

## **Allied Maritime Command hosts Allied Operational Commanders**

On 23 March it was reported from Northwood, NW London, that Fleet Commanders from Allied and Partnership for Peace nations and senior NATO command representatives had met there for the annual Maritime Operational Commanders Conference (MOCC) two days previously.

This conference serves as a platform to openly discuss maritime topics to enhance cooperation across the maritime domain and increase cohesion of effort while providing value back to national navies.

The conference covered topics ranging from the maturation of NATO's Operation Sea Guardian which focuses on Maritime Security Operations in the Mediterranean to coordination and cooperation across the NATO area of responsibility on Maritime Situational Awareness and included a readout from the MARCOM Maritime Operations Centre Directors' Conference held in Northwood on 13 March.

MARCOM also took the opportunity to update naval leadership from across the Alliance on how NATO is using the ships, aircraft, submarines and sailors contributed by the nations to support collective defence.

In the past year, MARCOM has flexed the schedule of operations and adjusted deployments to adapt to the changing security environment around Alliance states. An example provided to the leaders included MARCOM's efforts in the Black Sea. NATO is currently planning for a 50% increase over last year of Standing Naval Forces' presence operations in the Black Sea. This is three times the presence the groups had in 2015. Such effort not only bolsters NATO's joint Tailored Forward Presence (TFP) in the region, but offers more opportunities to build interoperability among the ships of the Standing Maritime Forces and the Allied and Partner maritime forces of the Black Sea.

At Northwood Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM) HQ participants also used the opportunity to provide feedback to MARCOM on activities and operations. MARCOM staff officers will use this feedback to help shape the planning for the next year and beyond.

*Photo: Vice-Admiral Clive Johnstone NATO Maritime Commander at Northwood.*

*Photo: NATO ©*