

## **First UK defence asset management conference:**

### **Sharing the Royal Navy's journey**

Report by Pierre Delamotte

Following the successful defence gathering instigated by Liam McKenna from the UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD) at the IAM UK Chapter Conference in November 2024, the defence community decided to keep the momentum and organise its first conference. This was held near Bristol on 6 May as a joint initiative by Team Defence Information and the IAM.

This conference marked a significant milestone in the evolution of asset management within the UK defence sector. It brought together a diverse group of professionals – industry partners, IAM members and notable figures in asset management – to foster collaboration, innovation and knowledge sharing.

Attendees were welcomed by the Chairs of the Defence Asset Management Community of Practice (DAMCoP), Liam McKenna and Tim Ingram (AtkinsRéalis). Then, they introduced our keynote speaker, Cdr Sue Seagrave (MoD), who had agreed to step in at the last minute to replace RAdm Steve McCarthy. Sue set the tone for the morning presentations, which were all about sharing the Royal Navy's journey.

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Tim Ingram said: 'Our goal today is to energise collaboration and make this the first of many conferences that will drive positive change in defence asset management. By establishing common understanding, such as taxonomy and frameworks, we can align our actions and complement each other's work, creating a platform for innovation that will enable us to meet evolving defence needs and challenges.'

Lt Cdr Gregory Sinclair (MoD) and Alistair McVicar (PwC) kicked off the Royal Navy presentations with the Programme LIGHTHOUSE from the equipment assets perspective. This was followed by Ben Mogridge (MoD), who talked about asset management applied to submarines. Infrastructure assets were also well represented, with Liam McKenna presenting on the naval defence estate, followed by a virtual visit of the three naval bases: Clyde (John Hanlon, MoD, and Danny Gow, Babcock), Devonport (Mike Thompson, Babcock) and Portsmouth (Erin Bisset, MoD, and Gary Morrison, KBS Maritime). The 15-minute presentation format was well received by attendees, who used the networking opportunities (coffee and lunch breaks) to ask further questions of our guest speakers.

The afternoon started with exploring the Future In-Service Submarine Support contract with Ben Mogridge (MoD) and Dan Eastwood (Babcock). Joanne Davies (MoD) and Liam McKenna informed attendees about the defence asset management lexicon and defence asset management courses, accessible via the Defence Learning Environment to personnel with appropriate clearance.

We then focused on our interactive sessions, where attendees were given the opportunity to contribute collaboratively in groups around three themes: inflight projects/ initiatives; collaterals; and aspirational (future direction). There was definitely excitement for the innovative ideas that emerged from these discussions.

The presentations ended with Ursula Bryan, CEO of IAM, and Phil Williams, MD of Team Defence Information, who offered the support of their organisations to the defence asset management community. As the conference drew to a close, the DAMCoP co-chairs reflected on the importance of asset management in supporting complex and challenging environments, such as defence. They called on all attendees to recognise their roles as leaders in asset management and to work collaboratively to achieve the goals of the Ministry of Defence.

Liam McKenna said: 'Today is a significant achievement. The asset management capability within defence has grown dramatically over the past five years. Through this Defence Asset Management Community of Practice within Team Defence Information, alongside the IAM and Defence's own asset management CoP, we have a unique opportunity to establish a real urgency in furthering asset management across the defence sector.'

The Defence Asset Management Conference was a resounding success, setting the stage for future collaboration and innovation in the sector. The event underscored the importance of a unified approach to asset management, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, ethical principles, and transparency.

Thanks to the IAM (Vicky Diesel), the IAM South-West branch (Andrew McArthur) and Team Defence Information (Kelly Gough, Demi Bowler, Eion Bailey and Graham Smith) for making this conference happen.