

Harland and Wolff owner positions for armed forces work with board appointment of former naval chief

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A former Royal Navy chief has been appointed to the board of Harland and Wolff owner Infrastrata.

Sir Jonathon Band is the former First Sea Lord & Chief of Naval Staff of the Royal Navy and will join the board of directors before the end of this month.

Since retiring from the navy, he has held numerous non-executive positions at Lockheed Martin UK, Babcock International Group, National Museum of the Royal Navy and Survitec Group Ltd and is currently a Non-Executive Director of Carnival Corporation, the NYSE & LSE listed global cruise operator.

The move is targeted one by AIM-listed Infrastrata which is focused on winning new work from the armed forces.

It bought the Harland and Wolff Belfast shipyard in 2019 after it had fallen into administration before adding the Appledore shipyard in north Devon to its portfolio.

In December 2020, Prime Minister Boris Johnston noted both shipyards while announcing an extra £16.5 billion in defence spending where he laid out plans for the “renaissance of British shipbuilding”.

At the time Infrastrata chief executive John Wood said the government’s move played into Harland and Wolff’s plans for the yards.

“When we acquired both the Belfast and Appledore shipyards, we set out a vision to unlock the potential of these two critical and strategic facilities,” he said. “The Harland & Wolff Group is determined to making the most of this increased defence budget and commitment to UK naval power.”

Clive Richardson, Chairman of Infrastrata, said Sir Jonathon’s experience in the naval sector will help the group reach those aims.

“With this appointment, the Board of InfraStrata will now consist of three non-executive directors and two executive directors, each one with significant experience in our key growth sectors. Sir Jonathon brings with him several decades of experience in the defence and wider marine markets.

“I look forward to working very closely with Sir Jonathon and for him to become an integral part of our Board as we move the business forward.”

During his time as First Sea Lord & Chief of Naval Staff of the Royal Navy, Sir Jonathon created a new Command Structure in addition to promoting the need for maritime investment and security. He has also worked closely with industry to promote and implement the Defence Industrial Strategy, a UK government policy focused on the efficient allocation of military equipment and resources to the UK armed forces.

Prior to his role as First Sea Lord, Sir Jonathon was Commander in Chief Fleet during which time, as Chief Operating

Officer, he was responsible for the operational capability and deployment of the Navy's front line. He has also spent time supporting foreign and defence policies and has had a crucial role in negotiating and building coalitions across NATO allies and Middle Eastern partners.

As well as the Belfast shipyard, Infrastrata also owns the Islandmagee gas storage project in Northern Ireland.