



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COLONEL MICHAEL A. THOMAS

Col Michael A. Thomas is currently the Commander, 353d Special Operations Group, Kadena Air Base, Japan. As Commander of the 353 SOG, Col Thomas is the Commander of Air Force Special Operations Forces for both Special Operations Command Pacific and Korea. He commands 950 special operations personnel across seven squadrons at Kadena and Yokota Air Bases, supporting special operations throughout U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's area of responsibility by providing combat-ready Special Tactics Teams, MC-130H Combat Talon II, MC-130J Commando II, and CV-22 Osprey aircraft.

Prior to this assignment, Col Thomas was a student at the Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy where he focused his industry study on space and counter space. Previously he was the Executive Officer to the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command. He acted as the personal advisor to the 3-star commander on the mission execution of the command's 5 special operations wings, 89 squadrons and over 19,000 personnel. He was entrusted with the critical information flow and regular engagements with United States Special Operations Command and Headquarters Air Force. He also led a 22 person staff including the Commander's Action Group, Protocol and Commander's Support Staff in the daily execution of the Headquarter's functions.



Col Thomas hails from Shelby Township, Michigan. He received his commission through ROTC after graduating from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Over his 22 years of service, Col Thomas has served in a variety of operational and staff assignments at various levels. Col Thomas has supported multiple operations throughout his career such as JOINT GUARDIAN, NORTHERN WATCH, ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE.

Col Thomas is married to the former Courtney Hutt from Carthage, New York. They have two children, six year old daughter, Elle and three year old son, Declan.

EDUCATION

1997 Bachelor of Science, Nuclear Engineering, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

2003 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

2007 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

2007 Master of Business Administration, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas

2011 Master of Science, Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.

2012 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence

2019 Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy

ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 1997 – January 1998, Student Navigator, 325th Flying Training Wing, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Fla.
2. January 1998 – November 1998, Student Navigator, 562d Flying Training Squadron, Randolph AFB, Texas
3. November 1998 – May 1999, Student Navigator, C-141 Initial Mission Qualification, Altus AFB, Okla.
4. May 1999 – August 2002, C-141B Instructor Navigator, Tactics Bookie, 6th Airlift Squadron, McGuire AFB, N.J.
5. August 2002 – July 2005, Instructor Navigator, Assistant Director of Operations, 562d Flying Training Squadron, Randolph AFB, Texas
6. July 2005 – February 2007, AETC Intern, Chief of Command Mobility Training Resources, AETC HQ, Randolph AFB, Texas
7. February 2007 – June 2007, Student Navigator, C-130 Initial Qualification, 714th Training Squadron, Little Rock AFB, Ark.
8. July 2007 – February 2008, Student Navigator, MC-130H Initial Qualification, 58th Special Operations Wing, Kirtland AFB, Texas
9. February 2008 – June 2010, Instructor Navigator, Assistant Director of Operations, 7th Special Operations Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom
10. June 2010 – January 2012, Student, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif.
11. January 2012 – June 2013, Chief of Safety, 352d Special Operations Group, RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom
12. June 2013 – April 2015, Director of Operations, 352d Special Operations Support Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom
13. April 2015 – May 2017, Commander, 1st Special Operations Support Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
14. May 2017 – Jul 2018, Executive Officer to the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
15. Jul 2018 – Jul 2019, Student, Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy
16. Jul 2019 – Present, Commander, 353d Special Operations Group, Kadena AB, Japan

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Master Navigator

Flight hours: 2,800

Aircraft flown: C-141B, T-43, C-130E, MC-130H

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Meritorious Service Medal

Meritorious Service Medal w 3 OLC

Air Medal w 1 OLC

Aerial Achievement Medal

Air Force Commendation Medal w 3 OLC

Air Force Achievement Medal w 1 OLC

Navy Achievement Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant – May 1997

First Lieutenant – May 1999

Captain – May 2001

Major – February 2007

Lieutenant Colonel – May 2012

Colonel – October 2018

(Current as of July 2019)