

News story: New military chiefs appointed

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson is pleased to confirm that Her Majesty the Queen has approved the following senior appointments to the top echelon of the Armed Services:

Vice Admiral Timothy Fraser CB is to be promoted Admiral and appointed Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, in succession to General Gordon Messenger;

Vice Admiral Tony Radakin CB is to be promoted Admiral and appointed First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, in succession to Admiral Sir Philip Jones;

Air Marshal Michael Wigston CBE is to be promoted Air Chief Marshal and appointed as Chief of the Air Staff, in succession to Air Chief Marshal Sir Steven Hillier;

Lieutenant General Patrick Sanders CBE, DSO is to be promoted General and appointed Commander Joint Forces Command, in succession to General Sir Christopher Deverell.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I am delighted to congratulate this new group of defence chiefs on their appointments. Forward-looking and keen to modernise the Armed Forces, these are the transformational leaders we need in these challenging times.

The appointment of a new generation of commanders will ensure that Britain remains ready to face the threats of tomorrow and continues to be a major player on the world stage.

Vice Admiral Tim Fraser CB

Tim Fraser was educated at Lord Williams' School in Oxfordshire and joined the Royal Navy in 1982. A surface warfare officer, he has had the privilege of commanding four ships: the patrol craft HMS ARCHER (1989-1991); the T42 Destroyers HMS GLOUCESTER (1997-1998) and HMS CARDIFF (2001-2003; as the Captain Fifth Destroyer Squadron); and the aircraft carrier HMS ILLUSTRIOUS (2006-2007).

He has also served as the United Kingdom Maritime Component Commander in Bahrain (May 2010 to November 2011), commanding Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships in the Middle East, and additionally serving under the Commander US Fifth Fleet as the Deputy Commander of the Combined Maritime Forces.

In between sea and operations appointments he has served as the Surface

Flotilla Staff Navigating Officer, as an Assistant Director in the Navy's Personnel Strategy Directorate and as the Head of Navy Resources and Plans on the Central Staff (2007-2010). On promotion to Rear Admiral in January 2012 he led the Navy Command HQ Defence Reform implementation in 2012 prior to serving as the Senior British Military Advisor at CENTCOM HQ in Tampa, Florida (September 2012- January 2014).

On return from the States he spent three years in the MOD as the Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Capability and Force Design), which included SDSR 15. He was appointed as Chief of Joint Operations in June 2017 on promotion to Vice Admiral.

Tim Fraser attended the UK Higher Command and Staff Course in 2006 and the US Pinnacle Course at the Joint and Coalition Warfighting Centre in April 2012. He was made a Companion of the Bath (CB) in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Vice Admiral Tony Radakin CB

Tony Radakin was appointed Second Sea Lord and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff in March 2018.

Commissioned in 1990, his early sea service was as an Officer of the Watch in HMS Leeds Castle, navigator of HMS Andromeda, command of HMS Blazer and then serving as operations officer in HMS Beaver. This period incorporated security duties in the Falklands, NATO embargo operations in the Adriatic, as well as escort duties in the Iran/Iraq Tanker war, and countering smuggling in Hong Kong and the Caribbean.

Commands have ranged from Lieutenant to Rear Admiral of ashore, afloat and international forces. This includes HMS Blazer and Southampton URNU, HMS Norfolk, the Naval Training Team in Iraq (where he was awarded the Bronze Star), the Iraqi Maritime Task Force, Portsmouth Naval Base, and Commander of UK Maritime Forces and NATO's High Readiness Maritime Component Commander. It also encompasses commanding in Iraq on Operation Telic three times as a commander, captain and commodore.

Other than Britannia Royal Naval College, his staff appointments have been in either joint or defence roles. These consist of operational planning at Permanent Joint Headquarters, military assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Defence, a financial and capability programmer in the Equipment Plan Directorate, military assistant to the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, and Head of Strategy Management (involving finance, capability planning and strategic force development). Most recently he was Chief of Staff of the Joint Forces Command with specific responsibilities for people, infrastructure and the UK's permanent overseas bases.

His education includes reading law at Southampton University, qualifying as a barrister, the Advanced Command and Staff Course, an MA in International Relations and Defence Studies, and the Higher Command and Staff Course. He has also graduated from several US courses including the US Combined Forces Maritime Component course, Capstone course and the inaugural UK/US Future

Leaders' course. In 2017 he attended the London Business School's Senior Executive Programme.

Air Marshal Mike Wigston CBE

Air Marshal Mike Wigston was appointed Deputy Commander Capability and Air Member for Personnel and Capability in August 2018.

Appointments in operational headquarters have included Al Udeid Airbase, Qatar, as the Chief of Combat Operations in the Combined Air and Space Operations Centre; Basrah International Airport, Iraq as Commander 903 Expeditionary Air Wing; and one year in Afghanistan as the Director Air Operations in Headquarters ISAF Joint Command. He was appointed CBE in 2013 for his contribution to that mission.

Staff appointments in the Ministry of Defence have included Principal Staff Officer to the Chief of Defence Staff working for General Lord Richards and, from July 2013, for General Lord Houghton. In January 2015, he was appointed Administrator of the Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia and Commander British Forces Cyprus. In March 2017, he was appointed Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, responsible for the strategic coherence and coordination of the Royal Air Force, and oversight of the RAF100 centenary programme.

His education and training includes reading engineering science at Oriel College, Oxford; the Advanced Command and Staff Course; an MA in defence studies from King's College, London and the Higher Command and Staff Course.

Lieutenant General Patrick Sanders CBE DSO

Lieutenant General Patrick Sanders was commissioned into The Royal Green Jackets in 1986 with whom he served in Germany, Northern Ireland, Canada and Norway. He has commanded on operations in Crossmaglen, West Belfast, Kosovo, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

On the staff, he served as Chief of Staff of 1st Mechanised Brigade, deploying to Oman and Kosovo. On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in 2003, he served in Baghdad as a strategic planner and Pol-Mil adviser to the US Commander of CJTF-7. In 2004 he was posted to the Staff College as a member of the Directing Staff. He commanded 2RGJ (becoming 4 RIFLES) from 2005-2008, including a tour of Basra in 2007.

He attended the Higher Command and Staff Course before establishing the post of Colonel Army Strategy in May 2008 in the MOD. He commanded 20th Armoured Brigade 2009-2012 in Germany and in Afghanistan as Task Force Helmand 2011-2012. After a brief period in Washington as the Chief of Defence Staff's Liaison Officer to the US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he served as Head of Operations 'A' in the MOD.

Promoted to Major General in March 2013, he served for two years as Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Operations), before taking over as GOC 3 (UK) Division in May 2015. He assumed his current post as Commander Field Army in

December 2016.

He was awarded the OBE in 2004, the DSO in 2008, and the CBE in 2012. He speaks fluent French and Norwegian.

Lieutenant General Sanders enjoys cycling, ski mountaineering and fly fishing. He is fond of whisky and Spurs.