

# ACCREDITATION

## CASE STUDY



### Defence Equipment & Support

#### Introduction

Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) is the crucial trading arm of the Ministry of Defence that procures and gives lifetime support for the equipment that the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force need to protect the UK and meet a complex range of threats and challenges in a rapidly changing world.

As well as ships, submarines, aircraft, vehicles, weapons and supporting services, DE&S is also responsible for food, clothing, medical supplies and temporary accommodation. It manages inventories and supports the British Forces Post Office and the Submarine Dismantling Project.

DE&S spends around £14bn a year on behalf of its customers; £6.2bn on new equipment, £7.7bn on support and around £1bn on our operating costs. High value and complex projects include the Typhoon jet at £18.2bn through life and the £9.7bn through life Astute class submarine.

The organisation currently employs around 11,500 staff, the majority of whom are based at the Bristol headquarters and mainly specialising in programme and project management, engineering and logistics.

DE&S's priorities are to provide the best possible support to the Armed Forces and to secure best value

for money for taxpayers. The DE&S transformation programme underpins this challenge and, it is through this, that DE&S will become a recognised leader in Defence acquisition and in-service support.

DE&S has set out five strategic objectives:

- **Continuously improve delivery** by being outstanding in the procurement of equipment and support, being commercially agile, thinking internationally, applying an innovative approach, and being motivated by UK economic prosperity.
- **Develop supply chain capability** strategically and operationally, maximising opportunities for routes to market.
- **Continue to transform** by completing the next phase of DE&S transformation, realising the financial benefits of transformation, building organisational capabilities and having the management information needed.
- **Support DE&S people** by attracting a high performance workforce from across society to meet business needs and balancing recruitment and retention to deliver a sustainable workforce.
- **Focus on customers**, by meeting customer requirements, being trusted to deliver, and working together for Defence.

Essential to the success of this is managing project relationships with its customers; those in the front line, and working closely with industry.



“These are truly exciting times for the project management function and DE&S. The domain function managers and I are dedicated to supporting the project, programme and portfolio community's professional development and career progression within DE&S.”

**Mark Hawkins**, corporate function manager and deputy head of profession for P3M

## Building strong ties

DE&S is led by Tony Douglas, the chief executive officer, and constructed around five main chiefs of materiel (COM) areas of Land, Ships, Submarines, Air and Joint Enablers.

Beneath the COMs, there are 13 Operating Centres delivering projects, programmes and portfolios. The revised structure delivered as part of the transformation programme, now has a dedicated domain function manager (DFM)/head of profession within each of the COM areas who is responsible for ensuring those within their respective Operating Centres are suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the roles required of them.

All of the above is championed by the corporate function manager for project management and the MOD project, programme and portfolio deputy head of profession, Mark Hawkins. Mark has a direct link to the department head of profession; Dr David Marsh who governs the profession across all of MOD with direct links into the cabinet office and Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA – previously the Major Projects Authority (MPA)). Mark ensures buy-in and commitment from all senior management of the importance of P3M to the organisation and the need to continuously train and develop staff, providing opportunities all at levels.

## A framework for best practice

A key enabler for delivering the DE&S projects, programmes and portfolios is the intranet-based Acquisition System Guidance (ASG). The ASG provides a 'bible' for policy and good practice on acquisition for the MOD and its industry partners and sets the way that process is conducted, governed and controlled.

The largest section of the ASG is the project, programme and portfolio element. It brings together best practice from both the *APM Body of Knowledge 6th edition* and from the OGC's *Managing Successful Programmes*, ensuring that the guidance meets current professional standards.

## Setting professional standards

One of the ways that DE&S has set its professional standards is by providing opportunities to its staff to undertake industry recognised qualifications. The APM suite of qualifications are the predominant professional standard with an impressive number of staff holding or working towards various levels from the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification (PFQ) to APM Registered Project Professional (RPP). DE&S can also boast the first-ever holder of the new APM Project Professional Qualification (PPQ).

As part of its progressive improvement process, the organisation has moved from taking APM competencies as a reference to wholeheartedly adopting the APM Competence Framework. Every project management, and supporting role, at all levels has the required APM competencies built into the newly implemented role profile. Individuals will then be assessed against this, as part of their twice yearly performance assessment, to assist in highlighting opportunities for professional development and identifying the future career pathway to realise future aspirations and achieve professional excellence.

## Attracting and professionalising people

As part of the drive for excellence, all staff are expected to undertake continuing professional development. Staff are encouraged to participate in a number of activities ranging from internal seminars (on a number of topics where staff can share and learn from best practice) through to attending and participating in external events such as APM activities, and many other activities in between. Continual professional development features as part of the overall performance assessment.

From the start of their career in DE&S staff are provided with an indication of their potential career pathways along with the time and opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge to enable them to progress in their profession. APM qualifications and membership are integral to this and mandated for many roles.

The Project Management Function Team was established in 2013 to provide an increased focus on the development of project professionals in DE&S. Since 2013, the team has recruited over 500 new project professionals for DE&S, up-skilled over 900 DE&S staff and, more recently, have been a key enabler in the Transformation Programme; developing the processes and procedures that will govern the way that DE&S delivers its projects, programmes and portfolios in the future and how the function will be managed.

DE&S is committed to attracting and developing the future professionals of the organisation. One of the ways in which they do this is by focusing on and investing in apprentice and graduate schemes.

DE&S's flagship scheme for new entrants is the Defence Engineering and Science Group (DESG) student and graduate training scheme. This scheme is regularly featured in 'Top Employee Training' surveys.

DE&S took the opportunity to work in conjunction with APM and assist in developing the APM Competence Framework over the last 24 months. As part of moving to a balanced matrix, DE&S has now embedded these competencies at the heart of the five cross-cutting competencies, which underpins the DE&S Professional Competence Framework. Using a professional body, and adopting an industry benchmark that is recognised internationally, enables us to develop our P3M community in their professional excellence."



Recruits may start with an engineering or science degree, but the initial two-year, workplace-based scheme includes both training courses and experience in readiness for the APM Project Management Qualification (PMQ) at the end of the two years.

Further to this, and in support of the government's commitment to create three million apprenticeships by 2020, in 2015, as part of the Civil Service Fast Track Apprenticeship scheme, DE&S was proud to induct its first ever Project Professional Apprentices.

All Project Professional apprentices become Associate members of the APM and undertake a number of training modules as well as gaining a rounded experience of project management through working alongside experienced professionals within the organisation and undertaking specific work placements.

Building on this success, DE&S are also currently recruiting direct entrant project professional graduates.



Royal Air Force Chinook and Army Air Corps Apache helicopters are pictured practising deck landings onboard the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious



The Project Professional Apprentices with members of the Project Management Function Team and Air Marshall Julian Young in September 2015

## Association for Project Management and DE&S

DE&S has recently achieved corporate re-accreditation and continues to be a corporate member of APM, adopting the association as the lead body for project, programme and portfolio management standards.

“Achieving corporate accreditation is great news for DE&S and the function. With APM Corporate Accreditation, we stand out as an exemplar in the development of project management professionals – helping us attract, develop and retain the best talent in the country and reaffirm our position as a world-class delivery organisation and partner of choice for our customers and suppliers.”

The *APM Body of Knowledge 6th edition* has informed the policy and practice in the way that projects are run and delivered and all roles are mapped to appropriate APM qualifications. The APM Competence Framework has been adopted as the framework for DE&S role profiles.

Over 800 DE&S staff currently hold the former APMP or new PMQ qualification, a significantly higher number are currently working through training modules towards this level. DE&S also has many APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ), and APM Registered Project Professional (RPP) holders.

Individual membership of APM is mandatory for some senior grades, with DE&S paying for the subscriptions to ensure each person maintains their standard and remain focused on continuous professional development.

DE&S staff are also encouraged to contribute to local and national APM events and committees.



### Personal story

Ian Hunneybell came to project management through software development. Like many others, he increasingly found himself managing projects but with no training or qualifications. That all changed after he made the switch from IT to the world of defence.

As one who is keen to keep learning, he has embraced the opportunities offered by the MOD DE&S to increase and improve his project management skills and knowledge.

Ian joined the MOD three years ago following many years as a software developer in the private sector, including 15 years in the City of London working with the Stock Exchange and investment banks and on overseas assignments.

He is currently leading a construction project on a £50m programme for a Chinook helicopter flight simulator facility for the RAF, working with an industry partner main contractor, sub-contractors and RAF personnel.

“As a software developer, I increasingly found I was managing software design and development projects, which fired my enthusiasm for project management but I had to pick it up as I went along.

“I enjoy learning and as project management is something I got into without formal education I am keen to learn what I can. The MOD is very good at providing training opportunities for staff.”

The APM route has worked well for him. The MOD put him through the APMP – now the APM Project Management Qualification (PMQ) – and sponsored him for the APM Practitioner Qualification (PQ). He is now being supported through a three-year master's degree in Programme and Project Management run by Cranfield University at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham, Wiltshire.

He is also an active member of APM South West branch, welcoming the opportunities at events to share knowledge and learn from those in other industries.

“APM qualifications and branch events bring together many elements that make a successful project and project team. It has all helped to make me a more rounded person and project manager.”

At 52, Ian still has professional aims at ambitions. “Becoming an APM Registered Project Professional (RPP) is an aspiration, but I am still looking to gain more experience – and to continue to exercise my brain!”

## Association for Project Management

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### **FIVE**Dimensions of Professionalism

#### **APM Corporate Accreditation**

APM Corporate Accreditation will help you stand out as an exemplar in the development of project management professionals. It provides assurances to your customers and suppliers and allows you to attract and retain the best project management talent in the country.

APM Corporate Accreditation recognises the commitment of organisations and professional development services to the defined APM FIVE Dimensions of Professionalism, each of which is supported by an APM standard:

#### **Breadth**

The *APM Body of Knowledge* defines the knowledge needed to manage any kind of project. It underpins many project management standards and methods including the National Occupational Standard in Project Management.

#### **Depth**

The *APM Competence Framework* provides a guide to project management competences. It is part of your professional toolkit; mapping levels of knowledge and experience to help you progress your skills and abilities.

#### **Achievement**

APM qualifications take your career in new and exciting directions. They are recognised across the profession and aligned with IPMA's 4 level Certification Program.

#### **Commitment**

Continuing Professional Development helps develop your project management practice. A targeted development plan will enhance your project management career.

#### **Accountability**

The APM Code of Professional Conduct outlines the ethical practice expected of a professional. Becoming an APM member shows your commitment to the Code and sets you apart from others.