

COMMANDER LOUISE RAY ROYAL NAVY

Louise Ray grew up in Cardiff and studied at Leicester University before conducting her Initial Officer Training at Britannia Royal Naval College in 2002. Early bridge watch keeping assignments in HMS MANCHESTER and HMS CORNWALL included deployments to the Mediterranean, Middle East, Norway and the Baltic Sea. Completing Fleet Navigating Officer's course in 2008, she was appointed as the Navigating Officer in the Offshore Patrol Vessel HMS SEVERN conducting Fishery Protection Duties around the UK.

In 2009 she joined the staff at BRNC assigned to the Navigation Section where she was responsible for overseeing Navigation Training for Young Officers of all specialisations. On completion of her time at BRNC, Louise attended Initial Command and Staff Course prior to commencing Principal Warfare Officer's course in 2012.

On completion of Principal Warfare Officer's Course, Louise joined HMS NORTHUMBERLAND as Principal Warfare Officer (Underwater) for the latter half of her KIPION deployment to the Middle East working directly in support of CTF 150 operations. On return to the UK she assumed duties as the ship's Operations Officer generating the ship for a period as the Fleet Duty Towed Array Patrol Ship. In 2014, NORTHUMBERLAND completed Operational Sea Training before returning to the Middle East for a second KIPION deployment.

On return to the UK, Louise completed Advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer's course. She was promoted to Lieutenant Commander and assigned to Flag Officer Sea Training as Staff Warfare Officer (Underwater) specifically as the Towed Array Response Team Leader and was lucky enough to be assigned the secondary duty as Chilean Liaison Officer. Over the following two years, as well as routine sea riding, she embarked in various T23s for several ASW operations as well as delivering two very enjoyable training packages to the Chilean Navy in Valparaiso.

Selected for Small Ship Command in 2017, Louise joined HMS RAMSEY as the Commanding officer of MCM1 Crew 4. Having completed Operational Sea Training and Exercise Joint Warrior, Crew 4 flew out to Bahrain to join HMS BLYTH one of the forward deployed Mine Counter Measure Vessels. The crew completed a challenging but rewarding 8-month deployment working alongside the US and GCC nations to secure sea lines of communication in the area. On return to the UK Louise assumed command of HMS PENZANCE and was responsible for bringing her out of an extended maintenance period and ensuring her safe transition back to the operational fleet.

Louise joined COMLSG as Staff Operations Officer (SOO) in April 2019 and was selected for promotion to Commander in May 2019. She deployed with COMLSG as SOO to Op SENTINEL in Jan 20 and took command of HMS WESTMINSTER in Aug 20.