

UKHO confirms Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher as National Hydrographer & Deputy Chief Executive

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has announced that Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher has been permanently appointed as the United Kingdom's National Hydrographer and Deputy Chief Executive, effective 1 July 2021.

As National Hydrographer, Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher is the UK government's representative at the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), where he works to improve the sharing, standardisation and collection of marine geospatial data through international collaboration; setting and maintaining standards that protect the safety of mariners around the world.

His work will continue to involve the development of key national and international partnerships with UK and foreign navies, hydrographic offices, governments and commercial organisations to support the sharing of global marine geospatial data – spanning from seabed to surface, offshore and beyond.

Alongside Rear Admiral Hatcher's duties as National Hydrographer and Director of Data Acquisition, his role now also includes the leadership and management responsibility for the Defence Team. This team oversees the UKHO's vital work in supporting the UK's national security by providing defence partners with the decision support, data and analytical expertise they need to conduct military operations.

Commenting on the appointment, Chief Executive Peter Sparkes said:

It is fantastic to announce the permanent appointment of Rhett Hatcher to the position of UK National Hydrographer and Deputy Chief Executive. Rhett has a wealth of Defence experience that allows him to understand the operational and relational context better than most. Additionally, he has well established and valuable links with Navy Command, our allies and across Whitehall. It made absolute sense to bring his work on the Data Acquisition and the Defence fronts together under one position and I look forward to working closely with Rhett and his teams to underpin the UKHO's role as a world-leading centre for hydrography and marine geospatial data.

Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher said:

I am thrilled to be appointed as National Hydrographer at the UKHO, a world-leading centre for hydrography, and at the opportunity to expand my remit to include leadership of the UKHO Defence Team. It

is a really exciting time to be in this role as we develop the next generation of digital navigation and ground-breaking projects in Military Data Gathering. I very much look forward to working with our partners as we improve safety of maritime navigation, maritime operational advantage and decision support, and marine development around the world.

As a serving officer in the Royal Navy, and prior to becoming the UKHO's Director of Data Acquisition in September 2020, Rear Admiral Hatcher served as a Surface Warfare Officer and as a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm. He has held a variety of command appointments, including HMS Penzance, Bulwark and Protector and 815 Naval Air Squadron. He has also held a number of staff roles, most recently as Deputy Director for International Security in the Ministry of Defence.