3 (2009), pp. 548-558. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2346.2009.00813.x>.

[266] Oliver Daddow, 'The Use Of Force In British Foreign Policy: From New Labour To The Coalition', *The Political Quarterly*, 84.1 (2013), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923x.2013.02428.x>.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 10.

[269] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), pp. 6-9.

[270] Oliver Daddow, "The Use Of Force In British Foreign Policy: From New Labour To The Coalition", *The Political Quarterly*, 84.1 (2013), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923x.2013.02428.x>.

[271] James Bosbotinis, *The Strategic Utility Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Aircraft Carriers* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/naval-maritime-defence/articles/the-strategic-utility-of-the-queen-elizabeth-class> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[272] D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), pp. 6-9.

difficult and slow to respond, with political issues preventing deployment of shadow-storm missiles in Italy and reliance upon a land-based logistics line spanning Europe.[273] Serious questions were raised over an absolute reliance on the back-seated US involvement, and it was highlighted by the Defence Select Committee comments of First Sea Lord Alan West that, had Britain possessed an aircraft carrier at the time, it would have been used extensively.[274] [275] This operation revealed plainly the 'strategic myopia' over the 2010 SDSR, preceding the 2012 decision to revert to the F-35B and recognition of the QECs utility.[276] [277]

In 2013, the QEC became the remit of the CEPP concept responding to post-Libya US and NATO influence and addressing the inter-service rivalries in the MoD. This precipitated the renegotiation of risk with the ACA.[278] Over this period defence policy was increasingly moved to the National Security Council (NCS) by William Hague, and despite initial parliamentary difficulties Britain joined the littoral Operation Shader in Syria – a testament to the improved political bargaining of the NSC and Cameron's emboldened interventionism.[279] [280]

2015–Present

In light of this the 2015 SDSR confirmed the second QEC and emphasised a littoral focus with the designation of one carrier to amphibious operations. The past five years have seen significant developments to the strategic environment and multiple premierships, coinciding with the delivery and sea-trials of the two QEC. The 2016 EU referendum marked a break-away from EU defence policy, and the post-2017 NSCR and MDP strategic reviews have highlighted a complexifying and increasingly dangerous international environment with the US pivot East, the slow opening of the Northern passage, and the strengthening of Russia, Iran, India, China and Brazil.[281] [282] 2019 witnessed a spending round with a substantial increase in defence spending that if maintained would continue to allow Britain to meet the NATO 2% commitment and allow for the closing of a £7 billion MoD spending gap – timely due to the

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[273]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), pp. 21-24.

[274] *Report On Operations In Libya* (Westminster: Houses of Parliament Defence Select Committee, 2012), pp. 35-62.

[275]D. L. Neely, '*Joint and Integrated? Discussing the UK and US air power projection in the maritime environment*', (Defence Research Paper, Shrivenham: Joint Services Command and Staff College, 2015), p. 13.

[276] James Bosbotinis, *Regenerating UK Carrier Airpower: The Challenges And Opportunities Ahead* (Defence IQ, 2012) <https://www.defenceiq.com/air-forces-military-aircraft/articles/regenerating-uk-carrier-airpower-the-challenges-an> [Accessed 26 April 2020].

[277]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), pp. 21-24.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Oliver Daddow, 'The Use Of Force In British Foreign Policy: From New Labour To The Coalition', *The Political Quarterly*, 84.1 (2013), 110-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923x.2013.02428.x>.

[280]James Strong, 'Interpreting The Syria Vote: Parliament And British Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, 91.5 (2015), p. 1138. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2346.12401>.

[281] Andrew Curtis, 'Planning For The Next Strategic Defence And Security Review – A Much-Needed Peg In The Ground', *RUSI*, 2019 <https://rusi.org/commentary/planning-next-strategic-defence-and-security-review-–-much-needed-peg-ground> [Accessed 22 April 2020].

[282]Tobias Ellwood, *Leveraging UK Carrier Capability: A Study Into The Preparation For And Use Of The Queen Elizabeth-Class Carriers*, Occasional Paper (London: RUSI, 2013), p. 7.
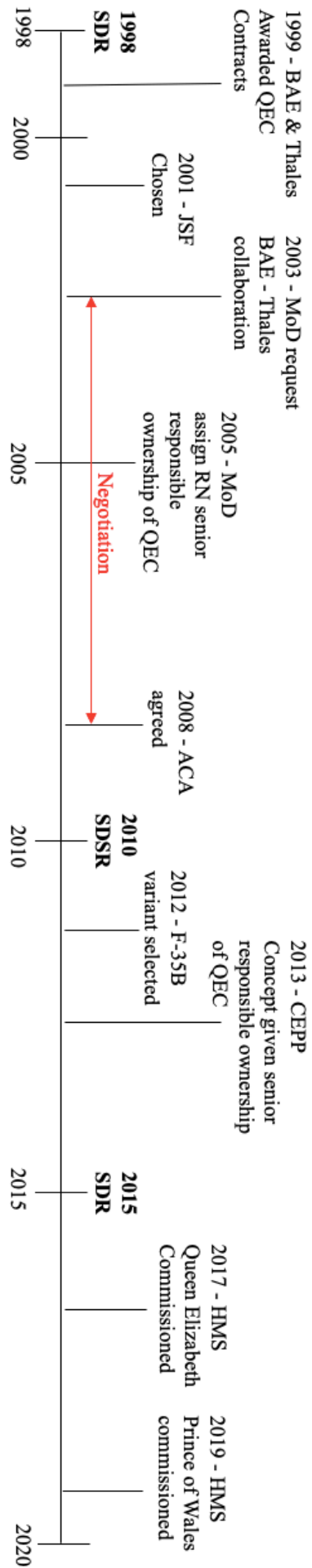
unfolding Persian Gulf Crisis.[283] 2020 is a key year for the QEC, with preparations for the first operational deployment underway and expectation of a pivotal SDSR that will define the immediate use of the QEC (an unpopular project with prominent government advisers such as Dominic Cummings), address the unaffordable MoD equipment plan (the Trump administration will oppose British defence cuts), and answer important strategic questions surrounding Post-Brexit questions, of which, perhaps most significant: Should Britain pursue a continental or maritime strategy?[284] [285]

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[283] Malcolm Chalmers, 'The End Of Defence Austerity? The 2019 Spending Round And The UK Defence Budget', *RUSI*, 2019 <https://www.rusi.org/commentary/end-defence-austerity-2019-spending-round-and-uk-defence-budget> [Accessed 22 April 2020].
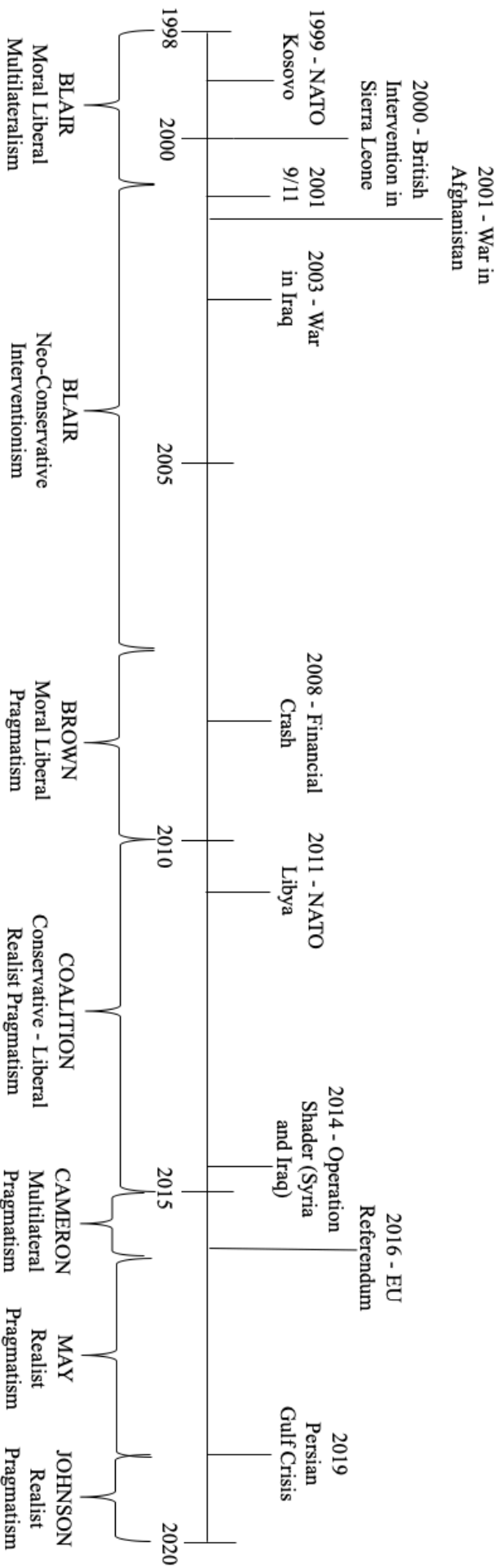
[284] 'SDSR 2020 – Which Direction For The Royal Navy?', *Save The Royal Navy*, 2020 <https://www.savetheroyalnavy.org/sdsr-2020-which-direction-for-the-royal-navy/> [Accessed 20 April 2020].

[285] Louisa Brooke-Holland, 'Defence In The 2020S', *House Of Commons*, 2020 <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/world-affairs/defence/defence-in-the-2020s/> [Accessed 22 April 2020].

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY TIEMLINE   QEC PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

British Foreign Policy Timeline

1998

BLAIR
Moral Liberal
Multilateralism

1999 - NATO
Kosovo

2000 - British
Intervention in
Sierra Leone

2000

2001
9/11

2001 - War in
Afghanistan

2003 - War
in Iraq

BLAIR
Neo-Conservative
Interventionism

2005

2008 - Financial
Crash

BROWN
Moral Liberal
Pragmatism

2010

2011 - NATO
Libya

COALITION
Conservative - Liberal
Realist Pragmatism

2014 - Operation
Shader (Syria
and Iraq)

2015

2016 - EU
Referendum

CAMERON
Multilateral
Pragmatism

2019
Persian
Gulf Crisis

MAY
Realist
Pragmatism

2020

JOHNSON
Realist
Pragmatism

QEC Procurement Timeline

1999 - BAE & Thales
Awarded QEC
Contracts

2003 - MoD request
BAE - Thales
collaboration

1998
1998
SDR

2000

2001 - JSF
Chosen

2000

Negotiation

2005 - MoD
assign RN senior
responsible
ownership of QEC

2005

2008 - ACA
agreed

2010
SDSR

2010

2012 - F-35B
variant selected

2013 - CEPP
Concept given senior
responsible ownership
of QEC

2015
SDR

2015

2017 - HMS
Queen Elizabeth
Commissioned

2019 - HMS
Prince of Wales
commissioned

2020

Model 3

Conclusion

In conclusion, the conduct of effective defence policy analysis requires critical consideration in labelling theories mutually exclusive, thus ensuring a holistic account and analysis. This is especially important in relation to the broader question of long-term negotiated sequential decision making processes, which necessitate the consideration and analysis of a wide-ranging network of actors within the context of timescale. It is clear that foreign policy is crucial to our understanding of defence policy – representing the dichotomy between strategic ambitions and interests against foreign influences and internal tensions – across the world stage and serves as an innate national motivator for policy action across the entire web of government. Further requirement is found in the need for implementation of analytical tools (such as the works of Freeman) in order to cut through the messiness, reduce complexity, and reveal network actor significance. To this end, the bureaucratic politics and interpretive approaches work well in tandem. The desire for flexible policy options and cost-driven concerns have seen interoperability and alliances as the core foreign policy impact on the QEC project, and, whilst the British government ostensibly appears to have a coherent nation narrative/perspective on the project, closer analysis reveals that fierce bureaucratic battles over influence and budgetary competition have driven a divergence of coherency in the narratives/perspectives of the QEC across Whitehall, with each network actor ultimately pursuing their own vison and agenda.

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List of Abbreviations

A2AD – Access Denial / Area Denial
ACA – Aircraft Carrier Alliance
CATOBAR – Catapult Launch
CEPP – Carrier Enabled Power Projection
CDG – Charles De Gaulle
CJEF – Combined Joint Expeditionary Force
DfID – Department for International Development
DoD – Department of Defence
FAA – Fleet Air Arm
FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FPA – Foreign Policy Analysis
FPDM – Foreign Policy Decision Making
GNI – Gross National Income
IPA – International Political Economy
IR – International Relations
ISTAR – Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance
JFH – Joint Force Harrier
JSF – Joint Strike Fighter
LPD – Landing Platform Dock
MARCOM – Maritime Command (NATO)
MDP – Modernising Defence Program
MEU – Marine Expeditionary Unit
MoD – Ministry of Defence
MS – Member States (EU)
MSO – Maritime Security Operative (EU)
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCSR – National Cyber-Security Review
NSC – National Security Strategy
OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PM – Prime Minister
QEC – Queen Elizabeth Class
RAF – Royal Air Force
RN – Royal Navy
SDP – Significant Deviation Procedure
SDR – Strategic Defence Review
SDSR – Strategic Defence and Security Review
SLOCs – Sea Lines of Communication
SPMAGTF – Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force
STOBAR – Short Take Off But Arrested Recovery
STOVL – Short Take-Off Vertical Landing
UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
UCAV – Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle
USMC – United States Marine Corps
USN – United States Navy
WMD – Weapon of Mass Destruction

Annex 1
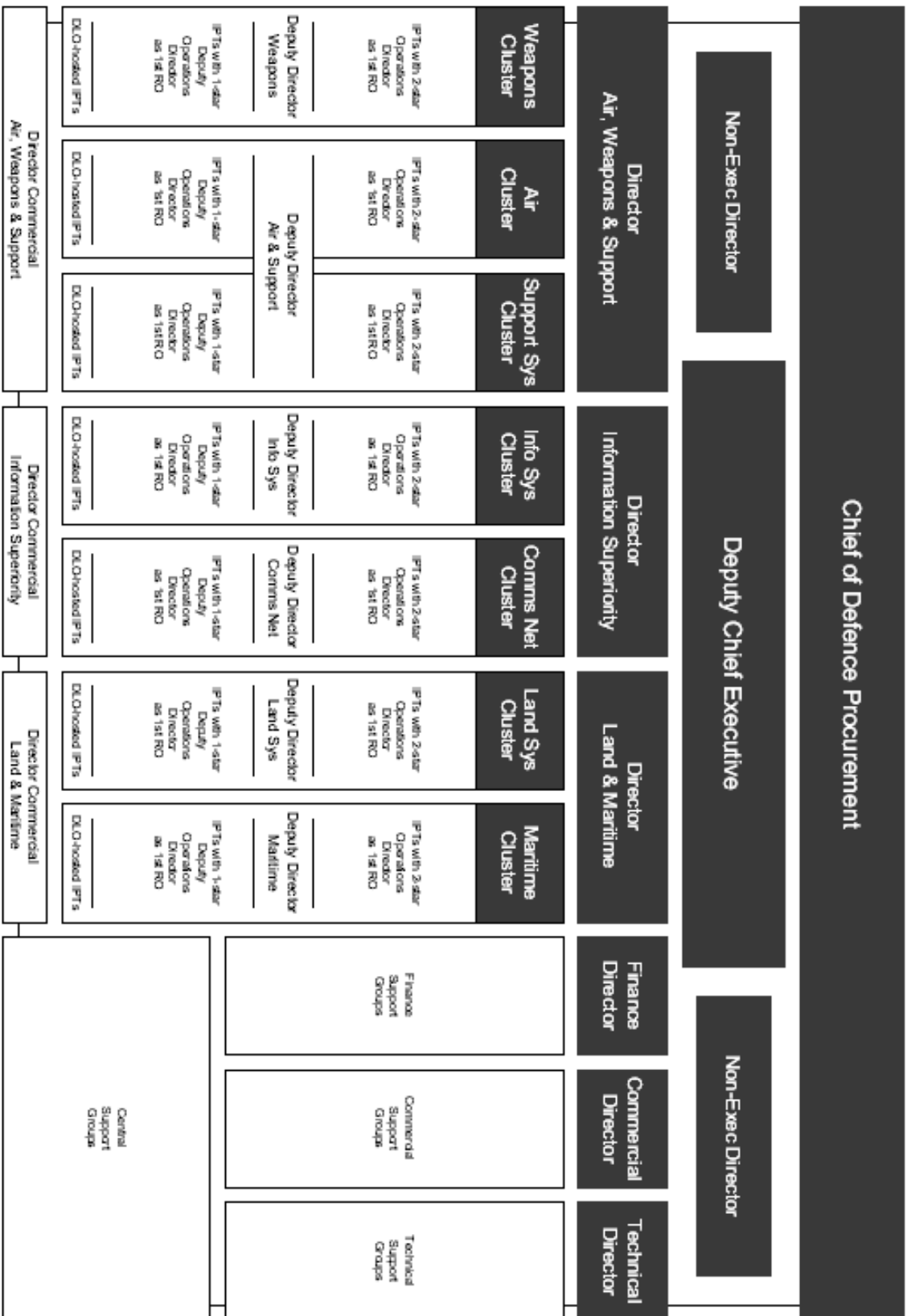
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