



Mr. John Coles CB FR Eng

John Coles was awarded a Royal Corp of Naval Constructors Cadetship to study at University College London for Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture Following appointments associated with the Design and Acquisition of ships and submarines; he joined the Staff of Commander in Chief Fleet at Northwood in 1978. In February 1982 he headed the British Admiralty Office in New London, Connecticut, overseeing the design and integration.

On return to the UK in 1985 he was appointed Assistant Director for the design and acquisition of all Future Naval Projects - based in London. Re-assigned to Bath in 1988 he was the Design and Acquisition Project Manager for new construction Submarines. In 1992 he was promoted to Grade 5 and appointed the Director of Works to manage the completion of the large civil works programmes at the Faslane Naval Base and nearby Armament Depot at Coulport in Scotland. He attended the RCDS in 1994 and on completion was appointed head of the ship repair authority as Superintendent Ships - Devonport

He became the Chief Executive of the Ships Support Agency responsible for the maintenance and repair of all RN ships and auxiliaries in September 1997, and became Head of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors in April 1998. In April 2001, he became the Chief Executive of the newly formed Warship Support Agency which subsumed the Ship Support Agency and the Naval Bases. From January 2005 until March 2007 he became head of the Future Aircraft Carrier (CVF) project. He now runs his own consultancy business - Harcourt Coles - supporting both Industry and MoD. In June 2007 he became the Chairman of UK NEST.

In December 2001 John was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Engineering from Bath University; in June 2004 elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, and awarded the CB in January 2005.

Some Specific Assignments:

Member of the Board of two Boards of Enquiry for Flag Officer Submarines (as a result of serious material failures)

Special Advisor to the Controller of the Navy during the "short fat ship" episode

Leader of the Red Team Review for the Astute Project

Undertaking a critical examination of the design/cost of the CVF project for CDP/PUS