

The ballistic missile submarines have also progressed from Polaris to Trident carrying craft represented by the four Vanguard Class serving from the early '90s to the present and of course to be renewed in the near future.

A major milestone was when women were allowed to serve aboard for the first time in 2014 – previously the restricted space constraints had prevented providing the extra facilities required – an indication of the improvement in the submariner's conditions. Another is the end of 'hot bunking' because each sailor has their own bunk. However, sea riders (additional training crew) are accommodated in the magazine alongside the weapons.

What had not changed in all this time was the role and conduct of Ray's team such as avoiding if possible working at night when red light rules were in force or becoming a dangerous 'knob twister' – someone who fiddles with controls they know nothing about.



To finish Ray summarised the current weaponry with the main torpedo being Spearfish, introduced in 2008, with a speed up to 70mph and the older Mk24 and Mk8 torpedo. Additional weapons are tube launched missiles including Sub Harpoon, a sea skimming cruise missile - Tomahawk, a long range cruise missile for land targets.

The nuclear deterrent, originated with Polaris is now provided by Trident with a multi targeted warhead. Ray's talk was interspersed with anecdotes to lighten the serious topic of what is essentially a doomsday scenario nautical

RAF RED ARROWS DISPLAY IN CHINA FOR FIRST TIME

After transiting via the Middle East, Malaysia and Singapore the Red Arrows arrived in China this month, as part of a 60-day tour to the Asia-Pacific and Middle East regions, supporting UK interests across innovation, industry and business. This tour has made history, being the first time the Red Arrows have visited China.

Their first full display was in front of thousands of people on the opening day of Airshow China in Zhuhai, and appearing at the show takes the number of countries in which the Red Arrows have performed to 57 since 1965 – the team's opening season. The team has also carried out dozens of ground engagement activities – including visits to schools, universities and meeting businesses – in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Nanjing and Haikou. A ninth and final display at Airshow China finished with a spectacular flypast involving all nine jets trailing red smoke, to draw an end to its six-day appearance at Airshow China.

Squadron Leader David Montenegro, Team Leader of the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team and Red 1, said:

"It is a huge honour to add to the amazing number of countries in which the Red Arrows have performed by having the privilege to display in China. The tour by the Red Arrows is the biggest in a decade and displaying in China is the culmination of more than 18 months of hard work, preparation and logistical planning".

"The team has flown nine public displays in China, in six days. In my time as Team Leader that's a first. China has offered a beautiful display site at Zhuhai. To fly those displays back-to-back has been a real pleasure. Every single day the weather has been great. To deliver aircraft ready for every display, we have travelled 9,000 miles, with more than 100 personnel within the team and many from several other organisations working for months to plan this tour"

Interest in the Red Arrows has been huge in China, with images and interviews with the team seen by tens of millions of people across newspapers, online and on television

The Red Arrows have now left China and have transited across Laos and were in Thailand on the 10th November, the overseas tour continuing with displays or flypasts in India, Pakistan, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait and the UAE

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