



Foreword

INTRODUCTION BY ADMIRAL SIR JONATHON BAND KCB ADC

FIRST SEA LORD AND CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF

I am very pleased to be writing the introduction for *Broadsheet 2007*. Following some constructive criticism of previous issues, this year's publication concentrates on factual articles, written in plain English, to provide a more straightforward and tighter focus on our business. The opening article on operations demonstrates in spades that the naval service is working exceptionally hard across the globe, delivering significant capability. We are still engaged in live operations in two theatres, maritime security operations, intelligence support to operations, capacity building around the world and provision of the continuous at sea deterrent. We are working to improve interoperability with coalition and NATO forces, as well as conducting fishery protection, counter drug operations, and surveying in 3 of the 5 oceans. As I was writing last year's foreword, 3 Commando Brigade and 800 Naval Air Squadron were about to deploy to Afghanistan. They did a fantastic job and achieved much, but sadly we lost 12 men in the intense fighting with the Taliban. 800 Naval Air Squadron is back out there now, as part of the Naval Strike Wing, this time with 40 Commando RM and Sea King helicopters from the Commando Helicopter Force, along with many headquarters and support staff from all branches of the naval service. We are still very busy in Iraq, too, providing support helicopters, support staff and force protection teams. We are committed to training the fledgling Iraqi Navy, developing their capability substantially. Most importantly, as part of a strong afloat presence in the Gulf region, we provide protection for the offshore oil and gas platforms, through which flows 90 per cent of Iraq's GDP. And we are back doing boarding operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf. Up-gunned, with better cover and a revised posture, we have learnt much from the incident involving HMS *Cornwall* last March. You can be reassured that the Navy has taken some very decisive steps in force generation, collective and individual training, mission rehearsal, intelligence

handling and knowledge exploitation, to ensure we are far better prepared for the specific challenges of every theatre of operations in which we are involved.

The pace of change ashore is no less demanding and creates its own pressures. The Defence Equipment and Support organisation has been formed as the single through-life procurement and logistic support organisation for all defence equipment. The Fleet HQ in Whale Island continues to transform the way it generates and supports naval forces for operations. MOD centre, as well as providing strategic direction for our Armed Forces, is engaged in a streamlining process that will continue the drive to realise efficiencies and release resources to the front line. We are also removing some of the duplication that exists in the Fleet HQ and the Naval Staff to provide a single naval staff that will support me as I take on responsibility as the Navy's top level budget holder in April 2008. Many of you will be aware of the pressure the defence budget is under this year. It will come as no surprise that we have some hard choices ahead. Equally, some recent key decisions make it clear that the Royal Navy will continue to provide significant capabilities based around the concepts of littoral manoeuvre, using the hugely improved amphibious task group, and of course, carrier strike. Our challenge now is to squeeze every ounce of capability from the available resources and in particular, to drive down the costs of our support infrastructure. But it is not simply about resources. We have to ensure that we offer clear-headed, strong leadership for our people as the Royal Navy continues to change and help them to deal with the demands placed upon them. The Royal Navy has an enviable, well-deserved reputation that we must protect and uphold. Above all, I am mindful that we must maintain a coherent, hard-edged, war-fighting capability, underpinned by a resilient, confident warrior spirit. This *Broadsheet* offers a snapshot of how we are doing and I trust you will find the content interesting.



HMS Richmond, HMS Superb and a Mk 8 Lynx helicopter