



Lieutenant Commander Simon P Kelly Royal Navy

Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1974, Simon was educated at Royal Grammar School Newcastle and graduated in European Studies from the University of Leicester. Following two years working in industry he joined the Royal Navy in 1998 as a Warfare Officer.

After initial Officer training and Fleet time in HM Ships Quorn and Birmingham, he joined HMS Newcastle as an Officer of the Watch at the start of the Naval Task Group 2000 Global Deployment. He qualified as a Ship's Diver in 2001 and subsequently chose to specialise as a Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Officer in 2002. During this time he served as a member of the team conducting Under Water Force protection for Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Merchant Shipping in support of Op TELIC.

In 2004 he was selected for an exchange appointment to the French Navy serving as Operations Officer in CMT PERSEE, and subsequently CMT CAPRICORNE based out of Toulon. He enjoyed a challenging and varied appointment with deployments across the Mediterranean, Adriatic and Black Sea.

On his return from France in 2006, he served in HMS Manchester in preparation for Principle Warfare Officers (PWO) Course and completed Initial Command and Staff Course. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 2007, he joined HMS Richmond as PWO(Above Water). Operations Officer for the majority of his time on board, he experienced a broad variety of tasks including multi-national exercises in the Baltic and towed array operations in the North Atlantic, before a 7 month deployment on Commander Task Force (Iraqi Maritime) defending the strategic Iraqi Oil Terminals in the Northern Gulf.

On departing HMS Richmond he returned to his specialisation taking up an appointment as Chief of Staff (COS) to the First Mine Counter Measures (MCM) Squadron. This challenging role included two periods deployed to the Gulf as COS to Commander UK MCM Force for which he was awarded a Chief of Joint Operations Commendation.

Since July 2012 he has been Commanding Officer of five different Hunt and Sandown Class Mine Hunting Vessels in the UK and on Op KIPION in the Gulf, most recently returning to the Gulf with MCM1 Crew 5 in HMS Shoreham in June 2014.

In April 2014 Simon was selected for promotion to Commander and has been selected for further Sea Command on his return to the UK.

Simon lives in Hampshire with his wife, who is an officer in the Royal Air Force.