

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. Most recently, Thomas commanded forward deployed naval forces as commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, from July 2021 to February 2024.

He assumed duties as deputy chief of naval operations for Information Warfare (N2N6) and the 69th director of Naval Intelligence in February 2024.

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