



Ministry  
of Defence

de&s



# DE&S International Women in Engineering - Innovators

# 2022



Women in Engineering  
Network

## Stephen Wilcock

### Director Engineering and Safety



International Women in Engineering Day (INWED) is a great opportunity to celebrate the high calibre of women in engineering within DE&S, inspiring others to join this fascinating and rewarding field of work. As well as attracting more female engineers, raising the profile of our talented female engineers will also help us promote an inclusive culture in DE&S where everyone can come to work as themselves, feel a sense of belonging and enjoy the same opportunities. We both want and need to nurture diversity in our talent if we are to continue to improve as an organisation by attracting, retaining and growing our talent for the long term. Externally, INWED also plays a vital role in encouraging more young women and girls to take up engineering careers, and internally it is key to ensuring women within the engineering function have the belief and empowerment to fulfil any role at any level in the business.

For 2022, INWED is looking towards the future, focusing on the inventors and innovators who will keep advancing technology for the good of all of our lives. This theme is particularly relevant to the Defence sector and for our organisation to deliver to our front line customers, at pace, the equipment needed to maintain our operational advantage. To do this we need to get cutting edge technology into the hands of the war fighter and be innovative in how we do that. I am inspired by the variety, immense skill and exceptional quality of the women in engineering, across all of the Domains and Operating Centres highlighted in this booklet. From innovative contracting and digital transformation to internationally recognised SMEs and superior leadership qualities, we have some of the best female engineers fulfilling our most technically demanding and complex roles.

These inspiring stories also highlight the importance of empowerment and supporting others to take risks, to develop new technology and succeed by creating the right environment for innovation to thrive. I am proud that DE&S continues to enhance our business through diversity of thought, culture and attitude, to provide attractive career opportunities for women, to build the reputation and skills in the engineering function and to set the example for society. It is fitting that these talented women are recognised and celebrated for the contributions they have made to their teams, domains and functions for the benefit of the organisation and our front line customers. They should be very proud of themselves as we are of them.

## Jo Osburn-Hughes

### Chief Operating Officer Land



This is the second DE&S Women in Engineering Awards booklet that I have had the privilege to champion as the DE&S Gender Champion. Excellence, Integrity, Collaboration and importantly Inclusivity are at the heart of our DE&S 2025 Strategy. As well as the clear moral case for action, a diverse and inclusive DE&S is a stronger, healthier and more resilient organisation and building an inclusive culture is something that we are absolutely committed to. Our success is dependent on our ability to harness the diversity of talents, experiences and perspectives of everyone we have in the organisation and we will only meet the current and future defence challenges if we, as individuals, create the right inclusive environment where everyone can bring their ideas and innovative solutions to the table.

One of the themes that often comes through when I am talking to women in our organisation, and particularly in the field of science and engineering, is the importance of relatable role models. It is simple but incredibly powerful and inspiring to hear about the unique career stories and experiences of others and this booklet shares some amazing stories of female engineers in our organisation. The stories not only showcase tremendous personal and technological achievements they also demonstrate the exemplary behaviours of some of our top female engineers, displaying curiosity, creativity, resilience and determination to make a real and lasting difference to defence. A huge congratulation to all of those who are recognised in this booklet and they should be hugely proud of the valuable contribution they are making to our organisation and defence both now and in the future. A theme running through all the nominations was the importance and value placed on supporting and encouraging others to explore, to experience and to develop. Creating that supportive culture where everyone can thrive is something we can all personally contribute to and influence and the difference it can make to individuals, to teams and to the organisation is immense.

International Women in Engineering Day is a great opportunity to celebrate the outstanding achievements of women engineers and this booklet not only showcases inspirational stories of delivery but highlights the diversity of roles, teams and career opportunities in DE&S.



# *Ships*



## *Kirsty Fido*

### Operations Manager



Kirsty is an Operations Manager in the Boats team, as part of her role she supports the Royal Marines with the ongoing maintenance of their craft.

Kirsty recently saw an opportunity to upgrade the existing Offshore Raiding Craft (ORC). Leading the engineering team to evolve the requirements for the updated ORC, develop a prototype, a detailed statement of technical requirement, and a 4-year project schedule for 12 boat upgrades.

Kirsty has also supported the Royal Marines to provide innovative solutions which will allow existing contractors to undertake this work.

## *Commander Sue Seagrave*

### Ships Support



Working to digitally revolutionise the way the Ships Support Operating Centre does its business, she has near single-handedly spearheaded the introduction and exploitation of data analytical tools.

With an unparalleled passion and deep subject matter expertise, she is infectious in her commitment to embedding a digital mindset. Sue continues to drive onboarding of new users, industry and service alike, to join the near 1000 users she has already successfully influenced.

Sue has been instrumental in digitising processes and reducing the resource time and effort required for routine administration; demonstrably delivering the virtuous benefits of a digital approach. Sue's selfless and passionate commitment to digital transformation is exemplary; as a role model, she is most highly deserving of recognition.

# *Land*



## *Helen Gowing*

### Land Equipment



Over the past year, Dawn has gained Senior Safety Responsible delegation and received temporary promotion. Dawn sought to progress MSDA as a 'learning authority', balancing discovery issues with progressing business as usual and improving the definition of responsibilities, the management of risk and the effectiveness of MSDA activities. Ably and competently achieving this within her term time contracted hours.

Dawn's focus on people-management should also be recognised, as well as mentoring a Systems Engineering Masters student through their dissertation project, and her extra-curricular volunteering work.

## *Dr Dawn Gilbert*

### Systems Engineer, Marine Systems Design Authority (MSDA)



Kate, the first RFA female Chief Engineer leads the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Tide Class Cell. This Class Cell comprises of a small DE&S team, working in collaboration with Cammell Laird.

This difficult and demanding role sees Kate leading this team from the front in development and implementation of upkeep maintenance and strategy on these modern complex platforms. A challenging role constantly evolving and transforming to meet the requirements as platform operating knowledge grows and develops. This requires agility, flexibility, passion and commitment, attributes reinforcing her present posting and has allowed progression through the RFA Engineering Cadre to this senior position.

## *Captain Kate Morgan*

### Cluster Support Team Leader (RFA)



Helen has been instrumental in DE&S' journey towards certifying the DE&S Business Management System and receiving ISO 9001 accreditation.

Using her extensive expertise and experience in quality assurance, she supported in understanding requirements and producing a plan that ensured work to support the wider DE&S certification audit was delivered on time.

Helen continues to champion quality through her support to staff and finding ways to further enhance compliance and effectiveness.

For the last 18 months, Emily has been part of the team looking at engineering and safety issues associated with ordnance. Emily reviewed the ordnance for compliance with existing Defence Standards, and other standards, to present a case to Defence Ordnance Safety Group.

This work has developed the baseline for an acceptance strategy that will be progressed into the trials programme and provide an ordnance safety certificate for trials and in-service use.

Emily is also currently undertaking a part time Post Graduate Diploma to expand her knowledge, allow further innovation, and continue to be a success both now and in her future career.

## Emily Townsend

Engineer,  
Land domain



## Sam Nesbitt

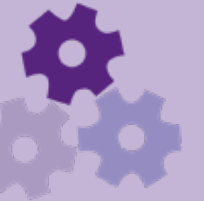
Chief Engineer



Sam is the Chief Engineer and Type Airworthiness Authority responsible for 7 different types of helicopter. These support different operations worldwide including jungle training, search and rescue and transportation. Sam ensures they are maintained and operated safely by the various military teams and commercial companies who use them.

Sam has extensive experience in airworthiness and regulatory certification. Previous experience includes certification of the A400M, both nationally and internationally, as the UK representative on the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation board - delivering the A400M into service. Recently as Lead Engineer in a new helicopter project, Sam established the engineering team from scratch and negotiated a significant work package with our external engineering partner.

Sam has a wealth of knowledge in all the engineering aspects of aircraft life cycles, having also held senior positions in human factors integration (air), quality assurance and repair and overhaul.



## Lauren Jenkins

Chief Engineer, Short  
Range Air Defence



Lauren achieved substantive promotion and qualification to hold Senior Safety Responsibility delegation – the first engineer at her level to do so in that area of the organisation.

Lauren is Chief Engineer for 13 complex projects. She has stepped in at short notice to undertake safety engineering and acceptance for a key trial, whilst motivating and developing the remaining engineers.

Bringing a wealth of experience, pragmatism and an ability to manage stakeholders, Lauren has also recently provided safety clearances for two key UK operations, supporting government policy and the provision of capability to the front-line commands.

Jody has managed a huge portfolio of work over the last couple of years including Release to Service Recommendations (rigorous safety and airworthiness protocols to ensure aircraft are operated with acceptable levels of risk) and improved Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel resourcing.

Jody has also improved the demonstration of regulatory compliance, a revamped Hazard Log and perhaps most significantly, migration of the Chinook helicopter to the new Type Airworthiness Safety Assessment Reporting system.

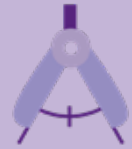
This coupled with a complex and disparate team, have made Jody stand out as a highly capable engineering leader and a clear ambassador for Women in Engineering.

## Jody Coote

Delivery  
Team Head  
of Safety







## ***Amy-Kaye Martin***

### **Senior Engineer**



Amy's time in DE&S has been spent in areas where automation is very much at the front of the innovation activity.

Amy-Kaye has been involved in the Institution of Mechanical Engineers Unmanned Air Systems Challenge for at least the last 4 years, supporting students developing and designing Remotely Piloted Air Systems.

As a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Ambassador to schools, she uses innovative ways to get her message to the target audience.

## ***May Holmes***

### **Integrity Management Lead**



May is an exceptional engineer with passion and drive to not only deliver her demanding day job as Integrity Management Lead, but she is also dedicated to sharing her passion for science and engineering to the girls in her Brownie pack and works tirelessly to help DE&S engineers prepare for professional interviews.

In her role as Integrity Management Lead across the 6 aircraft types, May has worked extremely hard to shape and influence the placement of a 2-year innovative contract providing external resource to support this delivery.

May is widely acknowledged as the go-to person for any integrity management issue and commands the respect of her peers and the senior leadership group.

## ***Wing Commander Michelle Parker***

### **Air Support**

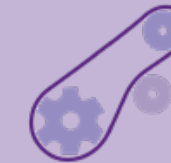


Wing Commander Parker's leadership ensured that a consistently high level of performance was achieved right through until the BAe146 aircraft's out of service date. An inspirational person and motivator, her proactive approach ensured that outputs were maintained and support established for the aircraft's final sale/disposal.

Her stakeholder management skills to coalesce multi-disciplinary and pan-sector team members are proving invaluable as DE&S looks to transition the new CSAT aircraft into service.

Wing Commander Parker is a credit to the Engineering function, her Service, and a valuable asset to DE&S.

## **Strategic Enablers**



Izzy is an extremely competent and highly motivated engineer. Building strong and respected working relationships, she has ensured effective and pragmatic decisions have been made on the safety aspects of many projects. This has enabled operationally important capabilities to be delivered on time while working to improve the safety culture in the team.

Her knowledge, expertise, determination and energy have contributed significantly to her team exceeding the Annual Safety Review target. In addition to the daily delivery challenges, Izzy has fully committed to obtaining an MSc and is investing significant amounts of her own time to ensure a successful outcome, while enjoying expanding her knowledge into new areas.

## ***Isabella Howe***

### **Safety Manager**



## Fiona Berndt

### Engineering Standardization Portfolio Manager



Fiona has been instrumental in improving the Defence Standard development process, to deliver better value for money and innovative solutions. Introducing a sustainability challenge within Defence Standards and creating virtual committees to improve Defence Standard content and consensus.

Fiona is enthusiastic about engineering, encouraging, and leading her team to continuously improve their skill and knowledge. A trait she also takes into her STEM activities and DE&S' Strathclyde University Partner programme, where students come in to conduct suitable projects in support of their MSc Dissertations and where we promote DE&S as a great place to work.

Jo has led from the front in adapting and innovating the deliverables on TGMI in-line with the customer requirements and disseminating the change. The end result has been exciting, engaging work led by Jo which has exceeded the customer's expectations. Jo provides clear and concise presentations to the team and builds on this with the customer during bi-weekly meetings. Self-described as a completer finisher, Jo always meets a deadline and ensures the delivered article is of exceptionally high standard. Jo has been an inspiration to work with and continues to strive for the best engineering solutions.

## Jo Camporeale

### Systems Engineering Consultant



## Delphine Byford

### Internal Environmental Consultant

*Deputy Science Discipline Lead  
and Women's Engineering  
Society top 100 Women in  
Engineering 2022*



Delphine is passionate about environmental management and assisting others in their journey as environmental professionals. And she became a member of the Institute of Consulting in 2022.

Delphine created the first Defence Environmental Professionals Network, which has since expanded to become the Defence Green Network and now has over 1000 members.

She additionally volunteers to be the Deputy Discipline Lead for Science within the DE&S Engineering function and is part of the STEM Ambassadors outreach programme. As an inspiring female role model, she showcases marine science and environmental management, encouraging children to consider taking up STEM as a career.