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John Spellar Says It Will Be Months Before Subs Return To Normal Operations

Britain's defense minister has stated that it will be ``some months'' before the Royal Navy's nuclear-powered hunter-killer submarines are back in service.

The announcement came during a House of Commons debate in which Defense Minister John Spellar told the House that the flaw was located in the pipes that form part of the reactor cooling system, and that he feared it might be ``generic.''

``Initial indications are that the defect may have arisen from the original construction of the submarine and that it is present in other submarines, albeit at an early stage,'' he said. ``It may take some months for submarines to be repaired where this is necessary.''

Spellar explained that the decision to correct the problem would ``clearly have an impact on our operational program.''

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