

Admiral Sir George Zambellas KCB DSC

As the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff, a position he takes up in April 2013, George Zambellas is the Royal Navy's professional head and Chairman of the Navy Board. He is responsible to Secretary of State for the fighting effectiveness, efficiency and morale of the Naval Service, and supports the Secretary of State in the management and direction of the Armed Forces.

As a member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, he advises CDS on maritime strategy and policy, and has a collective responsibility for providing strategic direction to the department, managing performance and ensuring that Defence delivers the required outputs.

George Zambellas was educated in Zimbabwe, and at Stowe and Southampton University, graduating in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering. He joined the Royal Navy in 1980 from the aerospace industry and qualified as a pilot in 1982. He flew three tours in different helicopter types, serving in carriers and frigates. After staff training in 1990, and a brief spell as a corporate planner, he commanded the mine hunter HMS Cattistock. In 1993, he was posted to Northwood as a Fleet aviation operations officer before promotion in 1995 and command of the frigate HMS Argyll.

During the 1997/98 Strategic Defence Review, he served in the MoD Centre Staff, helping to shape the maritime case within Defence's tri-Service balance of investment. In 1999, as a Captain, he commanded HMS Chatham, which included Operation PALLISER in Sierra Leone. In 2001 George Zambellas attended the Higher Command and Staff Course, and then became Deputy Flag Officer Sea Training, responsible for training Royal Navy and foreign warships and auxiliaries.

Between 2002 and 2004, as a Commodore, he was Principal Staff Officer to two Chiefs of the Defence Staff. In 2005 he commanded the Royal Navy's Amphibious Task Group, overseeing the introduction of two new amphibious classes of ships, and the Bowman radio and data system into amphibious operational use. He and his staff supported Operation HIGHBROW, the evacuation of civilians from the Lebanon, in July 2006.

In 2006, as a Rear Admiral, he was appointed as Chief of Staff (Transformation), leading the change programme to design and deliver the Fleet's new approach to the generation of maritime capability and support to operations. In 2007, he was Commander United Kingdom Maritime Force and, in October 2008, Chief of Staff (Operations) at the UK's Permanent Joint Headquarters at Northwood. On promotion to Vice Admiral In January 2011, he was appointed Deputy Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Chief of Staff to the Navy Command Headquarters, and the Chief Naval Warfare Officer.

On promotion to Admiral in January 2012, George Zambellas became Commander, Allied Maritime Command Northwood, in which role he also discharged Full Command responsibilities as the Royal Navy's Fleet Commander until November 2012. He was appointed KCB in 2012.