



Lieutenant Commander Neil Skinner Royal Navy Commanding Officer MCM2 Crew 7

Neil Skinner was born in Penzance and grew up in Yeovil, before joining BRNC Dartmouth in 2005 as a Warfare Officer. Fleet training took place in HM Ships CAMPBELTOWN, OCEAN and DUMBARTON CASTLE which included deployments to the Middle East and South Atlantic. Qualifying as a Bridge Watchkeeping Officer, he was assigned to MCM1 Crew 8 as Gunnery Officer in 2007; the highlight being OP TECATE (Mine Clearance Operations within Iraqi waters) in HMS BLYTH.

His next assignment saw a further deployed period to the Middle East as Battle Watch Officer to CTF150 prior to conducting sub-specialisation training as a Fighter Controller. He was subsequently assigned to HMS ILLUSTRIOUS, where he was part of the onboard J5 planning team during OP PATWIN (Philippines disaster relief) and later supported OP PITCHPOLE (UK flood relief) in 2014. This was followed by a highly rewarding posting as an Instructor at the RN School of Fighter Control.

Qualifying as a PWO in early 2017, he was awarded Top Student on course before taking up the role of PWO(A) and subsequently Operations Officer in HMS MONTROSE. This period included a full regeneration process, from refit through to a Baltic deployment and operations in support of CTF320. He then conducted a short assignment at PJHQ J3 (Europe) as the lead desk officer for OP TOSCA, the UK's contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Mission. During this time, he achieved CQ2 status and soon after commenced AWO training. He was assigned to HMS DRAGON as AWO during OP KIPION in 2019, where a record-breaking 8 drugs seizures took place. Taking over as SWO, HMS DRAGON deployed as Air and Missile Defence Commander to the UK Carrier Strike Group during WESTLANT 19; the first Type 45 to conduct such a role. Selected for Command, Neil took over MCM2 Crew 7 in April 2020.