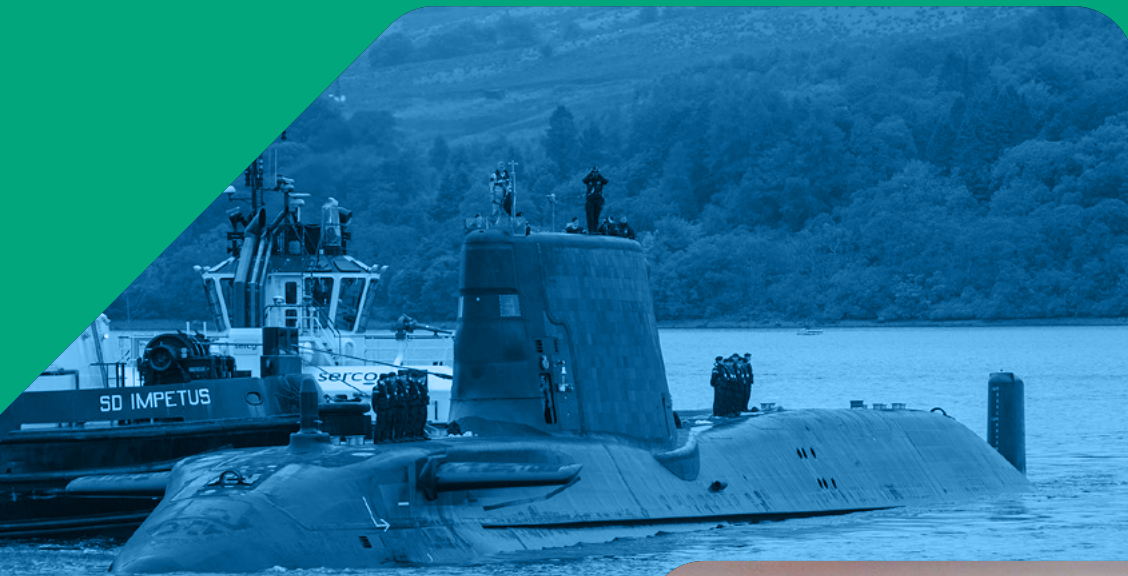




Submarine
Delivery Agency

Corporate Plan 2022-2025

April 2023



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Foreword – Secretary of State for Defence



I am pleased to introduce the 2022-2025 Corporate Plan for the Submarine Delivery Agency (SDA), which sets out how the agency will deliver vital submarine capabilities as part of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise together with how its performance will be assessed. Delivering the UK's submarine programmes is essential to supporting the Royal Navy's operational outputs in meeting the United Kingdom's national security requirements.

Establishment of the SDA was set against a backdrop of the following major Nuclear Enterprise challenges:

- failure to deliver the Astute Class both out of build and in service (due to historic decisions taken by the Department and industry performance)

- late investment in the Dreadnought programme with considerable optimism bias in both cost and schedule
- resulting in the need for the life extension of the Vanguard Class
- inadequate supporting infrastructure with late and incomplete plans to fix
- degraded industrial capability which we are having to rebuild
- long-term failure to dispose of decommissioned submarines
- complex structures, funding and governance where we have a real opportunity to make good and within that make SDA an empowered and trusted Delivery Agent

The SDA aims to deliver our submarine capability safely, securely and more effectively every year, and is committed to meeting these challenges head-on in the face of an increasingly unstable security environment.

I am confident that the SDA and the new leadership will address the historical challenges.

This document outlines the SDA's critical role for defence, and I fully endorse both this plan and the agency's approach.

The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP

Introduction – SDA Chair and Chief Executive Officer

In the SDA we understand the critical importance of our role in the defence of the UK and our sovereign territories and strive to deliver the nation's submarine capability ever more safely, securely and effectively every year. This ambition is underpinned by the values set out in our SDA Code and the three headmarks for our focus on: People and Capability; Collaboration; and Simplification. We are determined to sustain and enhance an empowered, dynamic and inclusive environment that ensures all our people can thrive and contribute to their fullest, each and every day. Our thirst for continual improvement is crucial as we deliver some of the nation's most challenging and important work.

We are equally determined to promote and support collaboration across the Defence Nuclear Enterprise to meet our shared aims from financial year 2022-23 and beyond. We work in partnership with the Royal Navy to maintain Continuous at Sea Deterrence (CASD) and to ensure that capable and reliable submarines are ready for operational deployment when they are needed. We also lead on the design and construction of new UK submarines in the Astute and Dreadnought Classes, ensuring the sustainability of CASD long into the future. Beyond these, the Submersible Ship Nuclear Replacement programme is maturing a range of potential future capabilities and delivery options for the even longer term. Ultimately, we are responsible for fostering and deploying the nation's highly capable technology base to build on the UK's submarine capability advantage.

Submarine construction and maintenance depends on the timely availability of nuclear and waterfront infrastructure. So, as well as delivering submarines, we are ensuring that the necessary support facilities are fit for purpose, today and tomorrow. We are also addressing the UK's nuclear submarine liabilities by safely disposing of submarines that are no longer in-service. Full disposal of nuclear submarines has not been achieved before, so we are innovating 'world-first' technical solutions as we go.

We can only succeed as part of the wider Defence Nuclear Enterprise. With industry, from our large industrial partners to the small and medium companies in the supply chain, and with our Ministry of Defence (MOD) customers and Sponsor, we are united in one common defence purpose. We commit, therefore, to purposeful and effective relationships (built on trust and collaboration) across a single high performing enterprise to deliver what is truly a national endeavour.

Our vital outputs have been sustained throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and we're especially proud of the resilience shown since March 2020; continuing to deliver in the most challenging of circumstances. We remain dedicated to providing a safe and secure environment for our colleagues; our people are our strength and their health and wellbeing our priority. We have listened to their feedback through channels such as our annual survey and we are redoubling our efforts to invest in them. Our People Strategy and change plans will ensure we attract, develop, reward and retain the skills and expertise we need.

We will empower our people to take decisions quickly, supported by simpler processes, clear relationships and responsibilities and further investment in systems and tools to enable their delivery.

Our Annual Report and Accounts shows the progress that we have made, and notable achievements in 2021-22 are also described in this report. There remains, however, much to do and we are not complacent about the scale of the challenge ahead.

This is a year of leadership transition for the SDA; we wished Ian Booth, the first CEO of the SDA, a fond farewell in September 2022 after a period of exceptional service in establishing the SDA.

This plan outlines how we will push forward with our improvement actions in the immediate term. We take immense pride in our work, and strength from the knowledge that our efforts are vital in protecting the people of the UK today and into the future.



Jonathan Simcock,
SDA Chair



Sir Chris Gardner KBE,
SDA Chief Executive
Officer



The Defence Nuclear Enterprise

The UK's independent nuclear deterrent, provided by a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine system, deters the most extreme threats to our national security and way of life, helping to guarantee our security, and that of our allies. The deterrent relies on a network of programmes, equipment and people, within the MOD and industry, often referred to as the Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE).

The DNE works together to design, produce, maintain and dispose of submarines and nuclear warheads, at the same time as ensuring the right infrastructure, people and support are all in place for the success of the Enterprise.

The Integrated Review Refresh 2023 re-affirmed the commitment set out in the Government's Integrated Review of Security, Defence,

Development and Foreign Policy 2021 to create an enduring, world-class Submarine Enterprise. This involves the Defence Nuclear Organisation, and the SDA as an Executive Agency of the MOD. It is recognised across Government that the DNE is a major national priority. As part of this, the construction of new submarines is among the largest and most complex programmes undertaken by MOD or UK industry.

Within the Enterprise, the Defence Nuclear Organisation, SDA and Navy Command work with Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), BAE Systems (BAES), Rolls-Royce, Babcock Marine (Babcock) and our international partners to deliver submarine capability effectively and safely to the Royal Navy and meet the nation's defence and security requirements.



Defence Nuclear
Organisation



Submarine
Delivery Agency



Ministry
of Defence



The role of the SDA – who we are

The SDA is an Executive Agency of the MOD. We deliver the procurement, in-service support and disposal of UK nuclear submarines – some of the most complex vessels in the world. We provide assured capabilities to the Royal Navy that are crucial to the delivery and maintenance of CASD.

In the SDA we have some of the nation's most experienced defence nuclear experts in our workforce, as well as highly professional and experienced project managers and procurement specialists. At the start of the period covered by this plan (April 2022), we had around 1900 employees. This is made up of civilian and military personnel across a range of functions such as engineering, project management, project controls, finance and commercial. We continue to grow our capability by improving and developing our skills in these

key areas. Our people are at the heart of our success and we are determined to create the environment and conditions which will enable them to deliver the best outcomes for the Enterprise. (See more in the 'Our people' section on [page 20](#))

With a commitment to teamwork and to achieve common goals as part of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise, as a delivery organisation our focus is on operations alongside our Royal Navy customer at Her Majesty's Naval Bases (HMNB) Clyde and Devonport, and with our key suppliers BAES, Rolls-Royce and Babcock across the UK. Most of our people are located at Bristol, from where we support the work undertaken at other defence and industry sites. In the US, we work collaboratively with Department of Defense colleagues.



Our Annual Report and Accounts reports on our performance in the previous Financial Year. The [report covering 2021-22](#) is available online.

Notable achievements in 2021-22 include:

- HMS Audacious, the fourth boat in the Astute class, being formally commissioned on 23 September 2021 in a ceremony at HMNB Clyde, following the successful completion of sea trials
- Astute class Boat 5, Anson, launching at the BAES shipyard, Barrow in April 2021, and successfully completing its first trim (test) dive in March 2022
- receiving all 12 missile tubes for the First of Class, Dreadnought at the BAES shipyard at Barrow – a significant milestone within the Dreadnought build programme
- delivering infrastructure upgrades at both the BAES shipyard in Barrow, and Rolls-Royce at Raynesway, allowing for good progress in the construction of the Dreadnought class
- with DE&S, awarding four further contracts to Babcock under the Future Maritime Support Programme to provide ongoing support at HMNB Clyde and HMNB Devonport

- establishing a data-driven approach to in-service support enabling us to meet a step change in submarine availability
- awarding contracts worth £140m to Babcock for infrastructure design and enabling works to support Astute class submarine maintenance at HMNB Devonport
- removing radioactive waste from three decommissioned submarines within scheduled time and cost
- awarding two contracts each worth £85m to BAES and Rolls-Royce to deliver design and concept work for a future class of Royal Navy submarine

We will seek continual improvement in programme delivery and in our systems of governance and internal controls in order to deliver submarine capabilities effectively and safely to the Royal Navy to support current and future operations.

Our key activities – what we do

Our vision and purpose

Defence Purpose

The Defence Purpose is to protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict and be ready to fight our enemies. We are prepared for the present and fit for the future

Our vision

Our vision is to lead a high-performing, industrial enterprise to deliver submarine capability safely, securely and more effectively and cost-efficiently every year.

Our mission

Available, capable submarines for the defence of the nation.

Our purpose

In supporting the MOD to meet its overall purpose, the SDA is here to:

- maintain CASD by safely delivering available, capable and reliable in-service submarines and systems
- lead the design and construction of all new UK submarines and, working with our customers and suppliers, bring them into service as effectively and efficiently as possible
- manage the delivery of the nuclear infrastructure needed to support the submarine fleet including maintenance operations and new construction
- safely dispose of the UK's submarines that are no longer in-service
- ensure that we retain and develop the submarine technology base such that it

meets our future requirements and retains our capability advantage

- support and fulfil our roles in international partnerships
- develop a sustainable industrial base for the Submarine Enterprise that is able to support all requirements efficiently, sustainably, safely and securely

We will deliver value for money across all our programmes by achieving an optimal balance of safety, time, quality and cost.

Our values

The SDA Code brings together our purpose, values and behaviours. We are committed to developing the SDA to be a high performing organisation that is an exciting and rewarding place to work. We want all our people – regardless of job, grade or function – to role model behaviours that support our strong Diversity and Inclusion ethos. This means that we understand our core values and aim to live by these daily. These are:

- When we Support. We are committed, inclusive and thrive on teamwork
- When we Deliver. We are accountable, open and sincere in all that we do
- We Aspire. We are ambitious, trustworthy and proud of what we achieve together

The SDA Code helps our people, our industry partners, and those considering working with the SDA to understand our values and ways of working. It also ensures that our people can see how our values relate to the Civil Service values and standard of behaviour as set out in the [Civil Service Code](#).

Our strategy – developing how we deliver for defence

In the SDA we maintain a clear line of sight between what we do and how we measure and communicate our performance. We articulate our roles and responsibilities by linking each element of our purpose with key workstreams of activities and improvement work using this framework (set out on [pages 11 and 12](#)).

This Corporate Plan sets out some of our key areas of focus but on the grounds of security and commercial sensitivity, we have withheld details of our programme plans, milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This information is held within government and used to measure our corporate and programme performance (see ‘Measuring our performance’ on [page 22](#) for further detail).

The SDA operates a long-term business; our order book spans some 50 years. We seek continuous improvement in our organisational capabilities and in our programme areas (such as the Dreadnought Alliance and the availability of the in-service flotilla). We take a leading role in the management of complex assets and infrastructure used across our programmes. Our collaboration across the Submarine Enterprise seeks to sustain unique UK skills and resources and drive sustainability

and value for money in our performance – an approach that aligns to the national endeavor that is CASD.

Building on the firm foundation of recent change activities, we will move ahead with our organisation-wide improvement initiatives, to grow the SDA’s capabilities and enhance our ways of working, culture and skills. To grow our agency capabilities, we will be working towards three key headmarks:

- people and capability – our capability is enshrined in our people, as well as in the processes and tools that support them. Our People Strategy, including our approach to reward and recognition plus effective function management, will be at the heart of recruiting, developing and retaining our people. Empowerment in decision making is also a key lever in helping our people deliver and succeed
- collaboration – our intent is to deepen and broaden collaboration across the scope of our responsibilities so that we achieve ‘best for defence’ outcomes
- simplification – we will drive a mantra for simplification into everything we do – both in our organisation and processes

In reviewing progress on this development journey, we draw on feedback from our people, including the annual People Survey, and leadership engagement events across our sites. This provides a rich source of information about what is working well and where we need to work collectively to improve the SDA.

During 2022-23, the fifth year of the SDA, we will review our overall strategy to ensure an ongoing and coherent view of how we deliver for defence as part of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise. Our vision for the next period and revised approach will be published in our Corporate Plan for 2023-2026.



Our strategy – linking our purpose, what we do and how we will develop for defence

Delivering the UK's Submarine Capabilities

SDA purpose link	Key work areas	SDA lead	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Maintaining CASD	Delivering today's capable and available submarines through in-service technical authority provision, combat systems and maintenance delivery.	Director Submarine Support	Performance against the in-service support programme provides an overview of our confidence in the programme. These KPIs provide an overview of the health of the in-service programme including associated systems.
Construction of new submarines	Delivering future submarine capabilities through delivery of the Astute, Dreadnought and Submersible Ship Nuclear Replacement (SSN(R)) programmes.	Director Submarine Acquisition	Performance against our acquisition programmes provides an overview of our confidence in the programmes. Assessed against delivery of the strategic milestones on time and cost, the KPIs provide an overview of the health of the acquisition systems.
Nuclear infrastructure	Effectively operating and maintaining facilities at HMNB Devonport, as well as the development of new facilities to meet future requirements.	Director Submarine Support	These KPIs will track progress with delivering the programme of work to support nuclear infrastructure requirements in support of the Submarine Programme. These KPIs provide an overview of the health of the programme to sustain submarine infrastructure now and in the future.
Safely disposing of the UK's submarines	Actively managing the UK submarine nuclear legacies through defuelling activities at Devonport and dismantling services at Rosyth.	Director Submarine Support	Performance against the agreed programme of activities will provide confidence that we are making progress in developing our submarine disposal process, including the safe defuelling and maintenance of submarines that have left service.

Growing the SDA's Capabilities

SDA purpose link	Key work areas	SDA lead	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Submarine technology and capability development	Provision of expert advice on safety, technical standards and future technology exploitation.	Technical Director/CSSE	These KPIs will check that the SDA is retaining our capability advantage as well as embedding a culture that achieves continuous improvement in safety through a robust and consistent application of processes and the development of lessons learned.
International partnerships	Delivery of Strategic Weapons Systems, Trident programme coordination and coherence, and fulfilling our roles in the 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement and 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement.	Technical Director/CSSE	While we are focussed on supporting and fulfilling our role in international partnerships, as our work is part of wider departmental activities, we do not have a specific KPI on this area.
Submarine Enterprise industrial base development	Ensuring industry delivers sustainably, safely and securely through supplier and supply chain development as well as better contracting.	Commercial Director	KPIs in this area will help us review the SDA's relationship with industry and the supply chain to effectively and cost-efficiently deliver for the SDA's customers.
Enabling SDA delivery	Enabling SDA delivery through Financial and Project Controls.	Chief Financial Officer	These KPIs assess how we maintain and improve our financial and project controls. It includes measures as to whether the SDA is successfully delivering realistic financial forecasting accuracy and stability.
	Enabling SDA delivery through governance, HR, and resourcing, as well as security, accommodation management, communications and engagement.	Director Corporate Operations	In assessing the SDA's management and delivery of its corporate performance, we include KPIs such as ensuring that the SDA has the right people, with the right skills in its core workforce, and has an increasingly diverse and inclusive workforce. It also tracks that the SDA achieves continuous improvement in security management and culture through robust and consistent application of processes and the development of lessons learned.
	Focusing on becoming a world-class delivery agent and great place to work through improving performance and enabling effectiveness.	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	In recognition of the SDA's ambition to be a high-performing Executive Agency, this KPI area will assess how we are improving our internal performance and delivering our business improvement and development initiatives.

Our plans – delivering our purpose

To achieve our vision and purpose, on behalf of our primary customers the Defence Nuclear Organisation and Navy Command, we will undertake a range of acquisition, in-service support, infrastructure, disposal and business programmes of work.

Maintaining the Continuous at Sea Deterrent

“We maintain the Continuous at Sea Deterrent by safely delivering available, capable and reliable in-service submarines and systems.”

The nuclear deterrent

Our nuclear deterrent guards against the most extreme threats to the nation’s way of life, both now and in the future, providing the ultimate guarantee of our national security. The UK’s nuclear deterrent is currently delivered by the four Vanguard class Ballistic Missile Submarines that are being upgraded to ensure they remain highly capable until they are replaced by four new Dreadnought class submarines. This will ensure that the UK has a credible, independent and capable nuclear deterrent out to the 2060s and beyond.

Supporting the fleet

In addition to supporting the current Vanguard class of submarines, the SDA works closely with the Royal Navy to maintain the Trafalgar and Astute classes of attack submarines currently in service. We work with Enterprise colleagues at HMNB Clyde and Devonport, as well as across the submarine supply chain, on a range of initiatives covering engineering

and associated design efforts, logistics and facilities.

Last year, with DE&S, we awarded contracts under the Future Maritime Support Programme, improving the partnering relationship between industry, SDA, DE&S and the Royal Navy. This will drive a step change improvement in output from our dockyards, increase availability and resilience across the Enterprise and bring an improvement in value for money.

Building on work completed up to and including 2021-22, we are improving availability through a targeted programme to co-ordinate and sequence existing change activity while introducing a data driven approach to in-service support. This includes generating greater capacity and productivity at the waterfront, initiatives to improve reliability and a through-life approach to equipment, system and platform management.

Asset Management requirements, in line with ISO55000, are being introduced into new contracts where possible, as part of a collaborative approach to utilising budgets with aligned and agreed priorities, informed and endorsed by our customer. Our Strategic Asset Management Plan outlines what will be an iterative journey towards implementing a robust Asset Management approach.

Driving forward, our aim is to further exploit our data to mature these initiatives, target interventions and revise maintenance policies to meet headmarks set for a step change in availability. Through specific improvement projects and Enterprise-wide collaboration, we will safely deliver the submarine availability that defence requires and support the Royal Navy with capable and available submarines.

We continue to work in tandem with our industry partners: Babcock for submarine maintenance and Rolls-Royce to support the Naval Reactor Plant and associated technology, throughout its life cycle from design to decommissioning. In-service support is provided to two classes of Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR): PWR1 fitted to the Trafalgar class submarines and PWR2 fitted to the Astute and Vanguard classes. We are focused on sustaining these technologies to ensure they remain safe to operate and available until each class leaves service. The new Dreadnought class will be fitted with PWR3 and we are working on the support and maintenance requirements for these future capabilities.

As part of our efforts to help keep safe and capable submarines at sea, we are responsible for maintaining and developing operational platform and combat system capabilities. Through maintenance activities, we ensure that the equipment on submarines works effectively and is refreshed and upgraded as necessary.

The SDA delivers Trident Weapon System procurement working with the United States and hosts the UK CSSE (see [page 18](#)), the Project Officer for the Polaris Sales Agreement (1963).

Construction of new submarines

“We lead the design and construction of all new UK submarines and, working with our customers and suppliers, bring them into service as effectively and efficiently as possible.”

The Astute programme

The Astute class submarines are the largest, most advanced and powerful attack submarines ever operated by the Royal Navy. They are being built for the Royal Navy by BAES in Barrow to replace the Trafalgar class submarines. There will be seven vessels in the Astute class. Four are in service with the Royal Navy: HMS Astute, HMS Ambush, HMS Artful and HMS Audacious. During the first year of this plan, the fifth boat in the Astute Class, HMS Anson, was commissioned into service with the Royal Navy (August 2022) and sailed from Barrow to commence sea trials (February 2023). The remaining two boats in the Astute Class, Agamemnon (Boat 6) and Agincourt (Boat 7), are under various stages of construction at the BAES shipyard.

The Dreadnought programme

In the future, the UK Nuclear Deterrent Capability will be delivered by four new Dreadnought class submarines which will replace the existing Vanguard class submarines.

Despite the effects of COVID and challenges in some parts of the supply chain, the Dreadnought ballistic missile submarine programme continues to remain within overall budget and on track for the First of Class, HMS Dreadnought, to enter service in the early 2030s.

Key staged investments made during financial year 2020-21 have allowed good progress to continue with the whole boat design and the construction process. These commitments have enabled the construction of the first two boats of the class (Dreadnought and Valiant) to progress, introduced further improvements in the shipyard facilities, and enabled the procurement of materials and equipment for the class. The procurement of long lead items and other early work for the remaining two other submarines in the class, Warspite and King George VI, continues in line with the overall programme schedule.

Recognising the impact of the ongoing pandemic on Industrial Partners and supply chains, the commercial framework employed during Delivery Phase 2 was extended for a further 12 months to March 2022. In May 2022, the MOD announced entry into the next phase of the Dreadnought programme, known as Delivery Phase 3 (DP3). Over £2Bn has been committed in initial contract amendments with Alliance Partners, BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce. DP3 represents the most significant Dreadnought work package so far, both in scope and cost. It will see the First of Class, HMS Dreadnought, exit the Barrow-in-Furness

shipyard to begin sea trials and will lay the foundation to deliver the remaining three Dreadnought boats to time and cost.

Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR3)

As part of our through-life work supporting the submarine nuclear propulsion plant, assembly of PWR3 has already begun. PWR3 will be used in the Dreadnought class of submarines.

Submersible Ship Nuclear Replacement (SSN(R))

Work continues on the Programme, Definition and Design (PDD) phase. This phase considers a range of potential capability delivery options and delivery arrangements for the manned nuclear-powered submarine and autonomous vehicles, to inform a future investment decision. From Spring 2023, the SSN(R) programme will evolve to meet the commitments of the AUKUS agreement, which will deliver SSN-AUKUS – a trilaterally-developed submarine, based on the UK's next-generation design that incorporates technology from all three nations.

Nuclear infrastructure

“We manage the delivery of the nuclear infrastructure needed to support the submarine fleet including maintenance operation, and new construction.”

Construction continues on the Primary Build Facility at the BAES Barrow shipyard, which will help support a more efficient submarine production process for the new Dreadnought class submarines. The Primary Build Facility comprises two main facilities where the fabrication of the submarine reactor pipework and the assembly of the reactor is carried out. The first facility completed in 2021 and is now operational, the second is progressing in line

with a revised schedule. At the Rolls-Royce Raynesway site, progress is being made with facilities where construction and testing of the new nuclear reactor cores (PWR3) for the Dreadnought class of submarines takes place. The generation of the Core Production Capability facility is being delivered in two phases.

A new team, the Submarine Disposals and Devonport Infrastructure Team was formed in 2021 to optimise the waterfront infrastructure for our submarines and continue to progress work to develop our approach for the safe disposal of our decommissioned nuclear submarines.

Work progresses with Babcock at HMNB Devonport where construction of the facilities to defuel decommissioned attack submarines is continuing, and at HMNB Clyde, where refurbishment efforts continue to support today's submarine operations. Working with our customers and industry partners, we continue to progress targeted initiatives at HMNB Devonport and HMNB Clyde to optimise submarine availability in line with defence requirements and are gradually further enhancing performance across the maintenance programmes.

Nuclear infrastructure projects are often large and complex, with bespoke designs. We are investing significantly in infrastructure across the Enterprise and will continue to work closely with regulators and industry partners to sustain improvements.

Safely disposing of the UK's submarines

“We safely dispose of the UK's submarines that are no longer in-service.”

The disposal of ex-service nuclear submarines is a complex and challenging undertaking. No nation has yet attempted full submarine dismantling. The SDA is developing and benchmarking world-class dismantling and waste disposal techniques which will meet all safety, environmental and sustainability standards, achieve best value for the taxpayer and address intergenerational liability expectations.

The SDA operates a programme of work – the Submarine Dismantling Project – to deliver a dismantling and disposal solution for 27 decommissioned nuclear submarines (up to and including the Vanguard class). There are currently 21 submarines in afloat storage: seven at HMNB Rosyth and 14 at HMNB Devonport. All stored submarines are rigorously maintained and managed to comply with safety, security and environmental protection standards.

Building on the successful initial phase of dismantling developed and undertaken over the last five years, we have removed metallic low-level radioactive waste (LLW) from the submarines Swiftsure and Resolution, learning and improving our processes and seeing significant strides in shortening schedules.

Notably, despite the impact of COVID, over 150 tonnes of LLW were removed from a third submarine, Revenge, and a significant milestone was achieved with the removal of two Steam Generators and a Pressuriser. This is the first time these large-LLW components have been removed from any ex-service submarine and is an international first. To date, no environmental or safety incidents have occurred with nearly 800,000 hours worked at HMNB Rosyth where all submarine dismantling works are currently conducted.

As we look to future phases of the project, we are moving from the Design to Demonstration Readiness phase, which will cover the removal of the intermediate-level radioactive waste from the demonstrator submarine, Swiftsure.

The Submarine Dismantling Project remains on track to deliver a safe, secure, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible solution for dismantling all our non-operational submarines, with the first disposal, Swiftsure, planned for 2026.

Submarine technology and capability development

“We ensure that we retain and develop the submarine technology base such that it meets our future requirements and retains our capability advantage.”

We undertake and provide a range of engineering services supporting the governance of our engineering activities and engineering products – both platforms and infrastructure. This covers management of nuclear safety and environmental protection, systems engineering policy, processes, standards and assurance, development of submarine technology, stealth technology

and training and nuclear skills development. In addition to the engineering and technical skills the submarine programme requires, we continue to build on the strong foundations established in recent years to develop our tools and processes around programme control and technology management.

As part of wider defence maritime programmes, including those delivered by DE&S, we provide Naval Authority Safety Assurance, including certification activities and technical support, alongside leading on the development and management of a range of Maritime Technical Publications and standards documentation.

In support of the nuclear deterrent, we work as the principal professional authority for the procurement, through-life support, safety and effectiveness of the Trident II (D5) Strategic Weapon System. We will continue to fulfil our role in support of international agreements, principally the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement and 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement, to support the UK deterrent posture (see ‘International partnerships’ section below).

Our core message of ‘Never Silent on Safety’ remains a key ethos for the SDA and we will continue to focus on three core areas:

- culture – establishing a stronger, more inclusive safety culture
- organisation – ensuring everyone is clear on their safety responsibilities
- capability – demonstrating that we have the right safety capability now and for the future

Our safety and environmental policies and practices have been updated to strengthen our commitment to sustainability principles and meet the MOD’s Climate Change & Sustainability Strategic Approach, as well as specific policy measures such as the Greening

Government Commitments 2021-2025 (more detail can be found in 'Sustainability' on [page 21](#)).

International partnerships

“To support and fulfil our roles in international partnerships.”

The UK works closely with the US on nuclear defence cooperation, underpinned by the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement (renewed in 2014) and the 1963 Polaris Sales Agreement (amended in 1982 to provide for the Trident missile system) – which reaches its 60th anniversary in 2023. These agreements allow the UK to work closely with US counterparts on Nuclear Propulsion and the Trident System to improve effectiveness whilst maintaining full operational independence.

As part of our work across the procurement and support life-cycle of the UK's submarine programmes, including CASD, we proudly support these agreements, working both here at home and in the US to ensure effective programme co-ordination, safety and assurance activities, collaboration and knowledge sharing. One example of this cooperation is our work with the US to develop a Common Missile Compartment for the Dreadnought class and US Columbia class submarines.

Our Corporate Plan for 2023-26 will reflect the agreement (in September 2021) of the landmark defence and security partnership between the UK, the United States and Australia, which will protect and defend shared interests in the Indo-Pacific. Under the 'AUKUS' alliance, all parties will work together to enhance the development of joint capabilities and technology sharing, ensuring safety from harm and reinforcing shared goals. AUKUS will also foster deeper integration of security and

defence-related science, technology, industrial bases and supply chains.

Submarine Enterprise industrial base development

“To develop a sustainable industrial base for the Submarine Enterprise that is able to support all requirements efficiently, sustainably, safely and securely.”

A key role for the SDA is to lead and develop an improved and enduring supply chain. Recognising the current challenges around global supply chain fragility we work collaboratively with our Tier-1 contractors – BAES, Rolls-Royce and Babcock – and sub-tier suppliers and public sector partners to ensure that the submarine supply chain has the technology, skills, manufacturing and maintenance capability to safely support the UK's submarine requirements for the long term. In support of Government industrial policies and wider strategies, we seek to develop a high-performing, responsive and resilient industrial base. This is particularly evident in our work with our suppliers to ensure they are supported in managing COVID both within their own operations but also their wider supply chains. We are also working to ensure that our supply chain, including small and medium-sized businesses, can best support our Enterprise, harnessing innovation, and supporting the Government's agenda of levelling up prosperity across the UK. We continue to seek an optimum balance of risk within our supply chain, and the ability to drive value and performance through appropriate incentivisation. We actively mitigate risks and manage opportunities through ongoing communication and improvement plans, and we ensure we are both capable and compliant through robust audit and assurance activity.

Internally we use Category Management as part of a MOD-wide initiative to develop strategies for the products we source and buy. We continue to align our approach better with our suppliers, for example by improving standardization management and simplifying our specifications where appropriate.

We also continue to drive value for money for the taxpayer and demonstrate corporate responsibility through strengthening our commercial principles and practices, and our approach to Social Value and Net Zero. This encourages the Submarine Enterprise to achieve value, delivering the programme outputs we require, whilst simultaneously fulfilling our obligations in line with Government priorities.

Enabling SDA delivery

To support delivery of our purpose, we must manage and run the SDA as an effective and cost-efficient business. Activities draw on areas of expertise including finance, human resources (HR), security, information management, business management, communications and strategy and change. Our aim is to ensure that, while supporting the ongoing development of the agency, we continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our services, evolving our operating model so that it is fit for today and the future. The landscape continues to evolve at pace, and it is vital that we ensure that the SDA provides a safe and secure organisation working in step with MOD and Civil Service best practice.



How we deliver

Our customers

We work closely with our primary customers, the Defence Nuclear Organisation and Navy Command, to deliver their requirements. These are laid out in Submarine Acquisition and Support Plans (SASPs) and agreed at the start of each financial year. Once the SASPs are in place, our Chief Executive Officer is accountable to our customers for delivery. In turn, the Defence Nuclear Organisation and Navy Command provide funding and resources to ensure that the outputs can be delivered (see 'Our resources' section on [page 21](#) for more on this).

Our people

With our strong focus on the support and acquisition of submarines as critical defence capabilities, most of our people are positioned within delivery teams and grouped in the following divisions; Acquisition, Submarine Support, and Technical. These areas focus on the outputs set out in our SASPs. Our enabling teams – Finance, Commercial, Corporate Operations and HR – are vital to ensuring that resources and business management systems operate effectively and efficiently. This organisational set up ensures that we are agile in our decision-making, deploying the right skilled personnel into the right business area as required.

We have a highly skilled and capable workforce and recognise the importance of continued training and development to deliver the technically challenging programmes of work with which we are tasked.

As an agency we are acutely aware of the challenges in the labour market, including a shortage of key skills, and the need to work with Enterprise partners to continually attract and retain suitably qualified, experienced and high performing people. We have improved our resourcing, recruitment and induction processes and policies. We have developed bespoke recruitment material and, through the introduction of our SDA Code, we have also stipulated the behaviours we expect in all of our people; this work continues to ensure that we are an employer of choice.

We have made significant progress on improving the function management of our people in the SDA by appointing leads for each of our Functions, having created our own architecture to be able to conduct targeted function management within the agency.

We have introduced a new mentoring scheme to help build valuable relationships across the SDA and further support the growth of our staff to meet business needs, but also importantly increasing individual opportunities within the SDA and improving their 'employee experience'.

As part of our efforts to provide exemplar support on wellbeing as well as Diversity & Inclusion, our trained Fairness and Equality Advisors (FEAs), who are embedded across the agency, continue to signpost colleagues to a range of services and information. Following Cabinet Office guidelines, the SDA also introduced Fair Treatment Ambassadors to work alongside our FEAs. In addition, we have over 40 trained Mental Health First Aiders across the agency, providing invaluable advice and guidance.

Focusing on Diversity & Inclusion and building on the success of the ‘Speak Out’ training, we have developed a bespoke SDA ‘Respect and Dignity in the Workplace’ workshop. This training, which is mandated across our organisation, is focused on behaviours in the workplace and the impact these have on others. The SDA is committed to challenging all forms of discrimination and unacceptable behaviour. Our ambition is that the lived experience of the SDA is enhanced, everyone will be free to be their authentic selves and thus achieve their full potential.

We have continued our work to grow a diverse and inclusive organisation, and this has included supporting our dedicated staff networks which are sponsored by members of our Senior Leadership Group as Champions. These communities and Champions, along with our Functional Leads, fulfil a crucial role of supporting our policies and work as advocates for behavioural and cultural change. Both the Network Champions and Functional Leads are members of the SDA Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group, chaired by our Director of Corporate Operations. This group supports our Chief Executive Officer in driving Diversity & Inclusion issues in the SDA through a new output-based Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan. This plan is designed to ensure that all SDA activities are joined up and build on the recommendations within the MOD’s Wigston Review into inappropriate behaviours as a springboard to further progress.

Working with industry

As the sole UK buyer of nuclear submarines, we have a critical relationship with our major Tier 1 suppliers – BAES, Rolls-Royce and Babcock. Building on the Submarine Enterprise Performance Programme, we balance commercial tension with the appropriate partnering behaviours. This is underpinned by the Single Source Contracting Regulations. We work collaboratively throughout the supply chain, providing opportunities for engagement

to support innovation, a focus on longer-term strategy and to check against on-going programme delivery.

The Dreadnought Alliance is a joint management team between the SDA, BAES and Rolls-Royce, who share the aim of effectively and efficiently delivering the Dreadnought design and build programme. Governance is provided through an Alliance Leadership Board, made up of a representative from each of the three parties, the Managing Director of the Dreadnought Alliance, and an Independent Chair. The team is united in its focus and requirement to drive the Alliance programme schedule at pace, to ensure a best for programme approach that the first Dreadnought submarine is delivered in the early 2030s.

Our resources

Programme funding, as part of the Defence Equipment Plan, is delegated to the SDA for management through our customers and allocated in line with the Submarine Acquisition and Support Plans (SASPs) and agreed investment plans. As an Accounting Officer, our Chief Executive Officer is responsible for managing monies to operate the agency effectively and efficiently, including workforce salaries and travel and expenditure costs. Our performance as an agency is reviewed and published annually in our Annual Report and Accounts which reports our operating costs. Equipment Plan spend is reported in the MOD main Resource Account.

Budget (values £m)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Total Equipment Plan	4458	4545	4596
SDA Operating Costs	228	222	217

Measuring our performance

The SDA Performance Committee reviews the delivery performance across the organisation with executive and customer representation. This Committee drives SDA delivery against the Corporate Key Performance Indicators ensuring that effective working relationships are established and maintained between the SDA, its Sponsor, senior customers, suppliers and other delivery agents, including DE&S. It provides a forum for time and cost performance barriers to be discussed and critical actions placed for resolution and mitigation. We also engage with our Senior Customer, Sponsor and SDA Board to collectively agree that delivery against the Key Performance Indicators are reflective of Enterprise experience to inform regular performance reviews. In addition, our performance as an agency, including financial performance, is reviewed and published annually in our Annual Report and Accounts.

As part of our approach to programme and performance management, we have refined our strategy for managing risk across our business and the interface with our customers. It is critical that we understand the risks to our business so that we can minimise the potential impact on timely and effective delivery of our objectives. In line with project, programme and portfolio (P3M) good practice, we have a comprehensive approach to risk, which is considered at several levels: individual project level where clear scope, cost and time parameters are defined; programme level, especially where we are delivering projects in an integrated manner in support of our customers' Command Plans; and strategic level where we focus on ensuring the SDA is a robust, compliant and sustainable agency of the MOD.

We also work collaboratively with our customers to share our understanding of risk

and associated mitigation activities to ensure that we develop a shared view across the Enterprise. We will continue our work to further improve our links between our risk data and other controlling artefacts such as schedules, assumptions, cost portfolios and our SASPs. We will also continue to link our analysis and management of project and programme risks to those at the strategic level, so that we can strengthen analysis of our data and work to reduce both our own and our customers' risk exposure.

Sustainability

The topic of sustainability increased in profile in 2021, with the UK Government issuing its Net Zero Strategy and its refreshed Greening Government Commitments, the MOD publishing its Climate Change & Sustainability Strategic Approach, and the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), held in Glasgow. In the SDA we developed our Climate Change & Sustainability Delivery Plan which outlines our internal integrated approach across the four interconnected themes of Net Zero, Climate Resilience, Sustainable Procurement and Engagement, Behaviours and Culture.

In 2021 we progressed several activities against our targets, including issuing a Net Zero strategy which sets out our approach for decarbonisation and includes a 'first cut' of a carbon baseline. In addition, the bi-annual Submarine Symposium focused on the topic of sustainability, with contributions from across the Enterprise, offering a collective narrative and a springboard to action. In recognition of the importance of collaboration the pan-Enterprise Engineering & Safety Directors Forum is the vehicle for ensuring a coherent approach to Environmental Protection and Sustainability is delivered across the Enterprise.

Within the SDA we have increased our capability and capacity across the themes of Environmental Protection and Sustainability and are looking to progress this twin agenda via several activities:

- the Go Green Network – the network inspires and engages our staff in green issues and has built an active membership of over 250 people. The network shares information, provides a staff forum, raises awareness of issues, and holds webinars led by expert speakers. It also provides opportunities for staff to engage in volunteering events within our local communities and to support campaigns
- in 2022 we will carry out a gap analysis of our maturing Environmental Management System against the ISO 14001:2015 standard to ensure our environmental management arrangements are in line with industry good practice
- we will continue the progress made through the Submarine Dismantling Programme and create a plan to describe how sustainability will be incorporated into this ground-breaking work
- we will progress our climate resilience approach by generating a strategy and supporting plan to build from the risk assessment work completed in 2021
- we will build on the submarine bio-fouling survey work carried out in collaboration with Navy Command and Babcock to provide a balanced risk-based method for managing the control of invasive species at our waterfronts
- we will continue to progress the sustainable procurement agenda, collaboratively with our supply chain, and will be piloting the Social Value Model across three of our contracts through 2022



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



How we are governed

The Secretary of State for Defence is accountable to Parliament for all aspects of our performance, including our strategy, operation, outputs and the effectiveness of our governance arrangements. The agency is governed by a Board, which operates under the provisions of a Framework Document approved by Ministers. Accountability to enable the effective, efficient and proper conduct of our business rests with our Chief Executive Officer.

Our Sponsor

The Defence Nuclear Organisation acts as the Departmental Sponsor for the SDA and engages on our business performance.

As an Executive Agency, the SDA sits under the Top-Level Budget area of the Defence Nuclear Organisation. Our Chief Executive Officer receives their delegations and Operating Expenditure from Director General Nuclear.

Our Board

The SDA Board endorses our strategy and ensures it is reflected in our plans. It also oversees financial and operating controls, providing insight, support and challenge to the Executive team. The Board has a critical role in ensuring that the SDA is fully compliant with safety and security regulations and that it has the appropriate capabilities to deliver its role effectively.



Our Executive team

We are led on a day-to-day basis by our Chief Executive Officer and the Executive team. This structure continues to bring focus and ensure that key workstreams are effectively supporting delivery of the SDA's purpose. Our Executive team for 2022-23 is shown below. In February 2023, Rear Admiral Jeremy Bailey was appointed as Director Submarine Support. In addition, Rear Admiral Robert Lauchlan was appointed as the UK Project Officer (CSSE) for the Polaris Sales Agreement in March 2023. Keith Beckett remains the SDA's Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Technical Director.



Sir Chris Gardner KBE

As Chief Executive Officer, Sir Chris leads and manages the SDA. The CEO sets the strategy for the successful delivery of the Corporate Plan and the Programme of Work, as captured in the Submarine Acquisition and Support Plans. CEO is also the Accounting Officer for the SDA's Operating Expenditure. He is supported by the Executive team, which provides the SDA with a clear delivery and operational focus.



Keith Beckett CBE

Keith Beckett serves as our Deputy Chief Executive Officer and leads our internal initiatives, such as our improvement agenda, on behalf of the CEO. Keith is also our Technical Director and leads on internal initiatives, such as our improvement agenda as well as engineering, technology, safety, environmental, and quality aspects of our business. He is responsible for the Nuclear Propulsion team, Combat Systems Delivery Team and Platform Equipment Delivery Team, as well as delivery of the Trident System and the effectiveness of Naval Authority Certification. Keith is the UK Project Officer (CSSE) for the Polaris Sales Agreement.



Jim Carter

As Commercial Director, Jim Carter is responsible for procurement and supply chain matters across the agency to enable the acquisition and support of nuclear submarines. He develops our commercial arrangements and supplier relationships to drive maximum value across the entire supply chain.



Ian Craddock

Director Corporate Operations, Ian Craddock, provides a broad portfolio of vital operational services for all SDA colleagues and supporting personnel, such as HR, Information, Security and Resilience, and Corporate Operations, including Governance, Internal Communications and Policy Secretariat.



Mike Cushen

As Director Submarine Support, Mike Cushen's priority is to drive improved submarine availability, influencing through-life support and guaranteeing current and future submarine capabilities. Mike is also responsible for delivery of submarine disposal and Devonport infrastructure



Bruce Martin

Chief Finance Officer, Bruce Martin, is responsible for all aspects of finance, including Financial Assurance and Reporting. He also has oversight of the Portfolio Office and Project Controls within the SDA. He supports the Chief Executive Officer in his Accounting Officer role by controlling and reporting to Parliament on the operating costs of the agency.



Dr Tim Sheldon

Director Submarines Acquisition, Dr Tim Sheldon, is responsible for the delivery and future in-service support for the Dreadnought programme, the Astute class programme and the Submersible Ship Nuclear Replacement (SSN(R)) programme.

Further information on the SDA can be found on [our web page](#).





Submarine
Delivery Agency

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