

## BIOGRAPHY OF COMMANDER SIMON P KELLY ROYAL NAVY



Born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1974, Simon was educated at the 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 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 CAPRICORNE based out of Toulon. He enjoyed a challenging and varied appointment with deployments across the Mediterranean, Adriatic and Black Sea.

Promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 2007, he joined HMS RICHMOND as Principal Warfare Officer(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 Arabian 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.

Between July 2012 and February 2015 he had the privilege to serve as Commanding Officer of five different Hunt and Sandown Class Mine Hunting Vessels, twice deploying on Op KIPION in Gulf, most recently with MCM1 Crew 5 in HMS SHOREHAM.

Promoted to Commander on his return to the UK, he was assigned to Joint Forces Command, where he established a team to provide Operational Assurance for the Joint Expeditionary Force Head Quarters, prior to a return to Op KIPION as the lead planner for the UK Maritime Component Commander based in Bahrain. Simon assumed Command of HMS WESTMINSTER in September 2016.

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

