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CHIEF NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICER

FOREWORD

BY THE

CHIEF NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICER

Having taken over from REAR ADMIRAL Mike WOOD in August my first pleasant duty is to thank him for the excellent stewardship of the Engineering Branch during his two years as CNEO. Many of you will know that CNEO plays an important part in the promotion process and Mike's tenure in office saw a record number of engineers being selected for Flag rank (there are now eight). I will do my best to maintain his outstanding achievement!

As I write, there is much 'deep thinking' going on in our branch and I hope that many of you are managing to keep abreast of this as it develops. The TOPMAST team, working closely with Fleet's 'competency' work-strand set about mapping out the key engineering competencies required to both man current and future platforms. From these, a number of far reaching concepts have been developed and work is now starting to flesh many of these out; two stage careers, the system engineer approach, re-engineering (no pun intended) of the OM specialisation and air engineering to name but four. Your views and engagement will be vital if we are to get this right and through the three Application Panels (MEAP, WEAP and AEAP) and other fora we will be ensuring that the views of all engineers are taken into account.

This leads me neatly on to the 2004 Engineer's Conference and Dinner. HMS *Collingwood* will host the event on Thursday 4/ Friday 5 March 2004. I have chosen 'Beyond the Horizon' as the Conference's theme and sought to put particular emphasis on how the future is likely to shape our role as engineers. As indicated above, the branch is setting a new course to steer and as the members of the branch we all need to understand what this means. Successfully managing the future will rely on all of us looking hard at our continuous professional development and the sort of technologies we will be expected to manage in the future. The Conference will provide an opportunity to learn where we and the professional engineering bodies see the future, how accreditation and mentoring processes are developing and for those not yet accredited, to learn what is required. We will also get the chance to learn from those within and outside the naval environment where the cutting edge of engineering is taking us. This will very much be your Conference and I do hope you will be able to join me in making the event a success.

Finally, as CNEO my door is always open for engineers to call (or write) and give me, at first hand, their views on any aspect of our engineering business. I look forward to working with you to develop the branch and ensuring that it maintains its position at the forefront of naval business.