



BIOGRAPHY



AIR NATIONAL GUARD

COLONEL PAUL DRAKE IV

Colonel Paul Drake is the Commander, Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) Gulfport, MS. The primary mission of the CRTC Gulfport is to provide an integrated, year round, realistic joint training environment (Air Space, Ranges, Systems, Facilities, and Equipment) for units to enhance their capability and combat readiness. The CRTC is certified as a National Training Center emphasizing Special Operations Forces (SOF), Suppression/Destruction of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD/DEAD), Close Air Support (CAS), En-Route Casualty Care (ERCC) and Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR). Colonel Drake is responsible for all operations of the Combat Readiness Training Center, which includes the Shelby East and West Air to Ground Gunnery Ranges, five drop zones, C-17/C-130/C-27 Assault Strip, the Air Combat Training System and all associated airspace. The CRTC is an Aerial Port of Embarkation/Debarcation in support of Contingency Operations worldwide. Also located on the installation are the 255th Air Control Squadron, 209th Special Operations Civil Engineering Squadron, 890th Engineer Battalion, 2nd Battalion 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne), and the 1108th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group.



Colonel Drake graduated from the United States Naval Academy in May 1992, upon which he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. At Paris Island, SC, he served as Series Commander for Golf and Hotel Company, Paris Island Rifle and Pistol Team, and officer in charge of the Marksmanship Training Unit. Colonel Drake entered the Air National Guard in July 1998 as an Air Battle Manger in the 117th Air Control Squadron, Savannah, GA. In June 2000, he became the Range Training and Range Control Officer at the Savannah Combat Training Center. In December 2002, he transferred to the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center where he continued to serve as the Range Training and Range Control Officer. In March 2008, Colonel Drake became the officer in charge for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Program at Joint Force Headquarters, Jackson, MS. In July 2009, he transitioned to the Deputy J 5/7. As Deputy J 5/7 his responsibilities included the State Partnership Program with Bolivia and Uzbekistan, strategic planning for current and future Mississippi military strategies, developing joint integration plans, Joint Professional Military Education, Joint Exercise and Training Programs, and the development of action plans to implement approved joint strategies for the State of Mississippi. In November 2014, as dual assignments, Colonel Drake served as Commander to the 255th Air Control Squadron, Gulfport MS and Director of Airspace and Ranges managing the Camp Shelby Air to Ground Bombing range and C-17 Assault Strip, and the W154 airspace in the Gulf of Mexico.

Colonel Drake's combat experience includes deployments during Operation PROVIDE COMFORT and IRAQI FREEDOM serving with 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry (ABN), 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division (ABN), and 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

EDUCATION

- 1992 Bachelor of Science Degree in General Science, United States Naval Academy; Annapolis, MD
- 2003 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, AL, Correspondence
- 2004 Air Liaison Officer Qualification Course; Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, NV, Distinguished Grade
- 2007 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, AL, Correspondence
- 2007 Army Electronic Warfare Officer Course; Fort Huachuca, AZ
- 2007 Counter RCIED Electronic Warfare Officer Course; Joint Crew Composite Squadron-1, Bagdad, Iraq
- 2012 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL, Correspondence
- 2015 Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA, Distinguished Graduate

ASSIGNMENTS

July 1988 – May 1992, Student, United States Naval Academy; Annapolis, MD
June 1992 – February 1993, The Basic School for Marine Officers, Quantico, VA
March 1993 – March 1995, Marine Air Control Squadron 2, Beaufort, SC
March 1995 – September 1997, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, SC
July 1998 – June 2000: Air Battle Manager, 117th Air Control Squadron, Savannah, GA
July 2000 – December 2002, Certified Range Training and Range Control Officer, Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center, Savannah, GA
December 2002 – March 2008, Certified Range Training and Range Control Officer, Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport, MS
March 2008 – November 2014, J 5/7; Joint Force Headquarters, Jackson, MS
November 2014 – May 2015, Commander, 255th Air Control Squadron, Gulfport, MS; MSANG Director of Airspace and Ranges; Gulfport, MS
May 2015 – present, Commander, Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport, Mississippi

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Bronze Star Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Air Force Commendation Medal
Army Commendation Medal
Air Force Achievement Medal
Navy Achievement Medal
Valorous Unit Award
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation
National Defense Service Medal with service star
Iraq Campaign Medal with service star
Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
Humanitarian Service Medal
Air Force Overseas Ribbon-Short with oak leaf cluster
Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border and oak leaf cluster
Air Force Longevity Service Award with four oak leaf clusters
Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Gold Hourglass and two "M" devices
Coast Guard Special Operations Service

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

United States Naval Academy Alumni Association
National Guard Association of the United States
National Guard Association of Mississippi
Life Associate Member of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Life Associate Member of the Mississippi Non-Commissioned Officers Association
Military Officers Association of America

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant, May 27, 1992
First Lieutenant, May 27, 1994
Captain, October 1, 1999
Major, December 15, 2003
Lieutenant Colonel, May 27, 2008
Colonel, December 10, 2015

(Current as of May 2016)