

Peter Watkins

Director General Security Policy,
Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom



High-Level Strategic Interview

**Terrorism in Europe – how to consolidate the fight
against it?**

Wednesday, 30th November 2016, 09:40 – 10:25 h

Peter Watkins took up the appointment of Director General Security Policy on 9 April 2014. He is responsible for advising the Secretary of State for Defence on all aspects of the defence contribution to security policy, including multilateral and bilateral defence relations and nuclear policy.

Peter Watkins joined the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in 1980. During his career, he has worked closely with all three Services and has held senior posts in security policy, acquisition and resource management. Prior to his present appointment, Peter was Director General of the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, a world-renowned institution responsible for the education and training of UK military personnel and MOD civil servants in command and staff skills, leadership, acquisition, technology and languages. Previously, Peter was Director Operational Policy from 2008-11; this post is responsible for setting the policy framework for the planning and conduct of UK military operations overseas and in the UK. As Director Typhoon, he was responsible for the overall direction of the programme to deliver and support the RAF's latest combat aircraft. Before that, from 2004-06, he was Command Secretary of RAF Strike Command (STC) which contained the RAF's front-line aircraft. In this role, he was the board member responsible for resources (STC had an annual budget of about £2bn), civilian personnel and corporate services. He played a leading role in preparing the merger of Strike Command and Personnel & Training Command in 2007. Peter was Private Secretary to the Defence Secretary from 2001-03.

Earlier assignments centred on international armaments policy. Peter was Team Leader of the MOD's 'Smart Acquisition' acquisition change programme (2000-01); Counsellor for Defence Supply & Aerospace in the British Embassy in Germany (1996-2000); and, before that, the Finance and Secretariat Director responsible for the financial and political aspects of the UK's participation in the Eurofighter (now Typhoon), Tornado and Joint Strike Fighter programmes. Prior appointments included three years as Private Secretary to the Minister for Defence Procurement (1990-93) and a number of policy-related roles.

Peter was educated at Peterhouse, Cambridge University, where he studied History and Political Philosophy. He is an ancien of the NATO Defense College (1993-94); and was a Fellow at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University for the 2006-07 academic year. He is a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, a Liveryman of the Coachmakers' Company and a Member of the Institute of Directors.