

News story: Sally Howes named new chair of UK Space Agency Steering Board

Dr Howes took up her position on 1 April 2019, replacing Professor David Southwood who completed his term as the Agency's Steering Board chair in March.

Dr Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

I am delighted to welcome Dr Howes to the position of chair of our Steering Board. Her skills and experience make her an ideal candidate for the role and the knowledge and enthusiasm she brings will provide excellent leadership for the board.

I would also like to thank our outgoing chair, Professor Southwood, for his invaluable insight, passion and commitment throughout his 3 years with us, during which time the UK space sector has gone from strength to strength.

The UK's space sector has seen significant growth in income, exports and employment in recent years, with total income now standing at £14.8 billion.

The sector employs 41,900 people, while exports are worth £5.5 billion. Much of this growth is due to space manufacturing, including satellites, ground systems and components. The UK has significant capabilities in this area, building major parts for one in four of the world's commercial telecommunications satellites.

Dr Howes has a range of non-executive and consultancy roles, specialising in cyber and digital transformation. She was previously a member of the Executive Team at the National Audit Office, responsible for evaluating the implementation and value for money of government technology and transformation programmes and for implementing digital transformation within the NAO. She has also worked for the Ministry of Defence as director of Commercial Services. Before joining the MoD she spent 4 years as director general for the Society of British Aerospace Companies (now ADS Group).

Her career started however in space programmes, involved in the development of ground segments for Earth observation and meteorological satellites and over 12 years as one of the founders and directors of an SME consultancy business in the satellite sector. Dr Howes was awarded an OBE for services to the UK space industry in the June 2004 honours list.

She holds a PhD in hydrology from the University of Bristol, and a Master of Arts in geography from the University of Cambridge. She is a Council Member for Surrey University, where she also chairs the Surrey Research Park.