

HMS TAMAR

August 2026

TAMAR TIMES

In this edition:

- *We visit Pitcairn Island*
- *Go surfing in Tahiti*
- *Host VIPs in Fiji*
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Tam Marte, Tam Pace

For the latest news from Team TAMAR
and updates on what your ship is doing

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THE CAPTAIN



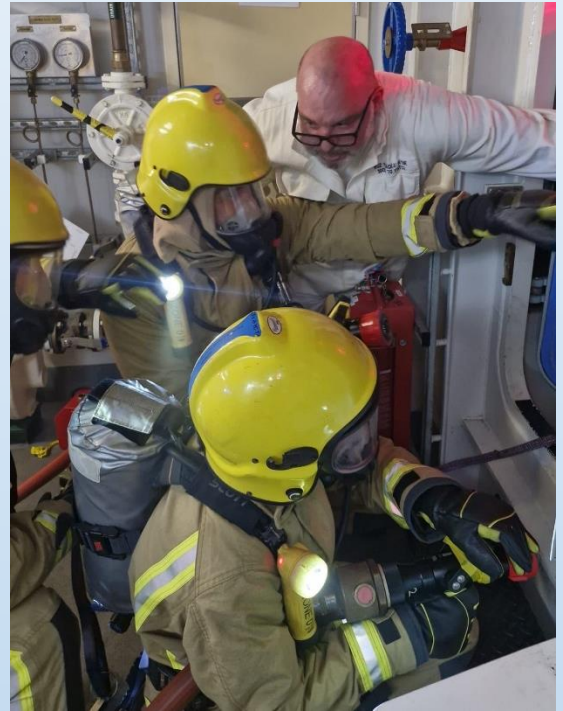
Commander Tom Lindsey Royal Navy



Greetings all! Since we wrote to you in January, TAMAR has been back to sea on some fantastic adventures and covered an incredible distance. After being put through our paces by the Fleet Standards and Training team, we made the grade with some superb individual efforts, but most importantly a collective refresh of our skills. From basic skills every mariner needs, to be able to extinguish a fire, aid a casualty or deal with a flood, through to tactical exercises fighting off attacking craft and drones, we proved that we were up to the RN's taxing standards. Since then we have been far out into the Pacific to dispose of explosives in the Pitcairn Overseas Territory, renewed and developed international relations with Pacific Island countries, and stepped ashore in some dream locations to learn about their incredible heritage. The sailors have had the opportunity to go surfing in Tahiti, learn about the wartime history of Guadalcanal, and change their watches more than their socks as we criss-cross time zones and the international date line. We have never operated further from home and from all of the support that keeps us going, so I thank you again for taking the time to think of us and to support the Ship's Company. For our affiliates, we are very proud to be a Cornish ship and in the countries we visit our link to Cornwall, and to you all, always comes up in conversation from our name to our Ship's badge; I hope that we are living up to the standard as ambassadors. Your generosity, such as the reusable cups and mugs, and the China Fleet Club's generous donation are all put to use as special ways to say thank you to those on TAMAR who go above and beyond. Enjoy the Times!

Ready for Operations

After spending an extended period alongside, TAMAR got put through her paces by The Fleet Operational Standards and Training (FOST). They ensure we are both safe to sail but also safe to operate as one of the UK Armed Force's forward deployed units. FOST train ships around the world, such is the regard in which the RN's standards are held. The team of 23 staff loved the chance to come to Australia and see what TAMAR was capable of. There were certainly challenging moments, but this made the end results all the more rewarding.



Designed to test every aspect of operational capability, the programme challenged the Ship's Company across a wide range of scenarios. These included firefighting, damage control, seamanship, and force protection exercises.



With training now complete, TAMAR returns to operations with renewed confidence and strengthened capability across the Ship's Company, having integrated all of those who have joined since we were last at sea.



Pitcairn Island

One of the most amazing places we have visited during this period at sea has been Pitcairn Island, the remote Pacific Island home to the descendants of the famous HMS Bounty. The mission was to prepare a suitable demolition ground for the over 3.5 tonnes of High Explosive Ammonium as provide assistance in the opening of the community center. While we were in Tahiti, we embarked Bravo Diving Unit II from DTXG, Royal Navy Divers who specialise in explosive ordinance detonation, before setting sail for this most isolated of British Overseas territories...



Few will forget the morning Pitcairn hove into view and we dropped anchor in Bounty Bay. Thirty of the thirty eight islanders lined up on their little jetty to greet us. We sent the Divers ashore first, so that they could prepare the demolition sites.

There were eight from DTXG, two of whom are EOD qualified, and a few TAMAR Ship's Company in the demolition effort. The Islanders were so helpful, giving lifts over the large hills that separate Tedside from the populated Adamstown. We had a great time, as normally explosions on land of this size are done by the Army but finally the Senior Service was able to show it was just as capable of creating big bangs and even bigger craters!

Pitcairn Outreach

The Pitcairn Islanders were incredibly welcoming when we arrived, despite brining the rainy British weather with us on the first day! Their dedicated supply ship had been in dry dock with mechanical issues for over a month, and over half the island's population are in their retirement, which meant that the influx of able-bodied matelots was a very welcome sight! The more mechanically and electrically minded were deployed to help maintain their engineering systems, fix some solar panels, and advise on the laying of a new road.



The initial main effort for team Young Officer was to help wash down the island's shop, which sold everything from HVAC to Baked Beans. While doing this we noticed that a lake was slowly starting to form in the main courtyard from the heavy rain. Over the following two days, we spent the mornings digging mud out of the blocked guttering and drains with a mix of some make-shift tools, our hands as well as a jury-rigged 'power washer'.

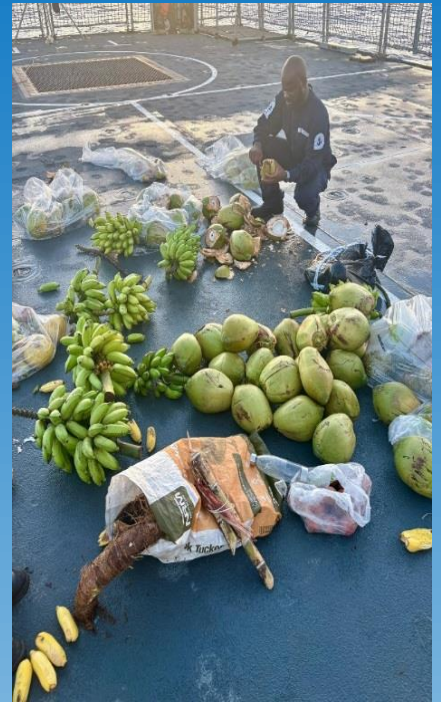
"These moments off, in a truly unique place really make the Navy special and the reason that TAMAR is one of the best ships in the fleet" – SLt Brisley



Time in Pitcairn wasn't all hard work. We managed to get everyone ashore for at least a day. In the afternoons we were free to explore the island, buy souvenirs, go on tours and the island even put on a banquet for us to enjoy! Pitcairn was also in fruit harvesting seasons so we managed to bring bananas, limes, grapefruit, and even the infamous breadfruit (the cause of that fateful mutiny two hundred years ago) back onboard to take with us when we left.



When we weren't eating our body weight in fruit, groups of us hiked up to Christian's cave, the dwelling place of the lead mutineer whose legacy still dominates this place. We then clambered up to the very top of Pitcairn, where we took photos at the world's signpost pointing towards London, New York, and Paris. We couldn't really have been any further from home.



Quad bike rides could be quite hap hazard, certainly on the first day when a flash rain storm occurred and a few of us had to cling on for dear life as they went down the steepest slope you can imagine on Tedsid hill. But moments like that make you really feel a connection to the island, that and the tonnes of Pitcairn honey many of us picked up! It said to be the best in the world (apparently that is why HM the King has it for breakfast everyday).

Catching Waves in Paradise

While in Tahiti, Ship's Company from took the opportunity to spend some well-earned downtime ashore, with many trying their hand at surfing for the first time. Tahiti is famous for hosting 2024 Olympic surfing events and holding some of the world's heaviest waves. Luckily for us, the island also hides some absolutely perfect beginner friendly beaches with slightly smaller waves.



We headed down to Papara on the South coast. This black-sand beach is know for it's consistent, rolling waves. After a quick beach safety briefing from our local instructor and some land drills, we paddled out to catch our first waves.

"It's not something you get to do everyday! I had never tried surfing before today but it was so much fun" – SLt Funnell



I think we all learnt that day that surfing is definitely harder than it looks. We swallowed our fair share of saltwater and had some spectacular wipeouts! But by the end of the lesson, we were actually standing up and riding waves all the way to the shore.

Celebrating Easter at Sea

Celebrating Easter in the Navy is always prone to some peculiarities, in our case this meant worshipping at sea without a Chaplain and making do with whatever we could cobble together.

For Holy Week, every evening a little group of faithful met to pray together, sing hymns, read the Holy Gospel, and even wash our feet on Maundy Thursday.

As part of the 'mend and make do' atmosphere, we made a DT timber cross that we lashed together with a little line. Then on Good Friday we paraded the stations of the cross on the flight deck.

While many of Ships Company ate their body weight in chocolate Easter eggs and Easter lunch some members made their way to church to celebrate.



We were even made guests of honour at the largest Easter Mass in French Polynesia. Three of us got into our no.1s and sang 'Eternal Father' to the stunned locals, they smiled joyfully and gave us flowers. In truth they didn't quite know what we said but at least we were loud and in joyful fellowship we shared gifts and prayed together. Experiencing Easter through the lens of French Polynesian culture is a memory we will cherish forever.

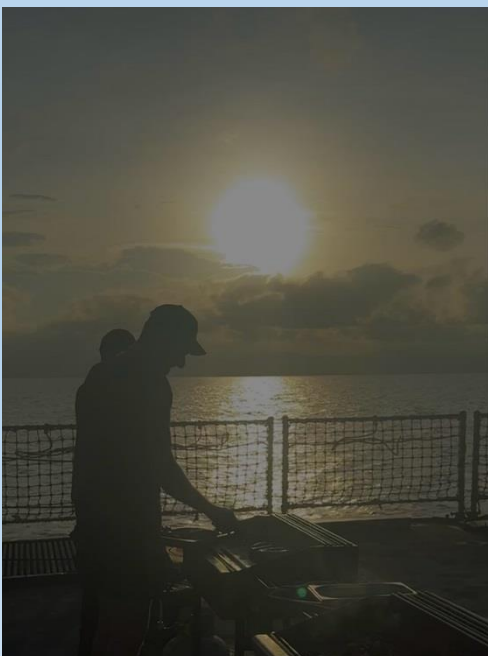
Bringing the Ship Together: Life Beyond the Watchbill

After a busy period at sea, Ships company took the time to unwind with a BBQ, offering a welcome break from routine. Firing up the grills on the flight deck, the chefs traded the galley for open air cooking. Sizzling burgers, sausages and even crocodile was served with homemade potato salad and coleslaw, it was quite the occasion!



This provided some time for Ships company to relax and enjoy some excellent food prepared by our talented chefs. The evening continued with an inter-mess quiz, with the Junior Rates securing a closely fought victory in the final tie-breaker.

"I love a BBQ at sea! Everyone gets together, has some great food, and you get to switch off for a bit"
– SLt Hepworth



Moments like these play an important role in maintaining morale at sea, building connections with Shipmates and provided some time for our sailors to relax.

Keeping Fit at Sea

Maintaining physical fitness remains an important part of daily life onboard. Flight deck circuits provide a easy and accessible way for all members of the Ships Company to keep fit while deployed.



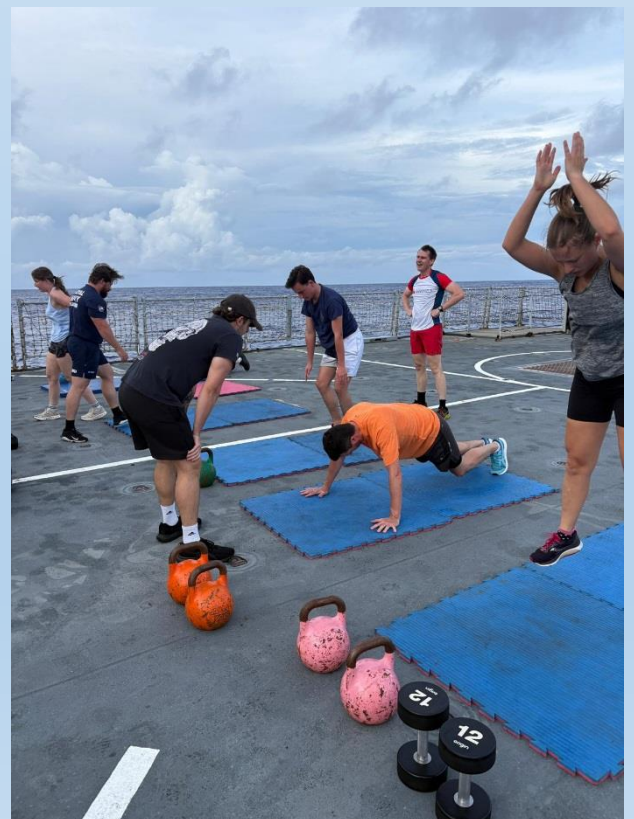
"Most of my job is inside so I love to come out onto the flight deck and exercise. It's also a great opportunity to watch the sunset"
– SLt Blyth

Even with limited space and sometimes challenging conditions (it's hard to exercise on a moving platform!) circuit training is enjoyed by everyone. The exercises focus on conditioning and high intensity, keeping us physically fit, with all of the mental health benefits that come with exercise, plus the social aspect of exercising together.

A typical TAMAR circuit session (Pacific sunset and rolling sea state optional!). In pairs:

20 flight deck shuttle runs (repeat after every exercise below)
150 burpees
200 walking lunges
200 press ups
200 sit ups
150 wall-balls
200 V-sits
200 squats

Cool off, shower and go on watch!



Honouring Service: ANZAC Day in Suva

Alongside the British High Commissioner to Fiji, Ship's Company attended the ANZAC Day dawn service in Suva, joining partners and representatives to pay their respects to those who served and sacrificed. Held at dawn, the cemetery was packed with representatives paying their respects in the gentle early morning rain, looking over Suva harbour. The event was followed by a community gathering, hosting the traditional 'gunfire' breakfast with Irish coffee to revive stiff legs from standing on parade and allow us to meet other guests.



The New Zealand graves in Suva, Fiji belong to service members who died protecting the South Pacific during World War II. Many of the New Zealanders buried here belonged to the No. 5 Squadron of the Royal New Zealand Air Force, alongside personnel from the No. 8 New Zealand Infantry Brigade. The cemetery holds 66 World War II Commonwealth graves, 35 from Fiji Military Forces and 31 New Zealand Armed Forces.

Marking ANZAC Day while deployed reinforces the Royal Navy's connection to its partners and its continued commitment to remembrance, wherever it operates.

Gifts from our Affiliates

While deployed far from home, small gestures can make a significant difference to morale onboard. We received a range of thoughtful gifts from our affiliates, providing a reminder of the support back home. HMS TAMARs crew extends a massive thank you to all of our amazing affiliates for all the support we receive.



While the areas we operate in couldn't be much further from home. Our incredible affiliates ensure that the crew never feel too far from home. Thanks to the generosity of our affiliates, our Ships Company have been treated to special care packages dispatched directly to the Ship. Filled with authentic Cornish produce we received calendars, candles, biscuits and jams as well as cups and water bottles to use onboard!

We would also like to show our appreciation to the China Fleet Trust. The China Fleet Club provides a incredible "home port" for our sailors' families and loved ones. This term the China Fleet Trust gifted us a weekend stay, which was awarded to our sailor of the term.



A visit from the Fijian Prime Minister and welcoming visitors onboard



While alongside in Suva Bay, we hosted senior leaders including the Fijian Prime Minister and the UK's Indo-Pacific Minister, providing an opportunity to strengthen relationships and discuss shared priorities in the region. This was one of our first big defence engagement after quite a while. The flight deck was full of around 150 people and we got to show people around our Ship as well as learning something about them.



"I love taking part in defence engagement because it means I get to meet lots of interesting people and show off what TAMAR does and why we're out here"
– SLt Hepworth

While alongside in Suva we also welcomed visitors onboard, offering friends, families, and partners a chance to see life on board first-hand. Guests were given a tour of the Ship, from the bridge to onboard systems, and even had the opportunity to experience how the Ships Company deal with fires and floods onboard.



Celebrating Our Sailors

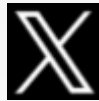
Life on a forward deployed Ship often means extended periods away from home. On board HMS TAMAR, this commitment was formally recognised with the presentation of Wider Service Medals to members of Ships company.



This ceremony also marked the presentation of the Sailor of the Term award, presented to ET Bradshaw, This recognised the outstanding effort and dedication he has shown to the ship during this term. He was awarded with a two night stay at the China Fleet Club, kindly donated by our affiliates at The China Fleet Trust.

Until Next Time...

We hope you enjoyed this edition of TAMAR Times, we'll be back with you shortly.

Do get in touch if you'd like to see an article in your TAMAR Times. Remember you can always follow our progress on 

Finally a massive thank you again to all our supporters and affiliates who help to sustain us so far from home!

