

Real-life 'Q' is a woman, British spy chief reveals

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The inventor behind James Bond's ingenious gadgets, codenamed "Q" in the spy films, exists in reality and is actually a woman, the head of Britain's MI6 espionage agency has said.

"The real-life Q is looking forward to meeting you, and I'm pleased to report that the real-life Q is a woman," Alex Younger said at a women's technology awards ceremony this week in London.

Q, the head of [gadgets](#) at foreign intelligence service MI6, has always been played by a man in the Bond series, though the inventor's boss, "M", was played by Judi Dench from 1995 to 2015.

Younger, known as "C", also revealed that the devices used by his operatives were much more sophisticated than those dreamt up by Q.

"The gadgets that we employ—or operational [technology](#) as we more properly call it—probably defy the imagination of spy writers," he said.

"Technology now is at the core of what we do in a way that it wasn't before."

Younger said that Bond's reputation was both an advantage and a hindrance in the [real world](#) of international espionage, and that he wanted to dispel some myths that the suave agent 007 had imposed on MI6.

"It's great in some ways because it means that all of our opponents think there's an MI6 officer behind every bush and that we're 10,000 times larger than we actually are," he said.

"But there's a problem because it leads to a stereotype which is of a particular kind or a particular sort of person that will join MI6—whether they're really posh or going to Oxford or whatever it is."

"We can reach into every community in Britain and make sure that we get the people that are the best regardless of their background," he added.

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