

OPV Case Study

Delivering optimum operational availability

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Over the past twenty years BAE Systems has been delivering a global whole ship support solution to the Royal Navy's River-Class Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs), maximising availability to the eight OPVs in the flotilla - made up of three 'Batch 1' OPVs (HMS Severn, Tyne and Mersey) and five 'Batch 2' OPVs (HMS Forth, Medway, Trent, Tamar and Spey).



Maintenance and support of these vessels is delivered as part of a Contracting for Availability (CfA) arrangement, where payment is linked directly to KPI performance, including ship and equipment availability. This has delivered unprecedented levels of OPV availability to the Royal Navy. Over the past five years the Batch 1 OPVs, which perform a range of roles including fisheries protection and assorted UK security operations, have achieved extraordinarily high availability against the required number of operational days per year per vessel. The Batch 2 OPVs which have transitioned from build into global deployed support, perform operations such as counter-narcotics, counter-piracy, fisheries protection and humanitarian aid, have also achieved extraordinarily high availability against KPIs.

As part of the contract, BAE Systems is responsible for providing whole ship support collaboration, delivering high operational readiness, and support activities including engineering and maintenance support, spares and repairs, equipment and supply chain management and defect rectification across a global footprint. Our core Contractor Logistics Support (CLS) team, which incorporates engineers, project managers and supply chain professionals, is responsive and agile to operational changes.

They provide around-the-clock, end-to-end support to ensure the ships are at optimum availability to meet operational commitments wherever and whenever required.

Maintenance tasks have to be planned well in advance and rectifying critical defects often presents opportunities to deliver solutions using our trusted global contractors and supplier network, as well as accessing bases and ports in remote locations to best meet their needs and mission.

As an example, the Falkland Island Patrol vessel, HMS FORTH, and her predecessor, HMS CLYDE, which have been on continuous service in South Atlantic waters for 15 years, have achieved some of the highest levels of operational availability in the Royal Navy's surface fleet since being deployed to the region.

The job of supporting a ship 8,000 miles away, across multiple time zones while maintaining a long-term forward presence in key maritime regions carries with it a number of complexities, especially when operating in remote waters such as the South Atlantic and Pacific region.

Bill Page, Head of CLS COM, said: "I am very proud of what the team has achieved, our performance is aligned to the ships' needs, driven by a strong partnering ethos and trust built over time. The team act as the single point of contact for all support activities, seeing repairs and maintenance periods delivered where operationally required, ensuring rapid defect rectification and driving real value for money. The support solution brings the best commercial practice to the Royal Navy, whilst recognising their unique operational requirements."

In addition, BAE Systems delivers deployed support to other classes of Royal Navy ships around the world, including the Queen-Elizabeth-class Carriers, Type 45 Destroyers, and Type 23 Frigates.

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