



# Director Operation Neptune 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



## Captain Andy Watts, ONZM, RNZN

Captain Andrew Watts joined the Royal New Zealand Navy on 17 January 1980 in the rank of Midshipman and on the General List of Officers in the Seaman specialisation.

On completion of initial officer training, then-Midshipman Watts was posted to HMNZ Ships TARANAKI and CANTERBURY for further seaman officer training. In December 1982, Captain Watts was awarded a Bridge Watch Keeping Certificate. Following service in various frigates, he was posted to HMNZS PHILOMEL in early 1984 for duties with the Commander 1st New Zealand Patrol Craft Squadron.

In the course of a very rewarding two years service in the squadron's Lake class patrol craft, he served as "third hand" in various ships, and as Executive Officer and then Commanding Officer of HMNZS PUKAKI. In March 1986, he began a further series of Officer of the Watch appointments in frigates culminating in 18 months as Navigating Officer, HMNZS WELLINGTON.

Between January and December 1989 Captain Watts completed a Principal Warfare Officers (Communications) course in Australia. He then returned to New Zealand and served variously as Navigating Officer, Principal Warfare Officer and Operations Officer in HMNZ Ships WAIKATO, WELLINGTON and SOUTHLAND.

Following a stint at Maritime Headquarters as a staff officer, Captain Watts was posted to the staff of the Chief of Naval Staff in May 1995 as the Director Naval Command, Control, and Communications. In June 1997 he was appointed Executive Officer, HMNZS WELLINGTON. Two years later he assumed command of that ship for a brief period as the final seagoing Commanding Officer.

In June 2000 Captain Watts returned to sea in Command of HMNZS RESOLUTION. In December that year he was posted to Headquarters, Australian Theatre in Australia in an operations planning role. After two thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable years in this post, he was appointed Commanding Officer of HMNZS TE MANA. Whilst in command, he completed two operational deployments to the Arabian Sea. He was made an additional Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in the 2004 New Years Honours List.

Captain Watts relinquished Command of HMNZS TE MANA in October 2004, and was promoted to his present rank in May 2005. He then served as the Director Capability Development and Programme Director, Network Enabled Capability, on the staff of the Chief of Defence Force until Dec 2007 when he posted to the Australian Defence Force Defence and Strategic Studies Course. He completed this course in late 2008, having met the requirements for the award of an MA (Strategic Studies) from Deakin University. Captain Watts assumed the duties of Captain Fleet Personnel and Training (CFPT) on 12 January 2009.

After three years as CFPT during which the FPTO team were heavily engaged in the HR and

Education and Training streams of the Defence Transformation Programme, Captain Watts retired from the RNZN, joining Opus International Consultants as a manager and project director in the mechanical and electrical business. After three rewarding years in this role, Captain Watts re-joined the RNZN in June 2014 as Director of the Navy's 75th Anniversary programme, Operation NEPTUNE, in which role he is currently serving.