



Commanding Officer HMNZS TE MANA



Commander Simon Griffiths, RNZN

Commander Simon Griffiths was educated at Gore and Otago Boys High Schools, before joining the Royal New Zealand Navy as a Midshipman in January 1992. In 1995, after a year of initial and specialist training and two years study at Auckland University he commenced his seagoing career.

Over the next six years Commander Griffiths served as Bridge Watchkeeper and/or Navigating Officer on a variety of RNZN ships. This included operational experience in the Arabian Gulf in 1995/96 and during the East Timor conflict in late 1999.

During the summer of 1996/97, he was also attached to the US Coast Guard Icebreaker POLAR SEA during her Antarctic Resupply Operations to McMurdo and Scott Bases.

In 2001, Commander Griffiths took study leave to complete his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Canterbury. In January 2003, he was posted to HMAS WATSON Sydney, Australia and completed back-to-back the Royal Australian Navy Principal Warfare Officer, Long Navigation, and Advance Navigation courses, to qualify as both a naval warfare and navigation specialist. After returning to New Zealand he served as the Operations Officer on the frigates HMNZS CANTERBURY and HMNZS TE KAHA.

In 2006, Commander Griffiths took ten months Leave Without Pay and travelled extensively throughout Asia and Europe with his wife. On returning to New Zealand in December 2006, he posted as the Navigation Training Officer. In this role he was responsible for the development and implementation of all RNZN navigation training. He was awarded a Chief of Navy Commendation for his performance during this period. In May 2009, Commander Griffiths attended the NZ Defence College Command and Staff Course, graduating in December of the same year. After completing additional study requirements, Commander Griffiths gained a Masters of Strategic Studies from Victoria University in December 2012.

Commander Griffiths was appointed as the inaugural Commanding Officer of the Offshore Patrol Vessel, HMNZS WELLINGTON in June 2010. During his time in command of WELLINGTON he successfully brought the ship into operational service, before completing several Sub Antarctic Island Resupply operations, the RNZN's first deployment to Antarctica in forty years, and the RNZN's first ever high seas fisheries patrol in the South West Pacific. Commander Griffiths was awarded a Distinguished Service Decoration in the 2011 New Years Honours List, for his leadership during WELLINGTON's inaugural Antarctica deployment.

He was promoted to Commander in March 2012, and served as the Base Support Commander at Devonport Naval Base until September 2013. He was then appointed as the Lead Planner for the Western Pacific Naval Symposium Mine Counter Measures Exercise, which was hosted by the RNZN in Feb/Mar 2014. For his performance and leadership in organising the exercise Commander Griffiths was awarded a Chief of Navy Commendation. Commander Griffiths then

served as a Battle Watch Captain during the RIMPAC 14 multi-national naval exercise in Hawaii.

He assumed command of HMNZS TE KAHA on 5 December 2014. During his time in command the ship successfully completed (amongst other activities) a Work Up training and evaluation period, ANZAC Day 100th Anniversary commemorations in Gallipoli, Turkey, and Combined Maritime Forces counter-narcotics operations in the Western Indian Ocean.

Commander Griffiths assumed command of the frigate, HMNZS TE MANA on 1 April 2016