

Vice Admiral Karl Thomas



Vice Admiral Karl O. Thomas is a native of Northern Virginia. He received his commission through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1986 with a degree in Management Systems. He earned a Master of Science in Information Technology from Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

A carrier aviator in the E-2C *Hawkeye*, he served at sea as a division officer in Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 114 “Hormel Hawgs;” as ship’s navigator aboard USS [*New Orleans*](#) (LPH 11) and USS [*Essex*](#) (LHD 2); as a department head in VAW-117 “Wallbangers;” and as executive officer and commanding officer of VAW-117 during Operation *Iraqi Freedom*. After graduating from the nuclear power school, Thomas served as executive officer for both USS [*Dwight D. Eisenhower*](#) (CVN 69) and USS [*George Washington*](#) (CVN 73), delivering the first permanently forward-deployed nuclear aircraft carrier to Japan. He commanded the U.S. 6th Fleet Command Ship, USS [*Mount Whitney*](#) (LCC 20); USS [*Abraham Lincoln*](#) (CVN 72) during refueling complex overhaul (RCOH); and USS [*Carl Vinson*](#) (CVN 70) in support of Operation *Inherent Resolve*.

Ashore, he served as a fleet replacement instructor in VAW-110 “Firebirds;” as flag aide for both commander, Fighter Airborne Early Warning Wing Pacific and the director of Naval Reactors; in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (OUSD AT&L) (Unmanned Warfare) coordinating the Unmanned Air Systems Task Force; and as executive assistant to the director, Air Warfare (N98).

As a flag officer, his tours include the director, 21st Century Sailor Office (N17); Task Force 70/Commander, Carrier Strike Group 5, deploying on USS [*Ronald Reagan*](#) (CVN 76) out of Yokosuka, Japan; and assistant deputy chief of naval operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy, N3/5B.

Thomas began serving as commander, U.S. 7th Fleet in July 2021.

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