



VICE ADMIRAL M. G. RUTHERFORD. CBE
CHIEF NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICER

FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICER

It is with much pleasure, and with a great sense of privilege, that I assume the mantle of Chief Naval Engineer Officer. Undoubtedly, we live in a demanding era, and the plethora of changes which have affected defence since the end of the Cold War are considerable, far-reaching, and have profound implications for everyone involved in the design, procurement and support of sea platforms and equipments.

I am particularly aware of the frustration and uncertainty which the current reviews, re-organisations and studies have engendered amongst many of you; it is, however important that we do not allow ourselves, as engineers, to be diverted from our primary tasks of keeping the ships, submarines and aircraft which make up the Fleet at the highest state of operational readiness. We must build upon the achievements of recent years, and in an environment of increasingly scarce resources. This will require a continuing awareness of the need to strive for improvements in quality, allied with value for money. For those working in the procurement and support areas, a readiness to innovate or to consider radical solutions to intractable problems will also be essential.

I do not intend to catalogue all of the major projects currently in hand, but would nevertheless like to single out two of our recent notable achievements. I have been immensely encouraged by the professional way in which engineers have contributed to the formation of the Naval Support Command. This initiative, with its potentially significant impact on the way that we support the front line, will continue to require a positive and enthusiastic approach from all those involved. We should not underestimate, either, the significance of the technical achievement of the successful build and sea trials of the TRIDENT submarines. This surely shows, emphatically, that U.K. industry, the MoD, and the Royal Navy have the ability and capability to undertake major projects and deserve more appreciation of these attributes than is often experienced.

Central to our success in the field of Naval Engineering is the quality of our personnel, civilian and uniformed alike. I remain committed to the notion that the Service should continue to offer a varied and challenging career which will attract and reward engineers of the highest quality. It is in this context that the *Journal of Naval Engineering* has its part to play with informing and educating the men and women who make the engineering decisions; I unreservedly commend it to you.
