

## Speaker and Panel Biographies

*In programme running order*



### **Sue Freeth**

*Chief Executive, Combat Stress*

Sue joined Combat Stress in January 2016 as the first female Chief Executive in the charity's 96 year history. Previously, she worked at The Royal British Legion (TRBL) as Director of Welfare and Director of Operations for 11 years, leading three TRBL health and welfare strategies and TRBL's latest transformation programme, Pathway for Growth.

Sue is a lay member of the NHS England Armed Forces Clinical Reference Group and previously served on a number of advisory bodies and committees for TRBL; MOD War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Advisory Committee, Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, King's Centre for Military Health Research, World Veterans Association Medical Advisory Committee and the MOD Defence Recovery Board.



### **Wing Commander Dr Walter Busuttil**

*Medical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist, Combat Stress*

Dr Walter Busuttil retired from the Royal Air Force after 16 years' service. He helped to rehabilitate the British Beirut Hostages and was instrumental in setting up rehabilitation services for personnel returning from Gulf War I with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Walter set up tertiary general adult and forensic psychiatric services for sufferers of Complex PTSD.

Walter was appointed Director of Medical Services to Combat Stress in 2007. He has helped to set up Veterans' mental health residential, outreach and community clinical services nationally, leading and expanding the clinical capability of Combat Stress as well as campaigning for and encouraging statutory NHS services to be set up for Veterans' mental health.



### **Mike Seabrook**

*Company Secretary, Thales UK*

Mike is Company Secretary of Thales UK, Trustee of the Thales Charitable Trust, Director of Ethics, Head of Corporate Responsibility and UK Compliance Officer for Thales UK. Mike started his career in the Group Secretariat of Racal Electronics Plc in 1986, joined Thales in June 2000 and became Company Secretary in 2008.

During his career he has had responsibility for various legal, compliance and governance matters, including insurance, corporate governance, compliance, risk management and corporate responsibility. Mike is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, a member of the Institute of Directors and a vice chairman of the ADS Business Ethics Network.



**David Duffy**

*Director, Career Transition Partnership*

David Duffy is Contract Director for the Career Transition Partnership, a partnership between Right Management and the Ministry of Defence. David has worked with Right Management since 2001 and in his primary role he is responsible for all operational aspects of the Career Transition Partnership, whilst also overseeing other elements of Right Management's UK operations. The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) provides support to over 14,000 Service leavers per year and its contribution to the Manpower Group has been recognised, receiving the prestigious Manpower Power Award. Early in his career with Right Management David was employed as the CTP Regional Manager for London; a position he held for 2 years. He then returned to his 'mother' country for his next role within the organisation as Regional Manager in Scotland. Further promotion then brought him back to London and the role of Operations Director, where he was part of the bid team that successfully re-tendered for the CTP contract, first in 2005 and again in 2015.

Previous to joining Right Management, David was employed in a range of roles within Careers Services leading on projects to support clients in education and also the long term unemployed. Completing his initial degree as a mature student in Business Management, David is committed to his own personal development and has completed a Post Graduate qualification in Advice & Guidance and more recently achieved an Executive MBA at Bath University. On completion of his secondary education, David served for 6 years in the Royal Navy. This was an experience which he believes provided a strong foundation for his working life, while providing an invaluable insight for his current role.



**Mark Arscott**

*Head of Military Engagement, BT*

Mark is BT's Head of Military Engagement. He is responsible for BT's links with the armed forces community, and manages a programme that aims to provide mutually beneficial outcomes to BT, Defence and armed forces people.

This includes BT's continuing recruitment of Service leavers, support to reserves and Wounded, Injured and Sick, leading BT's Transition Force employability programme and championing joint training and skills for employees.

In May 2016, Mark launched (and still chairs) the BT Armed Forces Network, which is now the largest of its kind in the UK with over 1,000 members. Mark also plays a leadership role in supporting BT's military contacts and policies, acting as a point of contact for MOD and other relevant military bodies, including military charities.



**Michael Coates**

*Co-founder, Combat Pest Control*

Michael joined the British Army aged 16, serving nearly 6 years with the Royal Engineers. During his service, Michael spent time in Iraq during the conflict at the beginning of 2003 and then again at the end of the year. After returning to civilian life, Michael then spent a further 9 years in the Fire Service. After witnessing several of his friends and peers suffer from post traumatic stress disorder, following their time in conflict, Michael co-founded Combat Pest Control with a simple belief that he had to help his fellow Military Veterans.

Michael regularly speaks to groups of people about his military experiences and how his own values, shaped by conflict, are now at the forefront of his entrepreneurial journey. Michael has co-authored the book - 'Better Business, Better Life, Better World - The Movement' (Published July 2018) and is about to publish his first book 'War & Pest' - from Basra to bedbugs' out August 2018.



**Dr Jeya Balakrishna**

*MOD Lead for Veterans & Reserves Mental Health Programme, Honorary Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist for Combat Stress*

Jeya is a medical doctor and psychiatrist of over 30 years, based in a military mental health department in Colchester. He is actively engaged in occupational psychiatry for Regulars, Reserves and the ex-military. Having been an infantry medical officer, he finds himself back in the 'military family' on the back of considerable experience in the public, independent and charitable sectors, in both clinical and managerial roles.



**Deirdre Mills**

*Chief Executive, The Poppy Factory*

Deirdre was appointed CEO of The Poppy Factory in January 2017. The Poppy Factory is the country's leading employment charity for veterans with health conditions or impairments. It works with businesses across the country to provide bespoke opportunities and ongoing employment support for hundreds of disabled veterans of all ages and from all Services, helping to restore their financial independence through sustainable and meaningful work. Since its foundation in 1922, the factory in Richmond has also employed disabled veterans to produce poppies and wreaths for the Royal Family and The Royal British Legion's annual Poppy Appeal.

Deirdre enjoyed a successful first career in the British Army and subsequently worked in communications and strategy development and as a consultant to the third sector. She spent several years abroad, raising cross-Government funding for a range of charitable projects and working, in particular, on HIV and gender issues in sub-Saharan Africa.

More recently, Deirdre was a Director at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, leading activity within the UK, Ireland and the Nordic countries. Prior to starting work at The Poppy Factory, Deirdre worked at Credit Suisse.



**Jolandi Du Preez**

*Lead Occupational Therapist, Combat Stress*

Working as an Occupational Therapist for over 25 years. Prior to moving to the UK in 2005, Jolandi had a private practice in South Africa where she specialised in vocational and disability assessments for companies to ascertain impact of impairment (social, mental and physical health) on a client's functioning as far as Activities of Daily Living are concerned, their ability to perform their own or any other occupation in the open labour market, making recommendations regarding worksite adaptations, assistive devices, as well as rehabilitation and reskilling.

Since moving to the UK, she has worked in various areas of Mental Health as a Senior and Lead Occupational Therapist, before taking up the position as Lead Occupational Therapist for Combat Stress in May 2016, where she is responsible for the development and implementation of Occupational Therapy specific services across the whole of the UK.



**Helen Thomas**

*Communication Consultant, Thales UK*

Helen has more than 18 years of experience in internal communications management having led internal communications for NatWest Life, AXA Sun Life, Lloyds TSB Insurance and following the merger with HBOS, Lloyds Banking Group Insurance division.

Highly regarded as a valuable team player with excellent communication skills, Helen is great at building rapport to establish effective business relationships. She is focused, enthusiastic and highly motivated to deliver long-term business results, with strong project management skills.

Helen also has considerable experience as a HR business partner and her dual expertise makes her a valuable asset for any HR, change and employee engagement related communication project.