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Supporting Narrative to NIIFTE Candidature - David Bentley

In your email dated 24 June 2024, you directed candidates for the NIAG Industrial Interface Group to NFTE (NIIFTE) leadership team to answer, in no more than 200 words, three questions:

1. Why are you the ideal candidate?
2. What would you aim to achieve in the first 18 months?
3. What do you sense is the greatest risk to NFTE?

Please see my response below:

I believe that I would bring an unrivalled level of knowledge and experience around military flying training to the NIIFTE. I have extensive instructional experience, have commanded a training squadron, have commanded the Central Flying School, responsible for training all military flying instructors, and as the Director of Flying Training (1 officer) I was responsible for delivering all UK military flying training. I also bring expertise as a Business Development Director and Managing Director within a high-tech training company.*

I have extensive experience of operating alongside NATO allies, both in the cockpit and in the headquarters environment. I am collaborative, an excellent communicator and have a proven track record of building focused, motivated and highly effective teams.

The majority of NFTE signatory nations are already experiencing a shortfall in their sovereign pilot training capacity. Therefore, I believe the greatest risk to NFTE is that the programme proceeds too slowly. With that in mind, in the first 18 months I would operate 'at pace' by establishing the NIIFTE as a fully functioning and collaborative body with a clear battle rhythm. That will enable us to start providing advice on existing solutions, technological developments and potential research projects at the earliest opportunity.

200 words