



Submarine  
Delivery Agency

# Corporate Plan 2021-2024

July 2021



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# Foreword – Secretary of State for Defence



I am delighted to introduce the 2021-2024 Corporate Plan for the Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA), which sets out the organisation's remit and intent for providing our Armed Forces and the nation with crucial submarine capability.

The SDA stood up as an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in 2018, with the intent to strengthen the procurement and in-service support of the United Kingdom's (UK's) nuclear submarine programmes. Together with the Defence Nuclear Organisation (DNO) and Navy Command, it forms the core of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE), which delivers the UK's strategic deterrent.

Sustaining our operational priorities and programmes, now and into the future, is vital for the security of our nation. The SDA continues to make progress in collaboration with industry and customers to deliver challenging priorities; the complexity of the procurement, in-service support and disposal of the UK's nuclear submarine fleet can only be achieved if public and private sectors work together, efficiently, sustainably and safely.

Like the rest of the nation, the SDA has responded to the Coronavirus pandemic, implementing new ways of operating and supporting the wellbeing of its people while working closely with industry to deliver outputs. The response across the Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE) in the face of the COVID challenge has reinforced their focus on delivering some of the most complex UK acquisition and support programmes of our times.

Since 1969 there has always been a Royal Navy submarine at sea, providing the nation's Continuous at Sea Deterrent (CASD) and ensuring the UK remains safe. The recent Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy concluded that our independent nuclear deterrent is relevant not only for today but will also remain relevant for the immediate future. This is why we have committed to a once-in-two-generations programme to modernise our nuclear forces. This is an investment in the future security of both the UK and our Allies and demonstrates that our nuclear commitment remains undiminished.

This Corporate Plan continues to reflect the enduring nature of the submarine programme and the capabilities that will be required and deployed for the next fifty years and beyond. It sets out the SDA's vision, purpose, strategy and plans for the next three years, together with how its performance will be assessed. With continuing and changing threats across the Globe, the role of the SDA and its skilled, dedicated professionals remains a key priority for Defence.

I welcome the SDA's commitment and ambition and fully endorse this Corporate Plan.

[The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP](#)

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# Introduction – By the SDA Chair and Chief Executive Officer

The DNE is a major national endeavour comprising of a network of programmes, equipment and people within the MOD and industry, that works to design, produce and maintain submarines and nuclear warheads, while providing the necessary estate, people and support. As part of this Enterprise, the SDA is responsible for some of the most challenging projects in the UK.

We are now in our fourth year of operation as an Executive Agency of the MOD. Our vision is at the heart of everything we do, which is to lead a high-performing industrial enterprise to deliver the submarine capability, safely, securely, more effectively and more cost-efficiently each year. We are determined to ensure that the SDA continues to grow as a fair, honest and inclusive organisation. This will help the SDA become the best possible place to work, which is vital as our customers and supply partners rely on us to do the right thing, the right way.

Throughout 2021 and beyond we will continue to advance our projects and support the MOD to meet its overall purpose. In delivering submarine capabilities for the Royal Navy, we continue to learn from the challenges we face, as well as our successes and achievements. Working closely with the Royal Navy, we maintain CASD and deliver capable and reliable in-service submarines and their systems. We lead on the design and construction of all new UK submarines, ensuring that we bring them into service effectively and efficiently. Our acquisition portfolio includes the Astute, Dreadnought and Submarine Submersible Nuclear Replacement (SSN(R) programmes. We continue to manage the delivery of the nuclear infrastructure needed to support the submarine fleet including facilities used for maintenance and construction. Recognising that our work spans the capability lifecycle, one of our key programmes is to safely dispose of the UK's submarines that are no longer in-service, and we are making progress on this work, securing technical solutions.

Throughout all of our work we need to ensure that we retain and develop the right submarine technology base to meet future requirements and retain our capability edge. Furthermore, we must continue to fulfil our roles in international partnerships and develop a sustainable industrial base for the Submarine Enterprise.

Throughout Financial Year (FY) 2020-21, the SDA adjusted to deal with the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Unsurprisingly, this has impacted our programmes, and a key priority has been to fully understand the resultant effects. Our core outputs remain the same and we have now settled into ways of working that align with government guidelines to provide a safe and secure environment for our people and industrial colleagues. Wherever our people are working to advance critical SDA activities, ensuring our people are safe and fully supported is vitally important.

Our people remain our greatest asset and we are especially proud of the resilience and determination shown to deliver in the challenging circumstances everyone has experienced. Our teams continue to work with utmost commitment to our purpose no matter what the challenge. As a result of their drive and determination, we have been able to successfully collaborate across the DNE to ensure delivery of submarine capabilities for today and tomorrow.

Noting the importance of collaboration across the Enterprise, we continue to work with our suppliers to maintain our focus on delivery, while also sustaining COVID-19 secure ways of working for both their own people and those in their supply chains. Our industry partners have established controls and protocols to maintain output and minimise risk to our programmes. In addition, having evolved our approach to key supplier and supply chain management collectively, we have been able to rapidly identify and deal with both current and future challenges.

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As we move towards 2022 and beyond, we will need to sustain our improvement activities, alongside supporting action following the Spending and Integrated Reviews. Overall, we are in a good position to continue to support our people and deliver for our customers. We remain focussed on achieving our vision and ensuring that the SDA achieves its vital role in helping to protect the people of the UK.



Rob Holden,  
SDA Chair



Ian Booth,  
SDA Chief  
Executive Officer



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# The Defence Nuclear Enterprise

The UK's independent nuclear deterrent, provided by a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine system, deters the most extreme threats to our national security and way of life, helping to guarantee our security, and that of our allies.

The 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) committed to create an enduring, world-class submarine enterprise. This principally involved the establishment of the DNO and the stand-up of the SDA as an Executive Agency of the MOD. It is recognised across Government that the DNE is a major national priority and the construction of new submarines is among the largest and most complex programmes undertaken by MOD or UK industry.

The DNE is made up of programmes, equipment and people, within the MOD and industry, that all work together to design, produce and maintain submarines and nuclear warheads, at the same time as ensuring the right estate, people and support are all in place for the success of the Enterprise.

Within the Enterprise, the DNO, SDA and Navy Command work with Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), BAE Systems (BAES), Rolls-Royce and Babcock Marine (Babcock) to effectively and safely deliver submarine capability to the Royal Navy.



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# The Role of the SDA – Who We Are

The SDA is an Executive Agency of the MOD. We were established in April 2018 to manage the procurement, in-service support and disposal of UK nuclear submarines, which are some of the most complex in the world. We deliver assured capabilities to the Royal Navy that are essential to the delivery and maintenance of our nation's CASD.

The SDA has some of the nation's most experienced defence nuclear experts in our workforce, as well as highly professional and experienced project managers and procurement specialists. At the start of the financial year (April 2021) we had around 1750 employees. This is made up of civilian and military personnel across a range of functions such as engineering, project management, project controls, finance and commercial. Our people are at the heart of our success and we focus on creating the environment and conditions to enable them to deliver the best outcomes for Defence.

We continue to grow our capability by improving and developing our skills in key areas such as project and programme management and commercial control. As a joint Enterprise, and in recognition that we only succeed together, we work closely with the DNO and Navy Command. This will ensure that, by delivering our common goals, we meet the nation's defence and security requirements. We also work alongside DE&S, which provides some of the equipment on which submarines depend.

As a delivery organisation, our focus is on operations alongside our Royal Navy customer at Her Majesty's Naval Bases (HMNB) Clyde and Devonport, and with our key suppliers BAES, Rolls-Royce and Babcock across the UK. Most of our workforce is located at Bristol, from which it supports the work undertaken at other defence and industry sites. In the US we work collaboratively with Department of Defense colleagues.

Our Annual Report and Accounts reports on our performance in the previous Financial Year (FY). The report covering FY 2019-20 is [available online](#) and we expect the report covering FY 2020-21 to be published by no later than January 2022. Notable achievements in FY 2020-21 include:

- improving submarine availability through greater capacity and productivity at the waterfront, and initiatives to improve reliability and contingent support;
- completing the commissioning of Boat 4 – HMS AUDACIOUS - of the Astute Class and her subsequent handover to the Royal Navy to commence sea trials in April 2020 and the naming of ANSON, the fifth in class on 11 December 2020, followed by her launch early in Financial Year 21/22;
- ensuring that the Dreadnought submarine programme remains on track for the First of Class, DREADNOUGHT, to enter service in the early 2030s. Staged investments have allowed good progress to continue the whole boat design and the construction process;
- making progress with our work to dispose of submarines now decommissioned from Royal Navy service and set in hand arrangements for the decommissioning and disposal of further boats. A major achievement has been our work to remove Low-Level Waste from the second decommissioned submarine, RESOLUTION, which is helping us to mature the technical solution for submarine disposal;
- understanding the impact COVID-19 had on our programmes and working with the rest of Defence and across Government to ensure we are playing our part in recovery efforts;
- swiftly adapting to the significant increase in remote-working, with virtual events, weekly leadership messages and additional use of our intranet portals used to support our people.

As we enter the three-year period 2021-2024, we remain focused on programme delivery and ensuring that our system of governance and internal controls enable the organisation to effectively and safely deliver submarine capabilities to the Royal Navy to support current and future operations.

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# Our Key Activities – What We Do

## Our Vision and Purpose

### Defence Purpose

The Defence Purpose is to protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict and be ready to fight our enemies. We are prepared for the present and fit for the future.

### Our Vision

Our vision is to lead a high-performing, industrial enterprise to deliver submarine capability safely, securely and more effectively and cost-efficiently every year.

### Our Purpose

In supporting the MOD to meet its overall purpose, the SDA has key areas of delivery. This is set out in our purpose which is to:

- maintain CASD by safely delivering available, capable and reliable in-service submarines and systems;
- lead the design and construction of all new UK submarines and, working with our customers and suppliers, bring them into service as effectively and efficiently as possible;
- manage the delivery of the nuclear infrastructure needed to support the submarine fleet including maintenance operations and new construction;
- safely dispose of the UK's submarines that are no longer in-service;
- ensure that we retain and develop the submarine technology base such that it meets our future requirements and retains our capability advantage;
- support and fulfil our roles in international partnerships; and
- develop a sustainable industrial base for the Submarine Enterprise that is able to support all requirements efficiently, sustainably, safely and securely.

We will deliver value for money across all our programmes through achieving an optimal balance of safety, time, quality and cost.

## Our Values

In 2020, we launched the SDA Code which brings together our purpose, values and behaviours. We remain committed to developing the SDA to be a high performing organisation that is an exciting and rewarding place to work. We have immense pride in ensuring that all our people – regardless of job, grade or function – role model behaviours that support our strong diversity and inclusion ethos. This means that we understand our core values and aim to live these daily. These are:

- When we Support. We are Committed, Inclusive and thrive on Teamwork;
- When we Deliver. We are Accountable, Open and Sincere in all that we do;
- We Aspire. We are Ambitious, Trustworthy and Proud of what we achieve together.

The SDA Code helps our people, our industry partners, and those considering working with the SDA to understand our values and ways of working. It also ensures that our people can see how our values support and link to the Civil Service values and standard of behaviour as set out in the [Civil Service Code](#)<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> The Civil Service Code can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code>



# Our Strategy – Developing How We Deliver for Defence

In the SDA we maintain a clear line of sight between what we do and how we measure and communicate our performance. We articulate our roles and responsibilities by linking each element of our purpose with key workstreams of activities and improvement work.

Using this framework (pictured on page 10) our Corporate Plan sets out some of the key activities on which we will focus to ensure that we deliver Defence's priorities and that our performance is effectively managed, measured and delivered.

On the grounds of security and commercial sensitivity, we have withheld details of our programme plans, milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This information is held within government and we are held responsible for our corporate and programme performance using a range of monitoring, reporting and review processes and fora.

The SDA operates a long-term business. Our programmes are enduring to ensure the Royal Navy gets the best support over the next fifty years and beyond. Since agency establishment, we have worked closely with our customers to shape the DNE, while working on common goals to achieve the nation's submarine defence requirements. We have strengthened and invested in our organisational capabilities and focussed on the effectiveness and efficiency of several programme areas (such as the Dreadnought Alliance and the availability of the in-service flotilla) to improve current and future delivery, and take a leading role in the management of complex assets and infrastructure used across our programmes. The Submarine Enterprise has different levels of maturity with different mixes of roles, skills and capacity. To be truly successful in the long-term, we will need to work across this community to ensure our approaches are aligned to the national endeavour that is CASD.

We remain committed to realising the ambitions set for the SDA of becoming a high-performing Executive Agency and an employer of choice. Empowering our people in an agile environment and culture so that they can focus on what really matters will be key to our collective success. We have therefore commenced several organisational-wide improvement initiatives, known locally as SDA 21, to enhance our ways of working, culture and behaviours across four key themes:



- **Organisational Clarity and Integration:** Making sure it's really clear who is doing what and setting up our new directorates on a strong footing for the future;
- **Organisational Capability:** Creating the environment and conditions for our people to deliver the best possible outcomes for Defence;
- **Ways of Working:** Ensuring we have the right processes and management system to operate them;
- **Integrated Planning and Information:** Making sure that we deliver all our complex programmes effectively and have the information we need to make the right decisions.

In reviewing progress on this development journey, we draw on feedback from our people, including the annual People Survey and leadership engagement events across our sites. This provides a rich source of information about what is working well in the SDA and where we might need to focus further action. We remain committed to involving colleagues across the Agency in such follow-on activities and in providing regular updates to our people demonstrating that we listen, care and will work together to improve the SDA.

## Our strategy – Linking our purpose, what we do and how we will develop for Defence

SDA purpose link	Key work areas	SDA lead	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Improvement activities
Maintaining CASD	Delivering today's capable and available submarines through in-service technical authority provision, combat systems and maintenance delivery.	Director Submarine Support	Performance against the in-service support programme provides an overview of our confidence in the programme. These KPIs provide an overview of the health of the in-service programme including associated systems.	To improve support to today's Royal Navy through capable, available submarines for Defence.
Construction of new submarines	Delivering future submarine capabilities through delivery of the Astute, Dreadnought and SSN(R) programmes.	Director Submarine Acquisition	Performance against our acquisition programmes provides an overview of our confidence in the programmes. Assessed against delivery of the strategic milestones on time and to cost, the KPIs provide an overview of the health of the acquisition systems.	To deliver submarines faster and cheaper, with greater confidence and certainty.
Nuclear infrastructure	Effectively operating and maintaining facilities at Devonport, as well as the development of new facilities to meet future requirements.	Technical Director/ Chief Strategic Systems Executive (CSSE)	These KPIs will track progress with delivering the programme of work to support nuclear infrastructure requirements in support of the Submarine Programme. These KPIs provide an overview of the health of the programme to sustain submarine infrastructure now and in the future.	To transform the status of the submarine programme's dependencies on infrastructure.
Safely disposing of the UK's submarines	Actively managing the UK submarine nuclear legacies through defuelling activities at Devonport and dismantling services at Rosyth.	Technical Director/ CSSE	Performance against the agreed programme of activities will provide confidence that we are making progress in developing our submarine disposal process in preparation for steady state disposal by 2026, including the safe defuelling and maintenance of submarines that have left service.	To utilise the best nuclear decommissioning expertise to inform and underpin our programmes.
Submarine technology and capability development	Provision of expert advice on safety, technical standards and future technology exploitation.	Technical Director/ CSSE	These KPIs will check that the SDA is embedding a culture that achieves continuous improvement in safety through a robust and consistent application of processes and the development of lessons learned.	To establish a robust framework for engineering excellence, supported by a highly capable workforce.

SDA purpose link	Key work areas	SDA lead	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Improvement activities
International partnerships	Delivery of Strategy Weapons Systems, Trident programme coordination and coherence, and fulfilling our roles in the 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement and 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement.	Technical Director/ CSSE	While we are focussed on supporting and fulfilling our role in international partnerships, as our work is part of wider departmental activities, we do not have a specific KPI on this area.	To transition relationships and arrangements to support our existing and new programmes.
Submarine enterprise industrial base development	Ensuring industry delivers sustainably, safely and securely through supplier and supply chain development as well as better contracting.	Commercial Director	KPIs in this area will help us review the SDA's relationship with industry and the supply chain to effectively and cost-efficiently deliver for the SDA's customers, as well as protecting our ability to deliver underwater capabilities in the future.	To develop a sustainable industrial base for the submarine enterprise that is able to support all requirements efficiently, sustainably, safely and securely.
Enabling SDA delivery	Enabling SDA Delivery through Financial and Project Controls.	Chief Financial Officer	These KPIs assess how we maintain and manage our financial and project controls. It includes measures as to whether the SDA is successfully delivering a more realistic financial forecasting accuracy and stability.	To maintain and improve financial management.
	Enabling SDA delivery through governance, HR, and resourcing, as well as security, accommodation management, communications and engagement.	Director Corporate Operations	In assessing the SDA's management and delivery of its corporate performance, we include KPIs such as ensuring that the SDA has the right people, with the right skills in its core workforce. It also tracks that the SDA is embedding a culture that achieves continuous improvement in safety and security through robust and consistent application of processes and the development of lessons learned.	To enable the SDA to do its best, every day.
	Focussing on becoming a world-class delivery agent and great place to work through improving performance and enabling effectiveness.	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	In recognition of the SDA's ambition to be a high-performing Executive Agency, this KPI area will assess how we are improving our internal performance and delivering our business improvement and development initiatives.	To organise our key strategic change activities to maximise benefit.

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# Our Plans – Delivering Our Purpose

To achieve our vision and purpose, on behalf of our primary customers, the DNO and Navy Command, we will undertake a range of acquisition, in-service support, infrastructure, disposal and business programmes of work.

## Maintaining the Continuous at Sea Deterrent

“We maintain the Continuous at Sea Deterrent by safely delivering available, capable and reliable in-service submarines and systems.”

### The Nuclear Deterrent

Our nuclear deterrent guards against the most extreme threats to the nation’s way of life, both now and in the future, providing the ultimate guarantee of our national security. The UK’s nuclear deterrent is currently delivered by the four Vanguard class Ballistic Missile Submarines that are being upgraded to ensure they remain highly capable until they are replaced by four new Dreadnought class submarines. This will ensure that the UK has a credible, independent and capable nuclear deterrent out to the 2060s and beyond.

### Supporting the Fleet

In addition to supporting the current Vanguard class of submarines, the SDA works closely with the Royal Navy to maintain the Trafalgar and Astute classes of attack submarines currently in-service. We work with Enterprise colleagues at HMMB Clyde and Devonport, as well as across the submarine supply chain, on a range of initiatives covering engineering and associated design efforts, logistics and facilities. Building on work completed up to and including FY 2020-21, we are improving availability through greater capacity and productivity at the waterfront, and initiatives to improve reliability and contingent support. Driving forward, our aim is to further exploit our data to mature our asset management and target equipment interventions to improve reliability, whilst revising maintenance policies and delivery to meet headmarks set for a step change in availability. Our strategy – through specific improvement projects and Enterprise-wide collaboration – will safely

deliver the submarine availability that Defence requires and support the Royal Navy with capable and available submarines.

We continue to work in tandem with our industry partners: Babcock for submarine maintenance and Rolls-Royce to support the Naval Reactor Plant (NRP) and associated technology, throughout its life cycle from design to decommissioning. In-service support is provided to two classes of Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR): PWR1 fitted to the Trafalgar class submarines and PWR2 fitted to the Astute and Vanguard classes. Our focus is on sustaining these technologies at a level that ensures they will remain safe to operate and available until each class leaves service. PWR3 will be fitted to the new Dreadnought class, so we are already working on the support and maintenance requirements for these future capabilities.

As part of our efforts to help keep safe and capable submarines at sea, we are responsible for maintaining and developing operational platform and combat system capabilities. Through maintenance activities, we ensure that the equipment on submarines works effectively and is refreshed and upgraded as necessary. Whilst much of submarine equipment is now supported by the SDA, we work with DE&S to fit and maintain equipment that is used on both submarines and surface ships such as refrigeration units, air conditioning plants and fire-fighting equipment.

Through the UK’s CSSE (see page 20), we support the provision and maintenance of the Trident Weapon System and independent coordination, coherence and assurance of CASD activities and equipment across both in-service and acquisition programmes.

## Construction of New Submarines

“We lead the design and construction of all new UK submarines and, working with our customers and suppliers, bring them into service as effectively and efficiently as possible.”

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## The Astute Programme

The Astute Class are the largest, most advanced and powerful attack submarines ever operated by the Royal Navy. The Astute submarines are being built for the Royal Navy by BAES in Barrow to replace the Trafalgar class submarines. There will be seven vessels in the Astute class. Four are in service with the Royal Navy; HMS ASTUTE, HMS AMBUSH, HMS ARTFUL and HMS AUDACIOUS. The remaining three boats, ANSON (named 11 Dec 20), Boat 6 (AGAMEMNON) and Boat 7 (AGINCOURT), are under various stages of construction at the BAES shipyard. ANSON was launched early in Financial Year 21/22.

## The Dreadnought Programme

In the future, the UK Nuclear Deterrent Capability will be delivered by four new Dreadnought Class submarines.

The Dreadnought programme entered Delivery Phase 2 in April 2018, under the management of the Dreadnought Alliance between MOD, BAES and Rolls-Royce. This phase sees the continuation of the manufacture of the first submarine and commencement of the build of the second submarine (VALIANT). As we enter FY 2021-22, the Dreadnought Programme remains on track for the first of Class, DREADNOUGHT, to enter service in the early 2030s. Construction work is now well advanced for Boat 1, with all units under manufacture. Boat 2 (VALIANT) unit production has also started in line with the overall build schedule. Recognising the high-levels of uncertainty caused by COVID-19, and the short to medium term uncertainty in Industrial Partners and Supply Chains, Delivery Phase 2 will continue until March 2022. The Dreadnought Alliance continues to mature, and the Alliance team has completed a thorough review of programme opportunities with suppliers seeking improvements wherever possible, which will be of particular importance in the face of the evolving Coronavirus pandemic.

## Next Generation Nuclear Propulsion Plant (NGNPP)

As part of our through-life work supporting submarine nuclear propulsion plant, assembly has already begun of the Nuclear Reactor Plant (PWR3), which will be used in the Dreadnought Class. The PWR3 reactor will deliver technological improvements whilst maintaining the highest safety, integrity and availability standards and at the same time, reducing through life costs. The contracts with Rolls-Royce are worth nearly £480 million for the manufacture and delivery of PWR3, for all four submarines.

## Submarine Submersible Nuclear Replacement (SSN(R))

Work has progressed around SSN(R) and approval was received to enter a Programme, Definition and Design (PDD) phase from April 2020. The MUFC PDD phase will consider a range of potential capability delivery options and delivery arrangements, including a manned nuclear-powered submarine (SSN(R)) and autonomous vehicles, to inform a future capability decision.

## Nuclear Infrastructure

“We manage the delivery of the nuclear infrastructure needed to support the submarine fleet including maintenance operation and new construction.”

The DNE, which includes the SDA, safely manages the nuclear infrastructure needed to support Royal Naval capabilities now and in the future. Construction continues on the Primary Build Facility at the BAES Barrow-in-Furness shipyard, which will help support a more efficient submarine production process for the new Dreadnought Class submarines. The Primary Build Facility comprises of two main facilities. These are a linked group of buildings within which the fabrication of the submarine reactor pipework and the assembly of the reactor is carried out, together with supporting office and welfare facilities.

At the Rolls-Royce Raynesway site, progress is being made with facilities where construction and testing of the new nuclear reactor cores – PWR3 for the Dreadnought Programme – takes place. Work also progresses with Babcock at Devonport Dockyard where construction of the facilities to defuel decommissioned attack submarines is continuing, and at HMNB Clyde, where refurbishment efforts continue to support today's submarine operations. Working with our customers and industry partners, we continue to progress targeted initiatives at HMNB Devonport and HMNB Clyde to optimise submarine availability in line with defence requirements and are gradually further enhancing performance across the maintenance programmes.

Nuclear infrastructure projects are often large and complex with bespoke designs. We are investing significantly in infrastructure across the DNE and will continue to work closely with regulators and industry partners to sustain improvements.

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## Safely Disposing of the UK's Submarines

“We safely dispose of the UK's submarines that are no longer in-service.”

The disposal of ex-service nuclear submarines is a complex and challenging undertaking. No nation has yet attempted full submarine dismantling. The SDA, on behalf of MOD, is developing and benchmarking world-class dismantling and waste disposal techniques which will meet all safety, environmental and sustainability standards, achieve best value for the taxpayer and address intergenerational liability expectations.

The SDA operates a programme of work – the Submarine Dismantling Project (SDP) - to manage and to dispose of the twenty submarines that have now been decommissioned from Royal Navy service. All laid up submarines in Rosyth and Devonport dockyards are managed in accordance with safety, security and environmental protection requirements.

Building on the successful initial phase of dismantling developed and undertaken over the last three years, we have removed 52 tonnes of mainly metallic low-level radioactive waste (LLW) from the submarine, SWIFTSURE. Work to remove LLW from the second submarine, RESOLUTION, started in November 2018 and completed in early March 2020, with over 77 tonnes of LLW taken from the submarine, over four months ahead of the approved schedule. This is approximately 50% more LLW than was removed from SWIFTSURE in 25% less time. A third submarine, REVENGE, entered the dry dock in Rosyth in late March 2020 to commence its LLW removal. Work was temporarily paused to implement safety measures for personnel in accordance with the Government's Covid-19 guidelines. Good progress is now being made to recover the consequential delays while remaining compliant with all evolving safety measures. The resultant delays are currently assessed as unlikely to affect significantly the overall timescale for the safe, secure, cost-effective and environmentally sound completion of the first disposal, due by 2026.

As we look to future phases of the project, we are moving from the Design to Demonstration Readiness phase for the Reactor Pressure Vessel Transport Container, which will cover the removal of the Intermediate Level Waste. Funding for the Demonstration Readiness phase is currently under consideration, with intent for contract placement.

## Submarine Technology and Capability Development

“We ensure that we retain and develop the submarine technology base such that it meets our future requirements and retains our capability advantage.”

In ensuring we retain and develop the submarine technology base, we undertake and provide a range of engineering services supporting the governance of our engineering activities and engineering products - both platforms and infrastructure. This covers management of nuclear safety and environmental protection, systems engineering policy, processes, standards and assurance, development of submarine technology, stealth technology, nuclear emergencies response and training and nuclear skills development. In addition to the engineering and technical skills the submarine programme requires, we continue to build on the strong foundations established in recent years to develop our tools and processes around programme control and technology management.

As part of wider defence maritime programmes, including those delivered by DE&S, we provide Naval Authority Safety Assurance, including certification activities and technical support, alongside leading on the development and management of a range of Maritime Technical Publications and standards documentation.

In support of the nuclear deterrent, we work as the principal professional authority for the procurement, through-life support, safety and effectiveness of the Trident II (D5) Strategic Weapon System. We will continue to fulfil our role in support of international agreements, principally the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement and 1968 Polaris Sales Agreement, to support the UK deterrent posture (also see below).

Our core message of ‘Never Silent on Safety’ remains a key ethos for the SDA and during FY 2021-22, we will continue to focus on three core areas: Culture – establishing a stronger, more inclusive safety culture; Organisation – ensuring everyone is clear on their safety responsibilities; and Capability – demonstrating that we have the right safety capability now and for the future.

Our safety and environmental policies and practices have been updated to strengthen our commitment to sustainability principles and the wider Sustainable MOD Policy, as well as specific policy measures such as the Greening Government Commitments. More detail is laid out in the Sustainability section of ‘How We Deliver’ on page 18.

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## International Partnerships

“To support and fulfil our roles in international partnerships.”

The UK works closely with the US on nuclear defence cooperation, underpinned by the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement (renewed in 2014) and the 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement (amended in 1982 to provide for the Trident missile system). These agreements allow the UK to work closely with US Counterparts on Nuclear Propulsion and the Trident System to improve effectiveness whilst maintaining full operational independence. In the SDA, as part of our work across the procurement and support life-cycle of the UK's submarine programmes, including CASD, we proudly support these agreements, working both here at home and in the US to ensure effective programme co-ordination, safety and assurance activities, collaboration and knowledge sharing.

## Submarine Enterprise Industrial Base Development

“To develop a sustainable industrial base for the Submarine Enterprise that is able to support all requirements efficiently, sustainably, safely and securely.”

A key role for the SDA is to lead and develop an improved and enduring supply chain. We work collaboratively with our Tier-1 contractors and sub-tier suppliers and public sector partners to ensure that the submarine supply chain has the technology, skills, manufacturing and maintenance capability to safely support the UK's submarine requirements for the long term. In support of government industrial policies and strategies, we seek to develop a high-performing, responsive and resilient industrial base. This is particularly evident in our work with our suppliers to ensure they are supported in managing COVID-19 both within their own operations but also their wider supply chains. Additionally, we are working with our Prime Suppliers to monitor progress following EU transition, identifying any risks that may exist during the transition period.

To continue improving performance in the future, we will develop our industrial strategy in line with broader Government efforts. This will ensure that our supply

chain, including small and medium-sized businesses, can best support our Enterprise, harnessing innovation and supporting the Government's agenda of levelling up prosperity across the UK.

As we continue to deliver our supplier strategies, we will embed new working practices to consistently and cohesively drive more value and performance with our industrial partners and their suppliers. We will continue to proactively increase our understanding of risk within the supply chain. We will also maintain progress with our work to actively mitigate and manage opportunities within the supply base through communication, audit, improvement plans and metrics.

Internally we will continue to re-examine our approach to the market, using category management as part of a MOD-wide initiative to develop strategies for the products we source and buy. We will use existing initiatives to align our approach better with our suppliers, for example by improving standardization management and simplifying our specifications where appropriate.

We will drive value for money for the taxpayer, through strong commercial principles applying the Single Source Contracting Regulations and driving transparency of cost and performance, as well as incentivising schedule adherence. This will encourage the Enterprise to deliver value for money, and delivery certainty and compliance from concept to programme closure. Within the SDA, we remain committed to developing our people and, using the Government Commercial Function Operating Standards, increase our audit and assurance activity to ensure we are both capable and compliant.

## Enabling SDA Delivery

To support delivery of our purpose, we must manage and run the SDA - an Executive Agency of the MOD - as an effective and cost-efficient business. Activities draw on areas of expertise including finance, human resources (HR), security, information management, business management, communications and strategy and change. Our aim is to ensure that, while supporting the ongoing development of the agency, we continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our services, evolving our operating model so that it is fit for today and the future. The landscape continues to evolve at pace and it is vital that we ensure that the SDA provides a safe and secure organisation working in step with MOD and Civil Service best practice.

# How We Deliver

## Our Customers

We work closely with our primary customers, the DNO and Navy Command, to deliver their requirements. These are laid out in Submarine Acquisition and Support Plans (SASPs) and agreed at the start of each financial year. Once the SASPs are in place, our Chief Executive Officer is accountable to our customers for delivery. In turn, the DNO and Navy Command provide funding and resources to ensure that the outputs can be delivered.



## Defence Nuclear Organisation

## Our People

We have a highly skilled and capable workforce and recognise the importance of continued training and development to deliver the technically challenging programmes of work we are tasked with.

With our strong focus on the support and acquisition of submarines as critical defence capabilities, most of our people are positioned within delivery teams and grouped in the following divisions; Acquisition, Submarine Readiness, and Technical. These areas focus on the outputs set out in our SASPs. Our enabling teams; Finance, Commercial, Corporate Operations and HR, are vital to ensuring that resources and business management systems operate effectively and efficiently. This organisational set up ensures that we are agile in our decision-making, deploying the right skilled personnel into the right business area as required.





## Working with Industry

As the sole UK buyer of nuclear submarines, we have a critical relationship with our major Tier 1 suppliers – BAES, Rolls-Royce and Babcock. Building on the Submarine Enterprise Performance Programme, we balance commercial tension with the appropriate partnering behaviours. This is underpinned by the Single Source Contracting Regulations.

We work collaboratively throughout the supply chain, providing opportunities for engagement to support innovation, a focus on longer-term strategy and to check against on-going programme delivery.

In demonstration of our commitment to intensify efforts with our industrial partners to improve performance, we established the Dreadnought Alliance in April 2018. This is a joint management team between the SDA, BAES and Rolls-Royce, who share the aim of effectively and efficiently transitioning design information into production outputs.

Governance is provided through an Alliance Leadership Board, made up of a representative from each of the three parties and the Managing Director of the Dreadnought Alliance. Sir Peter Gershon is the Independent Chair of the Alliance. The team is united in their focus and requirement to drive the Alliance programme schedule at pace, to ensure that the first Dreadnought submarine is delivered in the early 2030s.

**babcock**™

**DREADNOUGHT ALLIANCE**



**BAE SYSTEMS**

## Our Resources

Programme funding, as part of the Defence Equipment Plan, is delegated to the SDA for management through our customers and allocated in line with the SASPs and agreed investment plans. As an Accounting Officer, our Chief Executive Officer, Ian Booth, is responsible for managing monies delegated to him to effectively and efficiently operate the agency, including workforce salaries and travel and expenditure costs. Our performance as an agency is reviewed and published annually in our Annual Report and Accounts which reports our operating costs (Equipment Plan is reported in the MOD main Resource Account).

Budget (values £m)	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total Equipment Plan	4484	4504	4509
SDA Operating Costs	218	226	227

## Measuring Our Performance

As indicated earlier in this Plan, our performance in delivering our customers' requirements is scrutinised regularly by the Executive Team, the SDA Board and the Departmental Sponsor in the DNO. An overall assessment of organisational, financial and programme performance is reported through our KPIs, which are summarised as part of our business planning framework detailed on page 10.

Our performance as an agency, including financial performance, is reviewed and published annually in our [Annual Report and Accounts](#).

Since standing up as an Executive Agency, as part of our approach to programme and performance management, we have refined our strategy for managing risk across our business and the interface with our customers. It is critical that we understand the risks to our business so that we can minimise the potential impact on timely and effective delivery of our objectives. In line with project, programme and portfolio (P3M) best practice, we have a comprehensive approach to risk, which is considered at several levels: individual project level where clear scope, cost and time parameters are defined; programme level, especially where we are delivering projects in an integrated manner in support of our customers' Command Plans; and strategic level where we focus on ensuring the SDA is a robust, compliant and sustainable agency of the MOD. We also work collaboratively with our customers to share our understanding of risk and associated mitigation activities to ensure that we develop a shared view of risk across the Submarine Enterprise.

Having matured our approach over the last few years, we will continue our work to further improve our links between our risk data and other controlling artefacts such as schedules, assumptions, cost portfolios and our SASPs. We will also continue to link our analysis and management of project and programme risks to those at the strategic level, so that we can strengthen analysis of our data and work to reduce both our own and our customers' risk exposure.

# Sustainability

Sustainability has become more high profile in the SDA in line with wider MOD and Government programmes. Our responsible approach helps us to realise significant benefits for the environment and across the Submarine Enterprise in terms of managing risk, making savings and achieving compliance, which enables us to meet our vision and safeguard capability for the long term. The SDA's Environmental Strategy sets out our approach to managing environmental sustainability and is supported by an Environmental Management Plan, which demonstrates how the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals are being delivered through our activities.

Key developments for 2021 and beyond include maturing and enhancing the work activities with the SDA's Go Green Network as a mechanism for our staff to engage in the green agenda. We have also progressed the development of the development of the SDA's Net Zero Carbon Strategy and the implementation plan

to deliver improvements in line with MOD strategy for sustainability and climate change, in conjunction with taking forward activity in the area of Sustainable Procurement.

Examples of initiatives being undertaken are:

- working in collaboration with Navy Command to carry out a bio-fuelling pilot project to help establish a baseline position, which will inform a risk-based management system;
- eliminating the use of halons on the Astute boats and in future submarine designs;
- ensuring robust scrutiny of the usage and emissions of carbon intensive F-Gases across both the submarines and surface fleet through the newly established Fleetwide Gases Working Group;
- ensuring the new Dreadnought class submarines are being built to use ultra-low Global Warming Potential systems;
- taking further action taken to remove asbestos from in-service submarines where feasible.



# How We Are Governed

The Secretary of State for Defence is accountable to Parliament for all aspects of our performance, including our strategy, operation, outputs and the effectiveness of our governance arrangements. The Agency is governed by a Board, which operates under the provisions of a Framework Document approved by Ministers. Accountability to enable the effective, efficient and proper conduct of our business rests with our Chief Executive Officer.

## Our Sponsor

Nicole Kett, Director Strategy and Policy in the DNO, acts as the Departmental Sponsor for the SDA and engages on our business performance. As an Executive Agency, the SDA sits under the Top-Level Budget area of the DNO. Our Chief Executive Officer receives his delegations and Operating Expenditure from Director General Nuclear.

## Our Board

The SDA Board, chaired by Rob Holden, endorses our strategy and ensures it is reflected in our plans. It also oversees financial and operating controls, providing insight, support and challenge to the Executive Team. The Board has a critical role in ensuring that the SDA is fully compliant with safety and security regulations and that it has the appropriate capabilities to deliver its role effectively.



**SDA Chair**  
Robert Holden



**Non-Executive Director**  
Dominic Wilson



**Non-Executive Director**  
Sir Simon Bollom



**SDA Chief Executive Officer**  
Ian Booth



**Deputy CEO**  
Keith Beckett



**SDA Chief Finance Officer**  
Bruce Martin



**Non-Executive Director**  
Jonathan Simcock



**Non-Executive Director**  
Anne Baldock



**Non-Executive Director**  
Chris Walton



**Non-Executive Director**  
Vacant - recruitment underway

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## Our Executive Team

We are led on a day-to-day basis by our Chief Executive Officer and his Executive Team. This structure continues to bring focus and ensure that key workstreams are effectively supporting delivery of the SDA's purpose.



### Ian Booth

Ian Booth leads the SDA and delivery across the supplier base to deliver to our customers and is Accounting Officer for our Operating Expenditure. He is supported in programme and operational delivery by the Executive Team which provides the SDA with clear delivery and operational focus.



### Keith Beckett CBE

As Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the SDA and Technical Director, Keith Beckett leads our strategy and change work and ensures we have the engineering specialists to deliver safe and capable submarines to Royal Navy operations. He also provides a dedicated focus on safety, quality and the timely completion of our complex engineering projects, including submarine infrastructure and disposals. Keith also serves as the CSSE, which is the UK's Project Officer for the Polaris Sales Agreement with the United States.



### Rachel Baguley

Director Corporate Operations, Rachel Baguley, provides a broad portfolio of vital operational services for all SDA staff and supporting personnel, including HR, Security, Chief Information Officer, Governance, Communications and Policy Secretariat.



### Rear Admiral Paul Halton OBE

As Director Submarine Support Rear Admiral Paul Halton's priority is to improve the availability and capability of our submarine force. The role of Director Submarine Support was previously known as Director Submarine Readiness.



### Bruce Martin

As Chief Finance Officer, Bruce Martin is responsible for all aspects of finance, including Financial Accounting, Financial Planning and Analysis and Assurance. He supports the Chief Executive Officer in his Accounting Officer role by controlling and reporting to Parliament on the running costs of the agency.



### Dr Tim Sheldon

Director Submarines Acquisition, Dr Tim Sheldon, leads the Dreadnought, the Astute and SSN(R) programmes. He also leads on our relationship with BAES.



### Jim Carter

As Commercial Director, Jim Carter is responsible for procurement and supply chain matters across the agency to enable the acquisition and support of nuclear submarines. He develops our commercial arrangements and supplier relationships to drive maximum value across the entire supply chain.

Further information on the SDA can be found on [our web page](#).





Submarine  
Delivery Agency

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