

## Richard Spence



**Please give details of all diving industry related interests, whether remunerated or not, and any other potential conflicts of interest**

No conflicts of interest. I am very interested in BSAC youth development and outreach programming, such as the 'BSAC Scholarship for Army CCF' and BSAC Strategic Planning pillars based on community engagement, and protection and conservation of the underwater environment initiatives.

**What do you think are the key challenges facing BSAC, and what should we be doing to address them?**

In an era strategic shocks such as the COVID pandemic and current socio-economic downturn, people will prioritise expenditure on basic needs. This will likely be felt more acutely throughout less affluent communities and households, including those from ethnic minority diaspora, that BSAC seeks to influence via improve engagement. Increasing the visibility of BSAC beyond existing audiences, will remain a challenge during the current context. Symbiotic with this challenge is societal awareness of environmental issues, especially those concerning marine conservation and ocean health. BSAC messaging, engagement and actions to mitigate against the environmental impact of recreational diving and business operations, will take place within a non-permissive communications medium. Dynamic discourse, diverging and merging environmentalist advocacy coalitions and contesting media platforms will significantly challenge and stress BSAC 'blue economy' imaging.

**Please describe how you would contribute to any / all of these areas**

Retired Officer @MOD (Army) with 30 years experience in working with and leading a diverse workforce that included employees from various gender, ethnic minority and multi faith communities. 5 years in the role of senior Diversity and

Inclusion Advisor, with responsibility for implementing and operationalising MOD (Army) EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) strategies. My tasks included, but were not limited to the planning, designing and delivery of robust, relevant and current EDI curriculum on behalf of senior leadership.

4 years contracted on behalf of UK Foreign Commonwealth & Development Officer (FCDO) as senior Gender Advisor/Trainer Coordinator, during which I gained valuable experience in delivering on international commitments and frameworks that supported Prevention of Sexual Violence (PSV), women's rights, Gender during Conflict and other cross cutting issues such as Protection of Vulnerable Groups and Children & Armed Conflict. During this task, I supported multiple Key Leader Engagement (KLE) that were relevant to associated topics, while simultaneously building up a coalition framework to help liaise/align various branches and advisors, in particular those from UN and NGOs etc, to ensure EDI programming was integrated in mission planning, training and output.

I believe that this experience will allow me to contribute to ensuring EDI strategy is adequately delivered, lessons captured and fed into BSAC strategic decision-making for the overall attainment of a more supportive and inclusive culture. My vision would see collaboration with relevant agencies on mainstreaming EDI considerations across all training platforms; while further developing the institutional capacity of BSAC in associated agenda issues.

### **Personal statement**

I am currently a member of the UK Core Stabilisation Group (CSG), contracted as a consultant on behalf of the Office for Conflict Stabilisation, & Mediation (OCSM). My primary responsibilities include; providing operational advice and training to Security and Defence Forces (S&DF) throughout the Global South on the application of Human Security (HS) considerations, including associated cross cutting issues such as Protection of Civilians (POC), International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and EDI policy etc. Having been brought up as a member of a marginalised community during the conflict in Northern Ireland, I have a unique perspective on the societal impact of non-inclusive policy design and issues that inevitably arise as a result. This perspective, aligned with my extensive operational experience working among diverse community groups has impressed upon me the vital role in developing robust EDI policies throughout both the private and public sector. I firmly believe that presenting and inclusive culture and 'Sustainable Development' ethos, which includes marine conservation etc, will remain a vital pillar of BSAC communication operations. I am passionate in my belief that an evolved understanding of how EDI and environmental protection strategy can be implemented at all stages of the operational cycle will be critical to the long term success of BSAC going into the next several decades.

