

HMS York scrambled to Scotland in security scare as Russian fleet comes within 30 miles of Britain for the first time in 20 years. (Dec 11th)

The Royal Navy destroyer York was scrambled to Scotland in a major security scare after a Russian aircraft carrier came within 30 miles of British shores for the first time in 20 years. HMS York travelled around 1,000 miles from Portsmouth to keep watch as the 65,000 tonne Admiral Kuznetsov and a number of other battleships anchored on the edge of UK waters.



HMS York keeps watch as the Admiral Kuznetsov anchors just outside British waters off the coast at Moray Firth, Scotland, on Monday Dec 12th.

The vessels did not warn British authorities they were going to come so close to the coast and are thought to have blamed bad weather for having to approach.

Previously Defence chiefs would have scrambled Nimrod aircraft from RAF Kinloss in Moray but because the base has been scrapped in cutbacks and a new fleet of planes cancelled, the Navy had no choice but to send HMS York. Although the Russian fleet was outside UK waters it was within the exclusive economic zone which Britain has the sole rights to exploit. The Admiral Kuznetsov is en route to the Mediterranean from its northern base at Severomorsk for exercises with the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said: 'The Admiral Kuznetsov, with other warships and support vessels, is thought to be en route to the Mediterranean on exercise. The aircraft carrier anchored outside British territorial waters some 30 miles off the Moray Firth where she was thought to have taken advantage of the relative shelter to avoid the worst of current bad weather in the North Sea.'

Daily Mail Dec 16th 2011