

**Duration**

Theory lesson  
3 hours

**Max Capacity**

32 personnel

# IDT MTT - INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW

**AIM OF SUBJECT**

An understanding of the nature and significance of international law is important to for two reasons: (1) As a representative of the state, Commanding Officers have particular responsibilities for observing international law. To fail to do so may not only embarrass the UK, or lead to personal criminal liability in the case of breaches of the law of armed conflict, but it may also encourage reciprocal breaches of the law by other states that might damage the UK's national interests.<sup>9</sup> (2) In common with many others responsible for conducting operations, naval commanders will often express a sense of frustration that they are constrained by international law. However, it should be remembered that the constraints imposed by international law are agreed between states in order to promote stability in international relations. An effective military solution that overlooks international law may bring unwelcome strategic consequences in the longer term.

**OUTLINE SYLLABUS**

International Law may be defined as that body of rules that nations consider binding in their relations with one another. International Law derives from the practice of nations in the international arena (the "custom and practice of states") and from international agreements (treaties, conventions, memoranda of understanding and so on). International law provides stability in international relations and an expectation that certain acts by states will bring predictable consequences. If one state violates the law, it may expect that others will reciprocate; failure to comply also brings political and economic costs, such that states tend to comply with international law because it is in their interests to do so. Like most rules of conduct, international law is in a continual state of development and change. The body of international law is comprehensive, and may provide a legal framework for operations both in time of peace and during armed conflict.

The intent is to provide the attendee with an understanding of the principles of international law that relate to the maritime environment in time of peace. This includes not only the legal regime by which the seas are classified, but an examination of the laws relating to how the seas may be used; the rights and jurisdiction of states, the status of vessels, rights of navigation, rules for the protection of persons and property and the rules regulating maritime law enforcement. This provides the legal foundation for the great majority of maritime operations.