

UK Hydrographic Office appoints Chief Executive

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) is pleased to announce the appointment of Rear Admiral Peter Sparkes as the new Chief Executive and Accounting Officer. Peter will be leaving the Royal Navy to take up the role.

As Chief Executive, Peter will continue to lead the organisation's important work in supporting safe, secure and thriving oceans. This includes the UKHO's vital work in support of Defence and merchant shipping. Working in close collaboration with national and international partners, the organisation will also continue to develop ADMIRALTY Maritime Data Solutions to support the responsible and sustainable use of our marine environment.

Commenting on his appointment, Peter said:

It is an enormous privilege to have been selected to be the UK Hydrographic Office's permanent Chief Executive. I am delighted to be able to continue working with the UKHO's fantastic team, Defence and our allies, and our marine partners to help safeguard our sea lanes and those operating in the maritime sector.

Going forward, UKHO will continue to meet the evolving needs of mariners around the world, contributing fully to the development of the IHO's second generation of electronic charting and digital services, the S-100 data standard. As part of the Ministry of Defence, UKHO plays a key role in supporting the UK's national security. Our teams will continue to provide defence partners with the decision support, data and expertise they need to conduct military operations.

We also join the international community in recognising that many of our vital marine environments are under threat from overexploitation and the damaging effects of climate change. With this, we will continue work with governments, NGOs and commercial partners to support the protection and sustainable use of our oceans.

Peter joined the UKHO as National Hydrographer in 2019 and was subsequently appointed as Acting Chief Executive in July 2020. Following Peter's appointment as CEO, Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher will assume the role of National Hydrographer. In this role, Rhett will work to improve the collection, standardisation and sharing of marine geospatial data through international collaboration.

Peter served in a wide variety of appointments in the Royal Navy, both at sea on operations and ashore. Notably, he commanded the frigate HMS CUMBERLAND on counter-piracy patrol off Somalia and the UK's Ice Patrol Ship, HMS

PROTECTOR, in Antarctica. In addition to this, he commanded the 46 units (aircraft carriers, destroyers, frigates, mine-hunters, patrol vessels, and the maritime explosive ordinance disposal teams) of the Portsmouth Flotilla.

Ashore, Peter Sparkes has served in Ministry of Defence acquisition appointments and was responsible for the development and introduction into RN service of the Warship Electronic Charting Display Information System.