

Commander
Joel Roberts MBE
Royal Navy

Commanding Officer
HMS SOMERSET



Roberts joined the Royal Naval Reserve in HMS SCOTIA in 2006 before joining the Royal Navy and Britannia Royal Naval College in 2007. He conducted training appointments in HMS EDINBURGH in the South Atlantic, HMS ALBION on training and humanitarian operations around West Africa, and HMS PENZANCE and HMS SHOREHAM in UK waters.

In 2009 he became the Navigating Officer of MCM2 Crew 3 navigating HMS CATTISTOCK in UK waters, HMS CHIDDINGFOLD on Operation TELIC in the Arabian Gulf, and HMS BROCKLESBY on NATO and UK mine countermeasures operations in support of Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR and Operation ELLAMY in response to the 2011 conflict in Libya. He then navigated HMS KENT from 2011 - 2013 through her generation from refit and an Operation KIPION deployment to the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

His first Command assignment was as the Executive Officer in HMS CLYDE as the Falklands Islands Patrol Vessel before joining HMS SEVERN in 2015 for her first-of-class Atlantic Patrol Task (North) deployment to the Caribbean supporting UK Overseas Territories and conducting counter narcotics operations. SEVERN then returned to UK waters for marine and law enforcement operations alongside the Marine Management Organisation and Border Force.

Following Staff training and Principal Warfare Officer (PWO) course he joined HMS DRAGON as a PWO in 2017 and served as the Operations Officer for her Operation KIPION deployment to the Arabian Gulf which included significant narcotics seizures totalling more than 18 tonnes. He then joined the United Kingdom Carrier Strike Group battlestaff in 2019 as the Chief of Staff Coord for WESTLANT 19, the HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH deployment to the East Coast of the USA to develop UK sovereign carrier strike capability and conduct F-35B operational testing.

Assuming Command of MCM1 Crew 6 in HMS RAMSEY in 2020, he conducted a Standing NATO deployment to the Baltic and was her final Commanding Officer prior to decommissioning. He assumed Command of HMS GRIMSBY in October 2020 on UK operations, and HMS BANGOR in October 2021 deployed to the Arabian Gulf. Joining FOST(Ships) as Deputy Commander Sea Training in 2022 he was responsible for training the mine countermeasures, patrol vessel, and diving communities, and on promotion to Commander in 2023 assumed additional responsibility as Commander Global Sea Training.

Roberts assumed Command of HMS SOMERSET in November 2023. Awarded a MBE in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours List, he is a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Security Professionals, and holds a BA in Humanities from the University of Edinburgh and a MA in Modern Warfare from King's College London.