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23 April 2015

*Dear Tim,*

**APPOINTMENT AS SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER FOR THE ASTUTE BOATS 1-7 PROGRAMME**

This letter confirms your appointment as the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Astute Boats 1-7 programme. As SRO, you are personally accountable to me for delivering the programme and for the realisation of the expected benefits.

DG Fin (with VCDS, DG HOCS and/or DCDS Mil Cap as required, supported by the Defence Portfolio and Approvals Secretariat (DP&AS)) will routinely represent my interest in supporting and holding you to account as SRO, referring matters to the Head Office Management Group and/or the Defence Board or me as necessary. If you encounter issues which cannot be resolved through these governance processes you should escalate them to me.

It is understood that, because of your other responsibilities, you will not be able to devote yourself to this role in a full time capacity. However, you have confirmed that you are able and willing to devote around 20% of your time to being the Senior Responsible Owner for this programme.

In addition to your internal accountabilities you should also be aware that SROs will now be held personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the programme (or specific milestones). It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation: it will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

As Astute Boats 1-7 is in implementation, in your case this means that from the date of signature of this letter you will be held personally accountable for delivery and could be called by Select Committees.

The specific details of the Astute Boats 1-7 programme are contained in the programme mandate and subsequent approved business case(s). These describe the required outcomes the programme is to deliver and the benefits that are to be realised as a result. In summary the aim of Astute Boats 1-7 is to provide a class of nuclear-powered attack submarines which will progressively replace the Trafalgar Class.

The role and responsibilities of an SRO, as well as the relationship with Top Level Budget (TLB) holders, are explained in the Department's Policy and Guidance for SROs, which will be updated periodically. You should follow the guidance in that document. You are also to make yourself aware of the Major Projects Authority (MPA) requirements which will require your personal engagement. Clarification on the guidance and MPA requirements can be provided by DG Fin and DP&AS.

As SRO you are to develop, maintain and communicate the vision of the programme to all stakeholders. Key stakeholders, particularly in other TLBs with which the programme has inter-dependencies, are to be identified and engaged throughout the life of the programme. You are to ensure, through leading and guiding the programme, that it delivers coherent capability through the

achievement of its strategic outcome and the realisation of benefits in line with the approved programme mandate and approved business cases.

You are to ensure the ongoing viability of the programme. In doing so you are to champion the programme to secure the resources necessary to run the programme and for the related transition activities required to realise the intended benefits. Where you have formal financial delegated authority (governed in MOD through separate mechanisms to SRO appointment), you are responsible for strict adherence to the terms of your delegated authority.

You are responsible for submitting business cases and reports as appropriate to the Investment Approvals Committee. In doing so you will monitor the programme's status, its forecast timescales, costs and benefits and key risks and dependencies and report issues (including any likelihood of exceeding approved tolerances) openly and transparently.

You should pay particular attention to ensuring the effectiveness of the governance, assurance and programme management arrangements that you will establish and maintain throughout the life of the programme. You should adopt best practice and be prepared to justify any deviation from it, in line with guidance published by the Cabinet Office (Efficiency and Reform Group) and DP&AS. This must include:

- Appointing, chairing and setting priorities for the Programme Board.
- Ensuring the effectiveness and performance of the programme organisation.
- Ensuring appropriate assurance is in place including the commissioning of assurance and audit reviews.
- Providing reports as required to DP&AS.

In order to ensure that you are best able to discharge your SRO role and responsibilities, you are required to attend the Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA). I understand that you are currently enrolled on the MPLA and your course is due to finish in August 2015. As a graduate of the MPLA I will expect – and will support – you to continue your ongoing professional development and will encourage you to take an active part in MPLA alumni activities.

To widen their experience and understanding of their role, SROs are expected to become accredited Project Assurance reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other Government departments, the wider public sector or other areas of the MOD as appropriate. You should arrange through DP&AS to become an accredited reviewer, and as such you will be required to participate in such reviews at least once every 12-18 months to maintain your accreditation.

The Programme Status, including the available budget, at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly report on the programme to the MPA. Information on programme status and progress is published annually by the MPA. This is the publicly agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

Finally, you should note that an SRO should remain in place throughout the programme, or be replaced only when a distinct phase of delivery is completed. It is anticipated that you will remain SRO for Astute Boats 1-7 for the duration of your tenure, scheduled to end in spring 2018. During your tenure it is expected that you will be responsible for achieving the following programme milestones:

- Operational handover of Boat 3 (ARTFUL) – second half of 2015.
- Operational handover of Boat 4 (AUDACIOUS) – first half of 2018.

You should ensure that you notify the Head of DP&AS in good time of your departure and of any proposed transfer of your SRO role to a future SRO. You will remain as SRO until notified otherwise in writing by DP&AS; your SRO-ship will not (as a rule; exceptions to be agreed by DG Fin) automatically cease upon a change of post but when your successor is formally appointed.

As per the Cabinet Office guidance on Giving Evidence to Select Committees (October 2014) this appointment letter and your name will be published.

*Yours sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'J'.

**Jon Thompson**

Appointment approved by:

Michael Fallon, Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence: 23 April 2015

David Blackall, Acting Chief Executive, Major Projects Authority: 9 April 2015