

Boris Johnson appoints new chief executive of MoD procurement arm DE&S

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has approved the appointment of a new chief executive for the procurement arm of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

Andy Start will replace Sir Simon Bollom as the new top boss of Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), which is based in Filton, near Bristol. Sir Simon has been at the helm of the organisation since 2018.

DE&S is an arm's length body of the MoD responsible for providing equipment and support to the UK's Armed Forces.

Mr Start is currently chief executive of Capita Public Service, one of the largest strategic suppliers to the Government, where he currently leads a team of more than 12,000 staff.

He spent the first decade of his career working in the space sector as a designer and programme manager of military satellite systems, followed by leading a wide range of aerospace and defence businesses, with a specialism in helping improve performance and drive strategic change.

He said: "I am delighted and honoured to be taking on this key role in Government. DE&S plays a major part in keeping the UK secure and maintaining some of the nation's key industrial and technological skills. There can be few more interesting, more meaningful, or more challenging leadership opportunities.

"I'd like to thank Sir Simon Bollom for his extensive work in leading DE&S and setting a clear and deliverable strategy for the future. I look forward to working with DE&S staff, and the

wider Defence sector, to drive this forward.”

Mr Start has already previously taken responsibility for leading the UK aerospace innovation and growth team and supported the development of defence industrial policy.

Jeremy Quin, minister for defence procurement, said: “I am pleased that DE&S will be led by a CEO with extensive commercial experience who can take forward the work of Sir Simon Bollom.

“Sir Simon, who has led the organisation over the last four years, has consistently been a tireless exemplar of public service leadership and driven DE&S forward. I wish him the very best for the future.”

Sir Simon’s position was advertised in late 2021, attracting “strong interest”, according to the MoD. More than 50 individuals applied, with recruitment of the role being overseen by the civil service commissioner.

David Williams, MoD permanent secretary, added: “Andy’s appointment is great news for both DE&S and MoD as we look to navigate a critical time in UK Defence.

“He brings a wealth of expertise from 25 years in senior leadership roles in defence industry, and I know he has the vision and ambition to lead DE&S into the future. I would also like to thank Sir Simon Bollom for his leadership of DE&S and commitment to Defence over the last four years and across his career. I wish him all the very best for the future.”

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