



Commanding Officer HMNZS WELLINGTON



Lieutenant Commander Damian Gibbs, RNZN

Lieutenant Commander Damian Gibbs, grew up in and around the wider Whangarei area, with a keen interest in most things maritime it was almost guaranteed that a career on the water was to follow, and on completion of his schooling Damian was selected to join the Royal New Zealand Navy in 2004 as a Warfare Officer.

On completion of Junior Officer Training and his Basic Bridge and Advanced Watchkeeping Course, Damian Served on HMNZ Ships KIWI, RESOLUTION and then TE KAHA to obtain an Advanced and Warfare Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate.

Damian achieved his Qualification in early 2006, this was achieved in in good time showing a natural ability for the job.

He remained posted to HMNZS TE KAHA for the next 18 months, completing two South East Asian deployments. At the end of 2006 he temporarily filled the position of Navigating Officer, although only an Ensign at the time he enjoyed the opportunity and the associated challenges involved. Damian then posted to HMNZS MANAWANUI as the Navigating officer for a short period prior to attending the Ship Command Course and the Major Fleet Unit Navigator's Course.

In 2009 Damian was the commissioning Executive Officer for the newly purchased Inshore Patrol Vessel HMNZS HAWEA. On completion of his posting to Damian was able to enjoy one of his other passions when he was selected to represent the RNZN Rugby Team at the Commonwealth Cup in England, the highlight of this trip was being selected as the Player of the Tournament.

On His return Damian posted to HMNZS CANTERBURY as the Navigating Officer and remained there until late 2011. During this time he was involved in a number of exercises in the Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand. Damian was then given his first Command of HMNZS Taupo. An extremely challenging yet rewarding time in his career. He spent the next two years working around the New Zealand coast in support of other Government agencies. The ability to interact with people from all over the country and see the remote areas that not many people get the opportunity to see was a highlight.

As all good things must come to an end Damian relinquished his command and commenced the Royal Navy's Principle Warfare Course in 2015, on completion he then specialised in Anti Submarine Warfare, and Navigation.

Damian Returned to New Zealand in 2016 and was then posted in to the Battle Staff for the New Zealand led Amphibious Task Group in exercise RIMPAC. Whilst not initially in the current operations role a series of changes saw Damian executing the current operations planning and execution of up to 15 Ships. Whilst daunting at the time by the end of the exercise he found it thoroughly rewarding. Damian now takes up the appointment as Commanding Officer

HMNZS Wellington.

Damian and his wife Sarah have two young boys that keep them busy at home, any spare time is ideally spent assisting in coaching and playing rugby or around the coast of New Zealand scuba diving and fishing, with friends and family.