



UK Aircraft Carrier Suffers Embarrassing Breakdown One Day Into 4-Month Mission

Description

UK: The UK's biggest warship has suffered an embarrassing setback, breaking down shortly after setting off on a "landmark mission" to the United States. The HMS Prince of Wales experienced an "emerging mechanical issue" – according to a UK defense ministry spokesperson – and is now broken down just off Britain's southern coast.

The ship is the Royal Navy's second aircraft carrier, having becoming fully operational last year, and costs an estimated £3 billion. It is further considered a "**NATO flagship**". The breakdown came a mere day after it left Portsmouth on Saturday.



HMS Prince of Wales left Portsmouth Naval Base, Hampshire, on Saturday. Image: Royal Navy

“HMS Prince of Wales remains in the South Coast Exercise Area while conducting investigations into an emerging mechanical issue,” a Royal Navy spokesperson said.

The deployment to the US coast was supposed to be for four months, but after a history of problems in only its first year on the seas, the whole mission could be now in question, per *The Guardian*:

*Divers have been inspecting the 930-foot carrier after **damage was reported to a propeller shaft**, according to the Navy Lookout news site.*

The vessel – Britain’s largest warship and Nato’s flagship carrier – has had a history of problems, getting stranded in Portsmouth at the end of 2020 after flooding in its engine room damaged the electrics. During its first two years in service, the carrier reportedly spent fewer than 90 days at sea after springing leaks twice in five months.

The planned joint mission once entering US waters is to focus on F-35 fighter take-offs, as well as operations involving advanced drones. This was going to involve stops in New York, as well as Halifax in Canada and the Caribbean.

A defense and maritime monitoring site *Navy Lookout* had this to say:

*“Should the issue prove to be serious it goes without saying that this is **extremely unfortunate and not a good look for the RN** [Royal Navy].”*

Reports are further strongly suggesting this is no minor issue for the 65,000-tonne warship, but that a “significant technical fault” has forced its halt.

It didn’t take long for Chinese state pundits to begin trolling and mocking the plight of the state of the art carrier...

UK aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales broke down just after departing from Portsmouth. Lol, how is the James Bond 007 series able to make a sequel in the future?
pic.twitter.com/ZGeeESe4DH

— Hu Xijin ??? (@HuXijin_GT) [August 29, 2022](#)

BBC and others have further cited *Navy Lookout* to speculate the following:

The website says a photograph of the carrier leaving Portsmouth shows only a wake on the port side suggesting a problem with the other propeller shaft.

It states that, unless the problem can be resolved at sea enabling the warship to continue its journey to the US, it might need to go into dry dock at Rosyth in Scotland early, ahead of a planned inspection in 2023.

However, there's as yet been no official UK defense ministry confirmation of propellor damage, the extent of possible damage, or when the carrier might continue on its journey.

by Tyler Durden

Category

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