



Cdr Chris Mahony RNR
Head of the Air Branch

Commander Chris Mahony assumed his appointment as Head of Air Branch in July 2020 coincident with its 40th Anniversary of its commissioning. He originally joined the RNR in 1979 and then was commissioned into the Royal Navy as a Warfare Officer in 1986 serving in HMS BRAVE. Selected for flying training he was awarded his wings flying the Gazelle on 705 NAS in 1990.

A Lynx helicopter pilot with over 2500 hours, he has completed numerous deployments and served as Flight Commander on HMS BIRMINGHAM during the Bosnian crisis and then HMS MARLBOROUGH in the Falkland Islands. He subsequently specialised in Maritime Counter Terrorism (MCT) operations on 815 NAS as Operations Officer in support of UKSF with notable detachments including live counter-narcotic operations home and abroad.

A brief sojourn in Rolls-Royce Aerospace, enabled Chris to serve in the Air Branch for the first time in 1997. He then returned to the Navy in September 2001 on selection to the Advanced Command and Staff Course. Having completed a MOD media news appointment in London he was promoted to Commander and deployed to the US Embassy in Baghdad for twelve-month tour for which he was awarded the Bronze Star by the President, USA. A busy operational tour with PJHQ J3 as Chief Targets he completed further service in Iraq **and** Afghanistan. Selected for Command in 2008 he had the privilege of leading 702 NAS including embarkations in HMS ARK ROYAL, HMS OCEAN and especially in HMS ILLUSTRIOUS during "Fly Navy 100" in 2009.

His final tour was in the Foreign Office as Chief of Staff to the Prime Ministers Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan including a period in Benghazi, Libya in 2011. He was deployed to support setting up the new British Embassy and operating as a UN Liaison Officer within the New Libyan Government based in Dubai, Istanbul and Tunisia.

Having left full-time service in 2012, Chris has been mainly involved in the Aerospace industry – initially with Bombardier Business Aircraft based in Dubai and South Africa. He is now Director International Sales for small bespoke aircraft company based in San Diego, California. His home life with Sally, revolves around a very busy equestrian centre/business in Kent managing over fifty horses. A keen cyclist and skier both of which are better when going downhill.