

News Release



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UK Admiral Takes Over NATO's New Maritime Command

Earlier today, Vice Admiral Peter Hudson CBE (UK Navy), took over command of the NATO Maritime Headquarters during a brief ceremony in Northwood, London. He takes over at a time of major change within NATO which sees Northwood as the Alliance's sole maritime command with command of the range of NATO maritime assets (aircraft, ships and submarines) dedicated to maritime security and counter piracy.

Vice Admiral Hudson takes over from Admiral Sir George Zambellas KCB DSC (UK Navy), who has commanded the Maritime HQ while it has undergone a significant expansion. NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral Jim Stavridis, who presided over the ceremony stated:

"I want to thank Admiral George Zambellas for his remarkable performance as the Commander of NATO Maritime Command. Admiral Zambellas was the key to completing myriad complex maritime operations and preparing MC Northwood to handle the Alliance's future maritime strategy, capabilities and operations.

In recognition of his exceptional accomplishments, he has been selected to be First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff for the British Royal Navy. I wish him God Speed and open waters. I also congratulate Vice Admiral Peter Hudson on this significant appointment and I am looking forward to working with such an accomplished and experienced naval officer."

He continued, "The role of Commander NATO Maritime Command is crucial as this headquarters will become the sole, consolidated maritime command for Allied Command Operations within a few weeks.

Meeting the challenges of scanning the horizon and delivering a wide variety of operational effects on, and from the sea, will require tremendous leadership skills and expertise."

In his farewell address, Admiral Zambellas stated. "I am also very conscious of the singular honour accorded by NATO to the UK. By deciding to place its Maritime Command here in Northwood, it is something more than a tacit acknowledgment of how NATO rates Britain's maritime prowess and the important role Britain still has to play in maritime security; not only as a key buttress of the Atlantic bridge but as a fount of maritime expertise. It is also a tangible demonstration that Britain itself continues to place NATO at the very heart of our defence. Indeed, NATO is and will remain an indispensable relationship"

The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, UK Secretary of State for Defence said "Vice Admiral Hudson is taking command of the NATO Maritime HQ at an important time, with responsibility for the continuing NATO counter-piracy mission in the Indian Ocean and counter-terrorism mission in the Mediterranean. I have no doubt that he will build on Admiral Zambellas' legacy of success.

Vice Admiral Peter Hudson not only takes over the Northwood NATO HQ but also responsibility for its two existing live operations: namely, OPERATION OCEAN SHIELD the counter-piracy mission in the Indian Ocean and OPERATION ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR, the maritime counter terrorism mission in the Mediterranean. He stated that he is taking over responsibility at an exciting time, when the world is facing a range of pressing security challenges and we are seeing increasing demands being placed on the maritime elements of NATO. He said that throughout the Alliance we are clearly witnessing something of a renaissance in terms of maritime security. The ability of maritime forces to achieve influence without embroilment has seldom been at so high a premium. In the future we will continue to be able to afford our political leaders viable options and our military commanders a variety of choices.'

Vice Admiral Hudson joined the Royal Navy in 1980, completing warfare training in 1988 during which he specialised as a Navigator. He commanded various ships including HMS COTTESMORE, HMS NORFOLK and HMS ALBION. On promotion to Commodore he assumed a number of higher commands within the Royal Navy before being promoted to Rear Admiral in 2009. He was appointed as Commander UK Maritime Forces (COMUKMARFOR), the UK's contingent Maritime Component Commander. During this appointment he served as the Operational Commander of the EU Naval Force for Counter Piracy and Humanitarian operations off Somalia; a position he held for 1 year followed by service as NATO's High Readiness Maritime Force Commander. He

was promoted to Vice Admiral in February 2013 upon assuming Command of the NATO Maritime Command at Northwood.

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