



Rear Admiral P M Bennett (Paul) CB OBE
Commander United Kingdom Maritime Forces and Rear Admiral Surface Ships

Paul joined the Royal Navy in September 1985 and has enjoyed an extensive sea going career. Early jobs included Navigating Officer of HMS Cygnet in Northern Ireland and HMS Birmingham for a deployment to the Arabian Gulf. As a Warfare Officer, he served in HMS Westminster, the highlight of which was an operational deployment in the South Atlantic. He has commanded at every rank; HMS Biter, the patrol vessel of the Manchester Universities Royal Naval Unit 1991-1992, the Minehunter, HMS Atherstone 1998-1999 and, from 1999-2000, the destroyer HMS Exeter, the highlight of which was a return to the Gulf. As a Captain, he was the first Commanding Officer of HMS Daring, the first T45 Destroyer 2008-2009 and, following promotion to Commodore, commanded the Amphibious Task Group operating in the Indian Ocean, Norwegian Arctic and on the West Coast of the USA 2009-2011.

Interspersed between sea going appointments, he has served ashore as the Fleet Operations Officer, the Maritime Desk Officer to the Director of Operational Capability in the MOD, as capability manager in Navy Command for Above Water Capability and Maritime Security, for which he was honoured as an OBE, and for 6 months in Baghdad as the Advisor to the senior Iraqi hierarchy in their Joint Headquarters. From 2011-2013, he was the Commodore Naval Personnel Strategy, responsible for reshaping the Naval Service in the aftermath of SDSR 10. Promoted to Rear Admiral in February 2013 he spent 7 months as Director of the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, with responsibility for defining and developing the Joint contribution to Defence, before assuming the role of Chief of Staff, Joint Forces Command in September 2013. He assumed the position of ACNS(Cap) and COS HQ in May 2016. Her Majesty The Queen appointed him as a Companion in the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath in the Birthday Honours 2016. He joined the Maritime Battlestaff as Commander United Kingdom Maritime Forces and Rear Admiral Surface Ships in October 2017.

Rear Admiral Bennett is an alumnus of Higher Command and Staff Course (2007) and the Windsor Leadership Trust, a Companion of the Chartered Management Institute, a Younger Brother of Trinity House and a Liveryman of the Carpenters' Company. He lives in Chichester with his wife Kay and their two daughters Chelsie and Grace. When not kept busy by his family and garden, he maintains 'enthusiastic amateur status' in his sporting interests of mountain-biking, sailing and rowing.