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FOREWORD

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I am conscious that, in recent years, I am the first CNEO to be appointed from the personnel area at a time when there are unprecedented changes in naval engineering. Each of my immediate predecessors have commented on the changes in technology, systems and equipment, but these in turn create the need for significant changes in personnel related issues — education; recruiting; training; developing and employment of engineering personnel.

As naval engineers the personnel related issues which we face include:

- The need to recruit the number of engineer officers, technicians and mechanics in a very competitive market at a time when a reducing number of suitably qualified young men and women are emerging from the education system.
- The need to review the way we operate, maintain and support our ships and submarines in order to achieve the maximum resource utilisation – at present our personnel strategy limits hull utilisation, and this will become more pronounced with further improvements in marine and naval weapon systems technology.
- The need to balance the requirement for a smaller number of very highly trained and qualified engineer officers and technicians with the need for significant numbers of semi-skilled, or unskilled ratings required for more general duties, while at the same time ensuring that all are a valued part of a ship's company.
- The need to balance the requirement for specialist engineering skills with the prospect of increased availability and reliability where the engineering skills are likely to be required only to repair battle damage rather than for routine diagnosis and repair. How is skill fade to be managed – continuation training?
- The need to set up a system of continuing professional development to cope with the rate of change of technology – what is the half life of a degree today?
- The need to adapt our training and accreditation to cope with an increasingly litigious society.
- The need to decide what level of training we should provide when the requirements for CEng are becoming increasingly academic and focussed on design and innovation rather than our mainstream business of operating and supporting ships. Do we need MEng? How and when should it be achieved?

The need to provide training for engineers who will operate in a more joint and multi-national environment, with changing relationships with the Civil Service and industry and with a more competitive environment for selection of senior appointments in the MoD.

Many of these issues are being taken forward as part of routine business but there are two strategic reviews which are now underway which will, directly or indirectly, embrace most of them.

The first of these is the Defence Training Review (DTR) which will provide the first comprehensive assessment of training and education across the three Services and the Civil Service. The potential impact on the way that we do business is significant and a particular area of interest is the delivery of engineering training across the three Services and the major engineering disciplines. Complementary and subordinate to the DTR is the review of the naval training estate and therefore, in combination, these two reviews will determine the shape, size and delivery of the RN's training effort in the medium to long term.

The second review is the Naval Strategic Manpower (Personnel) Review – which will seek to answer the question, what is the naval personnel requirement for the early part of the 21st century?

This work is essential because, notwithstanding the changes in engineering, we shall continue to need to employ the right people, with the right skills, with the right prospects, terms and conditions of employment if we are to continue to be,

‘A world class Navy, ready to fight and win.’
