

China aircraft carrier takes to the seas

China's first aircraft carrier has begun sea trials, a move likely to increase concerns over Beijing's naval ambitions. The *Shi Lang* is a refitted former Soviet carrier, previously called the *Varyag*

Commissioned	1988
Length	300 metres
Displacement	55,000 tonnes
Speed	32 knots (59km/h)
Crew	2,500

Flight deck area: 14,700 square metres (80 percent size of U.S. Nimitz-class carrier)

Active phased array radar (APAR)
Similar to U.S. Aegis system

Aircraft: About 20 fixed-wing, including Chinese JL-9 jet trainer, plus 20 Russian-built helicopters

CARRIER COMPARISON

 **Nimitz**
United States

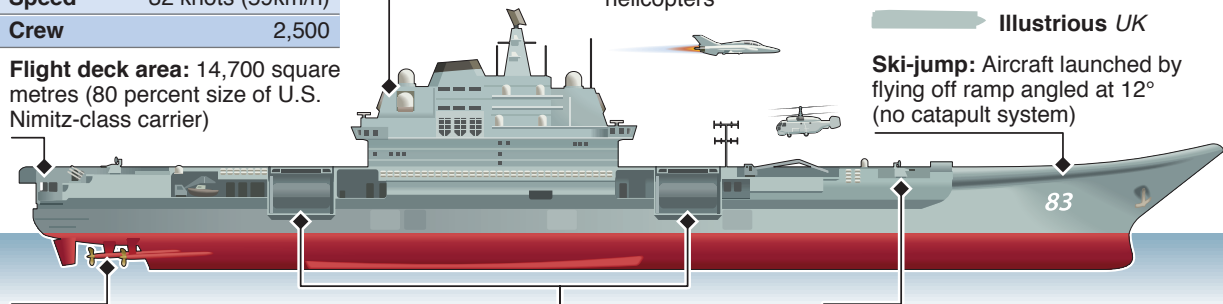
 **Shi Lang**
China

 **Queen Elizabeth**
UK

 **Charles de Gaulle**
France

 **Illustrious** UK

Ski-jump: Aircraft launched by flying off ramp angled at 12° (no catapult system)



Propulsion: Conventionally-powered. Eight boilers and four steam turbines, each producing 50,000hp

Two aircraft lifts
Move planes between hangar and flight deck

Armament: FL-3000N surface-to-air missiles (similar to U.S. RAM system), 30mm CIWS guns