

Diesel generators have now been installed on the first of the new aircraft carriers. Both ships will have two Rolls-Royce MT30 gas turbines and four diesel generator sets. The generators – provided by Converteam – provide a total power of 109 megawatts. The latest edition of *Desider* indicates that power will be generated to distribute electricity throughout the vessel powering anything from the propulsion system to crew members' laptops.

Another £33 million worth of contracts have also been recently awarded. These include:

- An £18 million contract for storage facilities to Wincanton.
- A £15 million contract for Balfour Beatty Engineering Services for the installation of cables on modules being constructed at Govan before final integration at Rosyth.
- A £44,000 contract for Edmundson Electrical to provide component parts used to pack and make airtight cables running throughout the vessels
- A £137,000 contract to Jetway Associates to supply hose baskets, which form part of the ships' fire fighting equipment.

According to the [Aircraft Carrier Alliance](#) around £1.25 billion worth of contracts have been placed throughout the UK, which in turn are supporting thousands of jobs in almost every region.

Regional involvement in the development of the carriers was further enhanced as the final shipyard in the programme started its part of the construction work. Birkenhead-based Cammell Laird will build two sections of the ships' flight deck. The work is worth over £44 million pounds and will keep a workforce of 1,200 busy until 2012. Upon completion the flight decks will be the size of three football pitches.

Commencing construction was especially significant for Cammell Laird as it marked the return of shipbuilding to the yard after a 17 year hiatus. Yet the company is by no means a stranger to carrier construction, having provided three throughout its illustrious 182 year history.

The Birkenhead shipyard joins five others – Govan and Rosyth in Scotland, Portsmouth, Devon and Newcastle in England – in the massive construction project. Work currently supports around 10,000 jobs at the shipyards and throughout the supply chain.

Despite the increase in [debate](#) over the cost of the aircraft carriers in the run-up to the publishing of the Strategic Defence and Security Review work continues unabated.