

Liaoning v Type 001A

With the launch of China's new aircraft carrier Type 001A, China has become the seventh country with the capability to build its own aircraft carriers after the US, Russia, Britain, France, Italy and Spain. Reports have said it would be named "Shandong" after the eastern Chinese province where it would be based.



LIAONING

China launched the Liaoning in 2011, after buying and equipping its rusting Soviet-era hull from Ukraine in 1998.

304m long, 70m wide

50,000 tonnes

29 knots

24 Shenyang J-15 fighter jets

About the vessel

Size

Displacement

Speed

Carrier-based aircraft

TYPE 001A

The carrier would undergo more testing and fitting of equipment before trials in the water. It is expected to join the navy's South Sea Fleet when fully operational by 2020.

315m long, 75m wide

70,000 tonnes

31 knots

32 to 36 J-15 fighter jets and a number of other planes

HOW CHINA'S AIRCRAFT CARRIERS STACK UP AGAINST CARRIERS FROM OTHER MILITARY POWERS

CHINA

- **Aircraft carriers:** One in service. A second aircraft carrier launched yesterday is expected to be fully operational by 2020.
- The Liaoning has been conducting take-off and landing drills in the South China Sea this year. The formation comprised three guided missile destroyers, three frigates, one supply ship, plus J-15 fighter jets and several ship-borne helicopters, according to Japan's Kyodo news agency, citing the nation's defence ministry.
- Military experts say China plans to have a total of six aircraft carriers in 20 years' time. Work on its third carrier, which reportedly has a displacement of 85,000 tonnes, has begun in Shanghai.
- The Chinese navy has announced plans to increase the size of its marine corps from about 20,000 to 100,000.

UNITED STATES

- **Aircraft carriers:** 10 in service, two under construction.
- Not only does the US have the largest military in the world, but its navy also has over 75 years' worth of carrier aviation experience. The US has more than 200,000 marines.
- A US "carrier strike group" – the largest operational unit in the US Navy – is usually made up of an aircraft carrier, 7,500 personnel, a guided-missile cruiser for long-range strike capability, a flotilla of six to eight destroyers or frigates used for protecting against air attack, an attack submarine for destroying enemy submarines and ships, an ammunition and supply ship, plus 65 to 70 aircraft.
- The US Navy's current Nimitz-class aircraft carriers weigh 100,000 tons and use nuclear power, which allows them to stay at sea longer without maintenance.

BRITAIN

- **Aircraft carriers:** Two under construction
- Britain currently has no operational aircraft carriers, but is constructing two 67,000-tonne Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers, the largest the nation has ever built.
- The first, 280m-long HMS Queen Elizabeth, was launched in 2014. It is expected to be ready for operational use in 2021. The second carrier, HMS Prince of Wales, is about two years behind it in construction.
- The carriers are designed to carry up to 36 F35B stealth fighters, four Merlin helicopters and can also hold Chinooks and Apache gunships. Each carrier's strike group will also comprise stealth fighters, an air wing, destroyers, frigates and probably a submarine.

INDIA

- **Aircraft carriers:** One in operation, two under construction.
- India formally launched the refurbished 44,570-tonne carrier INS Vikramaditya in 2013, a Russian-built vessel.
- India is also building the 40,000-tonne carrier INS Vikrant, which is expected to be completed in 2023 and is the first carrier to be completely built in India. It will have the capacity to carry 30 aircraft, including helicopters, The Times of India has reported.
- India is also constructing the 65,000-tonne carrier INS Vishal, which will be powered by a nuclear reactor, according to the current affairs magazine The Diploma. It will be able to carry 55 aircraft, including 35 fixed-wing combat aircraft and 20 rotary-wing aircraft.