



COMMANDER JOHN CROMIE RN

COMMANDING OFFICER OF HMS ST ALBANS

A native of Northern Ireland, Cdr John Cromie joined the Royal Navy as a Warfare Officer in January 1999 having obtained a MSc in Information Systems from the University of Southampton. After basic training he specialised as a Fighter Controller and from 2000 to 2004 enjoyed rewarding appointments in both HMS Southampton and HMS Invincible. It was a period which encompassed challenging deployments to the Middle East, Mediterranean, Black Sea, South Atlantic, United States and as far north as the Arctic.

2005 marked the start of a particularly rewarding assignment where, after 3 months of intensive language training, he undertook a 2 year exchange onboard the French Flagship Charles de Gaulle. His appointment consisted of 3 operational deployments, including extensive operations in the Indian Ocean as part of Operation Heracles (The French Navy's contribution to air operations over Afghanistan). Principally borne as a Fighter Controller, his time with the French Carrier also provided significant exposure to embarked NATO Battle Staff operations.

Upon return to the UK in 2007, he completed Initial Staff Course before Principal Warfare Officer (PWO) training, during which he was selected for promotion to Lieutenant Commander.

Returning to sea in early 2009, he was appointed to HMS York, as PWO (Above Water) subsequently assuming the role of Operations Officer for a 6 month deployment to the South Atlantic. In 2010 he returned to the Maritime Warfare School (MWS) to undertake the specialist Air Warfare Officer (AWO) course, on completion of which he was awarded the BAE Systems Prize for top AWO student of 2010.

From 2011 to 2012, he was appointed to the newly commissioned Type 45 destroyer HMS DIAMOND, initially as the AWO and in due course assumed the mantle of Operations Officer, Warfare HOD and Senior Warfare Officer for the ship's inaugural deployment to the Middle East. During this time the ship operated as part of the multinational Combined Maritime Force and integrated into 3 separate US Carrier Strike Groups.

2013 saw his first shore assignment as the Officer in Charge of PWO training at MWS Collingwood through which he oversaw the transition of numerous new PWOs into the Fleet. Selected for Sea Command in late 2013 over the following 2 years he commanded three minehunters HMS BROCKLESBY, HMS ATHERSTONE and HMS QUORN and deployed on operations to the Middle East.

In 2016/17 he attended the Advanced Command and Staff Course at the UK Defence Academy, obtaining an MA in Defence Studies subsequent to which he undertook the Advanced Anti-Submarine Warfare Course (AASWC) at MWS. Selected for further Sea Command in 2017 he ultimately assumed Command of HMS ST ALBANS in April 2018.